

# WE'RE RETHINKING DRINKING

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# THE FUTURE IS SMASHED.

**We've partnered with Leeds University Union Bars, Venues and Cafes to support its commitment to the health & wellbeing of its members by providing a range of alcohol-free drinks in its venues.**

Our mission is to introduce a different and more delicious way to enjoy alcohol-free drinks and we hope you enjoy our **Smashed Apple** and **Smashed Hops** which are now available in LUU.

The times 'they are a changin'. A hangover is no longer part and parcel of a night out. You can have a laugh with your friends without the need for booze.

There is a real trend for young people to reduce the amount they drink and opt instead for low or no alcohol alternatives. Focusing on health and wellness means keeping a clear head but still enjoying all that uni life has to offer.

If you choose not to drink alcohol then the range of drinks can be achingly boring – a sugary fizzy liquid, drinks full of artificial sweeteners, a bottle of insipid fruit juice, a mocktail... it doesn't really inspire sobriety.

## **There is another way...**

We are a bunch of dedicated people who have made it our one-and-only mission to create delicious drinks that are produced with care, provenance and quality ingredients, that just happen to be alcohol-free.

Tasting really is believing. Our drinks look, feel, behave and taste like the real thing.

We use locally-sourced British ingredients to create authentic, natural-tasting beer and cider and then we gently remove the alcohol. Our drinks contain no artificial sugars, are vegan-friendly, gluten-free (where possible) and are as low in calories as possible.

We have developed a unique, natural way to gently remove alcohol from beer and cider which leaves the character, personality and flavour of the drink. We dealcoholize our **Smashed Apple** and **Smashed Hops** in a vacuumed environment, rather than boiling the alcohol out, which results in a drinking experience that is unrivalled. You literally wouldn't know that there was no booze in it.

## **No one else makes alcohol-free drinks like us.**

Deciding not to drink isn't a fad created by "millennials". It's part of a healthier, gentler more sustainable lifestyle that has values at its core and is changing the way we all live. This is driven by people who want to do things differently and are determined to change our world for the better.

We are, and will always be, focused on creating alcohol-free drinks that deliver a joyful drinking experience without the need for booze.

Let us know what you think.

**Stay 100% you, drink a 0%.**

**DRYNKS<sup>®</sup>**  
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**IT'S TIME FOR**  
**RETHINKING DRINKING<sup>®</sup>**





# THE GRYPHON

The official newspaper of Leeds University

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Image: Niall Unger

## 117 Staff on £100,000+

*Every year, at least £11,700,000 is shared between just 117 members of staff at the University of Leeds.*

**Zahra Iqbal**  
News Editor

The Office for Students (OfS) have published their first annual analysis of what senior staff are paid at universities across the country. Published on the 12th February, the study revealed that 117 staff members at the University of Leeds received a salary of £100,000 or more between 2017 and 2018.

Across the 133 universities studied, the proportion of all staff paid a basic salary of £100,000 or more in 2017-18 was 1.5 per cent.

The study showed that, at the University of Leeds, the average number of staff in full time employment last year was 7,240. This means that the University of Leeds was above the national average, with 1.6 per cent of staff on a salary of £100,000 or more, an increase from 1.4 per cent of staff between 2016 and 2017.

The study also revealed that the

University of Leeds received a total income of £715 million (2017-2018).

When speaking to the University about the increase in percentage of staff on salaries of over £100,000, a University spokesperson said: "Leeds is one of the biggest universities in the UK – for example, we have 10,000 more students and 5,000 more members of staff than Leeds Beckett – meaning we inevitably employ more staff of all levels of seniority across academic and managerial roles.

"As a world top 100 university, we also operate in a globally competitive market, so we need to attract and retain the very best people to provide students with the exceptional education that has seen us rise up many of the league tables over the past few years. We are always mindful of the need to provide value for money and remain committed to being transparent about senior staff salaries."

Interestingly, there is an alarming disparity between the University of Leeds

and other Leeds based universities. Leeds Art University, for example, had a total income of £19 million, with only two members of staff (0.9% of staff overall) on salaries of over £100,000 in the academic year 2017-8.

In comparison to Leeds Beckett, the University of Leeds received £496 million more in terms of income in 2017-8. While Leeds Beckett employed 2,391 full time staff members, only twelve (0.5% of staff overall) were paid over £100,000.

Furthermore, Leeds was 8th, along with the University of Sheffield, when it came to the relationship between the basic salary of the Vice Chancellor and the median salary of all other employees at the University, at a ratio of 10.6. The average ratio across all universities was 7.2. The VC at Leeds receives a salary of £281,000, which has remained the same for the past two years.

Speaking further on this issue of VC pay, a University spokesperson said: "Leeds

### OnBeat Gets Off the Ground

Find out how three friends started Leeds' newest BME society 'OnBeat' – a magazine focused on women of colour.

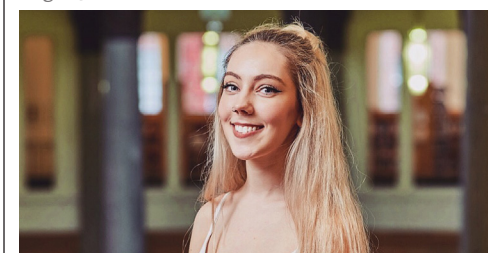
Page 10



### Women in Leadership

Business sat down with the society's president to discuss improving inclusivity for students at the University of Leeds.

Page 15



remains one of the largest universities in the Russell Group, which represents the 24 leading UK universities, and since taking up his post in 2013, Sir Alan Langlands has received only one salary increase of 1.1%, which was in line with the nationally negotiated pay increase. When comparing total remuneration, Sir Alan is 20th in the Russell Group."

Many London based Universities had the most alarming results. 120 of 801 full time employees at London Business School earned over £100,000 in 2017-18, the highest percentage in the country (15%), although this is a reduction from the 16.5% recorded between 2016 and 2017.

At University College London, 354 full time employees received salaries of over £100,000, the highest number of staff members at a single institution to earn this amount (2.3% of overall staff).



Editor of the Week  
**Nat Baker**

Every issue, Nat Baker pretty much single-handedly turns In The Middle into the piece of art that it is. This week might be the best the magazine has ever looked, and it's only fair Nat gets the credit she deserves for the hours she puts in to making it look so good.

Quote of the Week

*“A statistic! And staggering data at that. So staggering indeed, it beggared belief. It certainly merited a Google.”*

Alec Sims, who finally wrote the article he's spent 71 out of the past 100 days writing.

Credits

Editor-In-Chief ~  
Robbie Cairns

Associate Editors ~  
Polly Hatcher  
Ian White

Digital Associate ~  
Bella Davis

News ~ Megan  
Cummings, Zahra Iqbal,  
Eleanor Smith

Society ~  
Rose Crees

Features ~ Inaya Folarin,  
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Hamzah Bharwani,  
Eleanor Noyce

Science ~ Michelle  
Heinrich, Alec Sims

Business ~  
Shona Augustinus,  
Julia Constable

Sport ~ James Felton, Cian  
Fox, Will Pickworth,  
Ryan Wan

Design ~ Robbie Cairns,  
Polly Hatcher, Ian White

Head of Photography ~  
Giulia Bardelli

# Editor's Letter:



Dear readers,

Hello and a happy International Women's Day to all of you. This fair 8th March marks a day where we can huddle round our issues of the Gryphon and celebrate all the incredible ways in which women around the globe shatter the glass ceiling and say a big, fat "thank u, next" to the patriarchy. And with students at Leeds just voting for their first ever all female Student Exec, it certainly seems like there's no better time to celebrate the one thing which my predecessor, Reece Parker, will never understand - women.

Women (or womxn), ran the show for most of 2018 and have got off to a flying start in 2019. Lady Gaga became the first person EVER to swoop all five major awards in one awards season for her role in the song 'Shallow' from A Star is Born. Last year, Serena Williams returned to the tennis courts following her pregnancy and she's already back in the World Top Ten and telling women far and wide to show the world "what crazy can do." The continued relevance of the #MeToo campaign has seen countless fashion moguls, film executives and musicians resign over accusations of sexual harassment and exploitation, to see their poisonous empires crumble to the ground.

But we must remember that, even in this day and age of heightened social awareness, women are still unfairly discriminated against in every walk of life. While Lady Gaga may have taken home all the awards, there has only been one female winner of the Oscar for Best Director (Kathryn Bigelow in 2010) and only five women who have even been nominated for it. While women may be absolute titans in their chosen sport, the second they show emotion they're labelled as 'hysterical' or 'unhinged' or, \*shudder\*, hormonal. And the fact that it was Emma Thompson who quit her role on Luck after John Lasseter (a man with an array of alleged "misconducts" to his name) joined the production team rather than Lasseter himself, is an indicator that the #MeToo movement has only gone so far. To top this off? Some women still face daily struggles just to be identified as a woman, because some other women don't want to share that identification.

Last October, an Office for National Statistics report revealed that, in ALL jobs, women in the UK earn, on average, 17.9% less than men. The gender pay gap is closing, but it's still a sizeable disparity, and one which certain individuals out there refuse to address. Don't believe me? Well, here's a case in point:

#LeedsFess6696 - "Fact: There is no gender pay gap, it has been illegal since 1970 to not pay a man & a woman the same wage for the same job. The difference in mean salaries between men & women in a certain field or at a certain company is not a wage gap, it's the result of life choices of each individual. There is equality of opportunity in the workplace for men & women [...] Anyone still complaining about a gender pay gap is dense in the head, regardless of gender."

Although whoever wrote this has clearly perfected the ability of talking out of their arse, it's still a concern that such spiteful opinions as these might actually be held by real, functioning human beings. And, as such, I'd like to counter this Fesser (going gender neutral here, but I'm assuming pretty confidently that they're a man) with a LeedsFess of my own. So, here we go, #LeedsFess6696.5 - a list of all the women who have inspired me throughout my life, the women who make the world go round:

- Brie Larson/Captain Marvel (it gets released today and Thanos is already looking shook).
- My mum, a midwife who retires this month after 30+ years of helping to bring even more women into this world. You da real MVP, Cath.
- Rachel Stevens, Rachel Riley, Rachel Weisz... pretty much anyone called Rachel really.
- Next year's ALL FEMALE student exec!!!

- My A Level English teacher, Mrs King. She once joked that she'd call her first-born son "Juan." (Come on, sound it out loud - "Juan King"... get it?).
- Brienne of Tarth, Cersei Lannister, Arya Stark and Deanerys Stormborn of the House Targaryen, First of Her Name, the Unburnt, Queen of the Andals and the First Men, Khaleesi of the Great Grass Sea, Breaker of Chains, and Mother of Dragons.
- Any woman who has ever uttered the words "men are trash."
- Sporty, Baby, Scary, Posh and Ginger Spice.
- Aretha Franklin, Billie Holiday, Etta James, Amy Winehouse, Nina Simone, Madonna, Gwen Stefani, Pink, Norah Jones, Kali Uchis, Noname, Sampa the Great, Daphne Oram, Beyoncé, Odette.
- Ariana Grande - she deserves a slot on her own.
- The 50-year-old woman who once kissed me and licked the inside of my ear at a bus stop when I was 16. No one has ever held me like you have, Audrey.
- Toni Morrison, Shirley Jackson, Emily Dickinson, Angela Carter, Angela Davis, Simone de Beauvoir, Maxine Hong Kingston, Jessie Fauset, Nella Larsen, Zora Neal Hurston, Gwendolyn Brooks, Mina Loy, Willa Cather, Maya Angelou.
- Lindsay Lohan in The Parent Trap.
- The other Lindsay Lohan in The Parent Trap.
- 68% of The Gryphon's editorial team.
- Dragon from Shrek (she's a giiiiirl dragon, remember?).
- Emmeline Pankhurst, although technically she was at an advantage because she was born in the greatest city on God's green Earth, Manchester.
- Female barbers (shout out to Issue 6 of The Gryphon).
- Helen Parr aka Mrs. Incredible aka Elastigirl.
- Lara Croft - including, but not limited to, Angelina Jolie, Alicia Vikander, Keeley Hawes & Camilla Luddington.
- Vini Jones, daughter of TV hardman Vinnie Jones and sexually liberated reality TV star, winner of 'Love Island the Game' 2018.
- The Women in Leadership Society (page 15) and OnBeat (page 10).
- The girl from the petits filous adverts who always beat the boys at arm wrestles with her stronger bones.
- Marie Curie, Rosalind Franklin, Kathrine Switzer, Amelia Earhart, Bessie Coleman, Rosa Parks, Marilyn Monroe, Audrey Hepburn, Laverne Cox, Malala Yousafzai.
- Chaka Khan, and, by extension, every woman.

The playwright Alan Bennett once wrote: "History is a commentary on the various and continuing incapacities of men. What is history? History is women following behind with the bucket." Perhaps it's time men started learning how to carry the bucket, because the future's looking female. And I, for one, am happy to share the load.

Stay Classy,

Robbie Cairns  
Editor-in-Chief  
editor@thegryphon.co.uk

## Contents:

- 4-7
- 8-9
- 10
- 11-13
- 14-15
- 16-17
- 18-20

- News
- Features
- Society
- Views
- Business
- Science
- Sport



# Exec Columns:



**Union Affairs Officer**  
**Chris Morris**

*C.A.Morris@leeds.ac.uk*



**Education Officer**  
**Serene Esuruoso**

*A.S.Esuruso@leeds.ac.uk*



**Community Officer**  
**Tom Oladipo**

*J.O.Oladipo@leeds.ac.uk*



**Activities Officer**  
**Lauren Huxley**

*L.R.Huxley@leeds.ac.uk*



**Equality & Diversity Officer**  
**Tamsin Scott**

*T.E.Scott@leeds.ac.uk*



**Welfare Officer**  
**Matt Port**

*M.Port@leeds.ac.uk*

Congratulations to Lauren and the rest of the incoming Exec, I'm really excited to see what you all do next year and, to repeat what I said last week, thank you to every candidate who ran in Lead LUU.

Yesterday was University Mental Health Day, with LUU putting on a range of activities, including hosting a conference run by The James Burke Foundation and LUUWAF. Chris Skidmore, Universities Minister, spent some time on campus, visiting LUU and

What a week! Our new Exec has been voted in and for the first time ever, they're all women! LUU history has been made. I'm so excited to be handing over to Abiha, who's been a fantastic School Rep and will no doubt be a fantastic Education Officer. Well done to all the other Reps who ran across the categories, you put up a tough fight.

Today, I'll be heading into town to

First off, congratulations to all who ran and won in the just concluded LeadLUU election. I'm really looking forward to working with all of you, especially my successor, Cat.

This week, I attended a meeting with the other Students' Unions in Leeds talking about mental health and environmental issues facing students in Leeds. On top of that, after the

Well this has been an incredible week! It's still sinking in that I am lucky enough to be your Union Affairs Officer next year... And with an ALL FEMALE EXEC! I'm so excited to continue fighting for a better student experience for everyone at Leeds and I'm having some brilliant conversations about my manifesto points already.

No time to rest though; this week I

Hi everyone! So this week has been sooo hectic for me - in case you haven't noticed, it's The Sex Sessions! We've had an absolutely brilliant turnout at the events, and people seem to have really loved all the amazing discussions we've had.

There are still a few more to come, with the Arts Market being the finale from 2-9 on Saturday. I hope all the

I'm being replaced! Congratulations to Amy Wells, your Welfare Officer Elect, who will take up her post in June. I'm really excited to see the direction that she takes the Union in, along with the remainder of the all-female exec.

Before she takes the reigns, however, I'm looking forward to seeing the outcomes of the next round of Forums coming this week and also to interpreting the much-anticipated

Student Minds. We challenged him on a range of issues including how much he thinks universities should provide healthcare and made him well aware of what challenges face students today.

In a couple of weeks, LUU are sending coaches down to London for you to take your place on the Put It To The People March to make sure you can have your say on what you want from Brexit. Next week, there will be a number of votes which may have a big impact on how

meet with Dame Shirley Pierce. She's carrying out an independent review of the Subject Level TEF process we've just been through. The last Education Assembly was on Tuesday, and the Reps and I had a really interesting discussion about what the process was like from their perspective. I think Dame Shirley will really value getting insight into the student experience.

success of my first culture cooks event, on the 5th of March, the second Culture Cooks took place, where we shared in Indian culture again through the medium of food and conversations. The next Culture Cooks takes place on the 12 March, and this time we'll be tasting some Japanese cuisine. Tickets are on sale and cost only £3 through the LUU website. Make sure you book a ticket

chatted to the Universities Minister about what a difference it makes when students can get involved with something they love outside their studies and how important it is to think of Uni as more than just an academic experience. Let's hope he was listening eh!

Outside of that, I have also been competing with Freestyle Dance Society

brilliant, honest conversations don't stop after this week, as there's so much more to be said.

Apart from The Sex Sessions, you may have noticed that the new exec have been elected! Huge congrats to the all female exec for next year, you'll all absolutely smash it.

Finally, for Saturday's Arts Market we're serving sex themed cocktails.

results of the drug and alcohol survey. Also, I'm off on holiday towards the end of next week so will be enjoying the relaxing blistering cold of Stockholm.

This week we had Universities Mental Health Day which saw an amazing transformation of the foyer, led by our fabulous Help and Support staff. Five stations explored the NHS Five Ways to Wellbeing, encouraging students to take a proactive approach

Brexit will affect the student experience - in the event of No Deal, there could be a big impact on what we can do, where we can go, and what we can get. Make sure you get your place and don't miss out by signing up on the LUU website.

Finally, we are really aware that bottled water in the LUU Co-op is a big concern for students. We as an Exec are pushing to influence change through our partnership with Co-op, to take as many steps forward as we can.

I was also fortunate enough to meet with Chris Skidmore, the Universities Minister, yesterday. We spoke about different governmental policies and the damaging effect it's having on student mental health. Again, the Rep's thoughts and opinions shaped a lot of what I had to say and it seemed like Chris really appreciated our candid views.

and come on down.

Lastly, I just want to do a final push on 'rate your landlord'. It's still live, so please do tell us how good or bad your landlords are. This is vital not only so that we can help you and your housemates avoid housing horror shows, but so that future students can avoid these pitfalls as well.

over the weekend and I'm chuffed to say we came home with 5 trophies! I'm also competing this weekend in Loughborough at the biggest inter-uni dance competition in the UK. I'd like to wish a big best of luck to anyone taking part in any competitions over the next few weeks - you all deserve a result which makes all your hard work worth it!

If anyone has any ideas for names, please let me know! Love you all x

to their wellbeing. Of course, this shouldn't act as a substitute for one-to-one mental health support: I also spent a portion of the day challenging the latest Universities Minister Chris Skidmore on how he intends to better support students across Universities, and speaking to ITV Calendar about why it's more important than ever that mental health is taken seriously by the government.

# Campus Watch



## 1 The University of Bath University bus falls down a manhole

One of the university buses in Bath took a slight detour when it became stuck in a manhole on Thursday, 28th February. The bus reportedly tried to avoid crashing into another bus that was swinging left from North Parade onto Manvers Street.

The bus was full of university students, heading up to campus. Once the driver realised he was stuck, he immediately told all the passengers to evacuate the vehicle.

Amongst the crowd of students hastily leaving the bus was William Easdown. He described the situation: "All the students (including me) who'd been on the double decker walked to the bus stop on North Parade by the leisure centre to wait for another bus to pick them up from there. One full bus stopped, the driver called the depot and an empty double decker arrived 5-10 mins later."

Another passenger told Bath Live that, although no one was hurt in the incident, the students "didn't look very happy having to get off and get another bus."

First's West of England Head of Operations, Chris Hanson, reassured that "the incident has been reported to the police and an internal investigation will take place. We apologise to our customers and other road users who may have been delayed by this incident."

Sophie Denham

## 2 Purdue University Students offered an alternative to student loans

In an effort to find solutions to the crippling levels of student debt in the US, Purdue University in Indiana has offered an alternative to the current way of paying for university.

Instead of a traditional US-style loan, with interest that builds up over time and becomes unpayable for many people, Purdue are giving the option to pay a percentage of a graduate's income over the ten years after they leave university.

At around only 7% of income, this payment method is much more in line with the UK student loan system, and works more like a graduate tax.

Unlike UK student debt, however, student debt in the US can affect credit ratings and so limit a graduate's ability to buy a house or car years in the future; in the UK, student debt does not affect your credit rating.

Graduate debt in the US is over \$1.6 trillion and counting. If the example set by Purdue University can be shown to work – then it might offer some way to reduce the eye watering total.

Micheal Keating

## 3 Bath Spa University Student failed after file confusion

The modern student is lost without technology. Even the thought of our Mac Book running out of charge is enough to bring us out in a cold sweat. Without technology, we might as well give up and go back to bed – if we weren't on the verge of doing so already.

This sentiment must be shared by Liam Creighton, a graphic communications student at Bath Spa University, who was recently given zero marks for his coursework after the university failed to open his PDF file. His tutor was unable to open the 122 page document, meaning Creighton was not given any credit for his work.

Nobody even knows what the three letters stand for, yet we stake our degrees on these files working properly. Creighton is "outraged and disgusted" with the university's treatment of him, but has so far not been shown any sympathy by the university hierarchy.

He had been on track for a 2:1, but now looks more likely to emerge with just a pass. Nobody would wish such unfairness on a fellow student.

That's right, double check that you pressed save on that assignment. Maybe quill and parchment is the way forward, after all.

Mark Docherty

## 4 The University of Birmingham Anti-abortion society approved

The University of Birmingham has approved the formation of an anti-abortion society following concerns over free speech. The group, which are called 'Birmingham Students For Life' had their application for societal status deferred twice before being given the green light in February 2019.

Their Facebook page has been active since July 2018 and currently has almost 200 likes. On their page they state that they "believe that human life should be protected from conception until natural death," adding that they exist to "promote dialogue on abortion, and make people aware of the alternatives."

The approval of the society comes just months after a pro-life group was banned from associating with the University of Glasgow's Student Union. Similarly, 'Life', an anti-abortion charity, was banned from having a stall at the 2018 Freshers' Fairs in Manchester, Liverpool and Warwick.

A group of University of Birmingham students are now attempting to set up a pro-choice society in attempt to prevent a pro-life rhetoric from dominating the conversation.

Charlotte Loughlin

## 5 The University of Glasgow Buildings evacuated over suspicious package

Hundreds of students at the University of Glasgow were evacuated on Wednesday after a suspicious package was found in the University's mail room.

Classes were cancelled and staff were sent home early while a bomb disposal unit dealt with the device. Police Scotland later confirmed that there was no further threat to the public.

A Police Scotland statement said: "Around 10:50am, on Wednesday 6th March 2019, police received two reports of suspicious packages found at the University of Glasgow and the Royal Bank of Scotland in Edinburgh.

"Emergency services are in attendance and both buildings have been evacuated. At this stage there is nothing to link these incidents. The items will be examined and enquiries are ongoing."

It is believed that the package may be linked to the three homemade explosive devices which were recently posted to several locations across London.

Ian White



# 1 in 1 Out: Almost Half of Men Turned Away on Nights Out in Leeds

Amelia Cutting

A recent survey has revealed that almost fifty percent of men that arrived at a bar or nightclub in Leeds were turned away last year.

The survey, conducted by Grosvenor Casinos, showed that this was either because they were in too large a group, or because they did not have enough women in the group. Whilst the figure was 42% in Leeds, nationwide it showed that 6.3 million men across the UK were refused entry to venues whilst out at night.

Whilst this survey highlights the unfairness that men face when planning a night out as a group, it also shows how much money they are losing when being turned away. In Leeds alone, men were averaging an extra spend of £17.63 each time they had to leave the venue they wished to attend.

National Operations Director at Grosvenor Casinos, Debbie Husband, said “groups of men who simply want to socialise and enjoy a night out with their friends are being unfairly turned away from pubs, bars and clubs because they are arriving with two or more friends.”

The survey also identified the most common tactics that men in Leeds were using to be allowed entry when out. 39% of men said that they split up into smaller

groups on arrival, one quarter of men said that they brought their girlfriends out with them to balance the ratio of men and women, 18% asked women they met in the queue to join their group while they were let in, and 23% said they turned up earlier than they wished to just to make sure they were guaranteed entry to the venue.

A similar article addressed this issue back in April of last year, when many groups of men were complaining of being turned away from nightclubs, pubs and bars just because they had no women in their group.

The Equality Act of 2010 made it illegal to discriminate against someone for many different reasons, including gender. Maria Chadwick, Discrimination Department Manager at Stephenson's law firm, says that “theoretically, if the sole reason for turning a group away is their gender, then you could potentially mount a claim.”

However, she does say that there is a possible defence for bar owners and bouncers on the doors because accepting large groups of men when there are already lots inside can put “the health and safety of the staff and the other patrons at risk.” Despite this, they are “essentially discriminating against males without just cause,” says Ms Chadwick.

Although the recent study shines a light on the challenges men can face when on a night out with

their mates, Miss Chadwick says that for now “there's nothing you can do, really apart from put your head down and go somewhere else.” For how much longer will men continue to accept this?



# Students Among the Victims of Rising Knife Crime

Matthew Plant

Some of the UK's major cities have experienced a spate of stabbings in recent weeks.

Birmingham, the UK's second largest city, has seen three fatal stabbings in recent weeks with Sidali Mohamed, Abdullah Muhammad and Hazrat Umar all being killed. Just days later, a 16-year-old was stabbed outside of a charity shop.

In response to these stabbings, West Midlands' Police Chief Constable Dave Thompson, who also has responsibilities for Wolverhampton, Coventry and the Black Country, has announced an unprecedented stop and search initiative in the West Midlands. This is a first for the second-city which has never had stop and search in place before.

Chief Constable Thompson announced the initiative by describing it as “widespread and blunt” and noted that it would “upset some innocent young people.”

The Police and Crime Commissioner for the West Midlands David Jamieson described the stabbings as a “national emergency” and asked the Home Secretary Sajid Javid to give West Midlands Police a special policing grant to help tackle the problem.

At the same time that the Chief Constable and Police and Crime Commissioner were speaking, a man was stabbed at the nearby Aston University campus.

The victim, described by police as a “29-year-old man”, was taken to hospital with serious injuries. It is

unknown if he was a student at the university or not. The attack occurred on Aston University's Lakeside campus, close to student accommodation, with part of the campus being cordoned off.

Manchester has also seen a victim of knife crime as 17-year-old Yousef Makki was killed. He has been described by Manchester Grammar School as a “dearly loved, incredibly bright pupil.”

London has also seen a spate of knife crime in recent weeks. The 18th death so far in the capital is 17-year-old Jodie Chesney, described by friends as the “nicest person.”

Furthermore, with Runshaw College in Lancashire being threatened by a group of males armed with knives, and knife crime doubling in Sheffield within the last nine years, this is clearly a nationwide issue.

In response, Home Secretary Sajid Javid has condemned the “senseless violence” and called a meeting on Wednesday of police chiefs in an effort to look at how to counter the violence.

Theresa May has come under fire for suggesting that there is no link between knife crime and policing cuts.

Critics argue that the cuts to youth services and police numbers are key factors in increasing knife crime. When asked about the knife crime attacks on LBC radio, Met Police Commissioner Cressida Dick said that knife crime was down compared to last year, identifying that there have been 20 homicides

this year versus 29 last year. She also said that there must be some link between violent crime and police numbers falling.

At the start of 2019, the UK Youth Parliament launched their ‘Action Against Knife Crime’, calling on the Government to review its current approach as they argue, backed up by a report from the Centre for Crime and Justice, that stop and search has no real impact on knife crime. The Youth Parliament is arguing for a public health approach which will acknowledge that violence is “strongly associated with social determinants.”



Image: The Telegraph



# Who Run the Union?

For the first time in the history of Leeds University Union, students have voted for an all female Student Exec. Here, we take a closer look at who they are, and what the next academic year will bring.

Robbie Cairns  
Editor-in-Chief

The campaign banners are down and the election posters are gone, and soon the current Student Exec will also be moving on to pastures new. The new, all female exec were elected on the evening of Friday 1st March in a packed out Union Foyer, and they're promising some great changes to your university experience.

Lydia Evans was elected as Activities Officer with 3105 votes. Lydia aims to invest more money into and introduce mental health protocols across every society, as well as to create a fund for students who can't afford society memberships.

Cat Fairbairn was elected as Community Officer with 1654 votes. Cat pledges to bridge the gap between students and their community, help students manage their money better and to promote a focus on environmental and safety initiatives.

Abiha Khan was elected as Education Officer with 1572 votes. Abiha is planning to digitise core texts, prioritise mental health with dedicated wellbeing officers and to better support joint honours students.

Chloé Elliot was elected as Equality & Diversity Officer with 2169 votes. Chloé intends to further the 'Why is my Curriculum White' initiative, improve



Your new exec, from left to right: Chloé Elliot, Cat Fairbairn, Amy Wells, Lydia Evans, Lauren Huxley, Abiha Khan. Image: LUU

E&D awareness training for societies and recognise more religious holidays and festivals on campus.

Current Activities Officer, Lauren Huxley, was elected as Union Affairs Officer with 2597 votes. Lauren wants to reward student loyalty at LUU, increase the range of opportunities on offer across campus and to improve the accessibility of the Union.

Amy Wells was elected as Welfare Officer with 1527 votes. Amy pledges to prioritise a no-nonsense approach to mental health by improving in-school support, cut hidden course costs and to promote

student safety around drug use and safe sex.

Alongside the exec, Ed Barnes was elected as Gryphon Editor-in-Chief with 2855 votes. Ed promises to expand the Gryphon's online presence, increase the diversity of its editors and its writers and to make the Gryphon the go-to news source in Leeds.

Overall, 6,948 votes were cast for a total of 37 candidates. This marks a slight reduction from last year's turnout of 7,610 votes.

# 'Epidemic' Levels of Sexual Harassment at British Universities

Beatriz Casarrubios Lopez

A recent survey has uncovered that over half of the university student population in the UK have experienced unwanted sexual behaviour – ranging from undesired sexual messages to rape.

The survey, carried out by the charity Brook and student database Dig-In, interviewed over 5,500 students and discovered that only a small percentage of students actually reported these incidents.

Many of the students interviewed were dubious as to what exactly constitutes as sexual harassment and violent sexual acts, with only 8% having reported past incidents. A meagre 15% of those questioned understood that unwanted sexual behaviour is regarded as sexual harassment – a criminal offence.

Alarmingly, 56% of those who have experienced unwanted sexual behaviour disclosed that the perpetrator was indeed a fellow student. Unsurprisingly, women were far more likely to experience unwanted sexual behaviour compared to men.

3% of reported incidents were from men who expressed that they had been inappropriately touched – a much lower number than for women, but it still represents thousands of cases of sexual harassment that shouldn't be disregarded.

Furthermore, according to the Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) 20% of women and 4% of men have experienced some kind of sexual assault since the age of 16.

This is equivalent to 3.4 million female victims and 631,000 male victims. These figures only include reported cases. As a disconcerting 5 out of 6 victims will not report these incidents – the true number of victims is likely to be far greater.

Power dynamics between men and women are the main reason why more women experience unwanted sexual behaviour, according to Stop Violence Against Women, a project run by The Advocates for Human Rights.

Women are more likely to receive unsolicited sexual behaviour precisely because men are more likely to hold positions of power, leaving women in more vulnerable and insecure positions.

It also is part of the reason why many victims are averse to reporting unwanted sexual behaviour, as many are fearful of the potential re-victimisation that may occur, whether it be from the criminal justice system or ostracization from family members. A lack of reporting comes down to power imbalances, embarrassment and simply not realising that what had occurred was a crime in itself.

In response to the 'epidemic' of sexual harassment

cases on campuses across the UK, several universities are implementing compulsory consent classes as part of their Freshers Week.

Hopefully, this move signals that universities are beginning to take combatting sexual harassment more seriously, and suggests there isn't a correlation between academic ability and an understanding of consent.

These consent workshops are undoubtedly a step in the right direction. But, only 49.8% of the population go to university and are able to attend such workshops – sexual harassment doesn't occur exclusively in universities. It is increasingly clear that consent classes need to start at a much earlier stage, as the complexity of consent is far more nuanced than simple binary answers.

The Department of Education have revised their sex and relationship guidance for the first time since 2000 to include "consent classes" to pupils as young as four. Learning about respecting each other and enforcing the concept of personal boundaries to children is thought to improve their understanding.

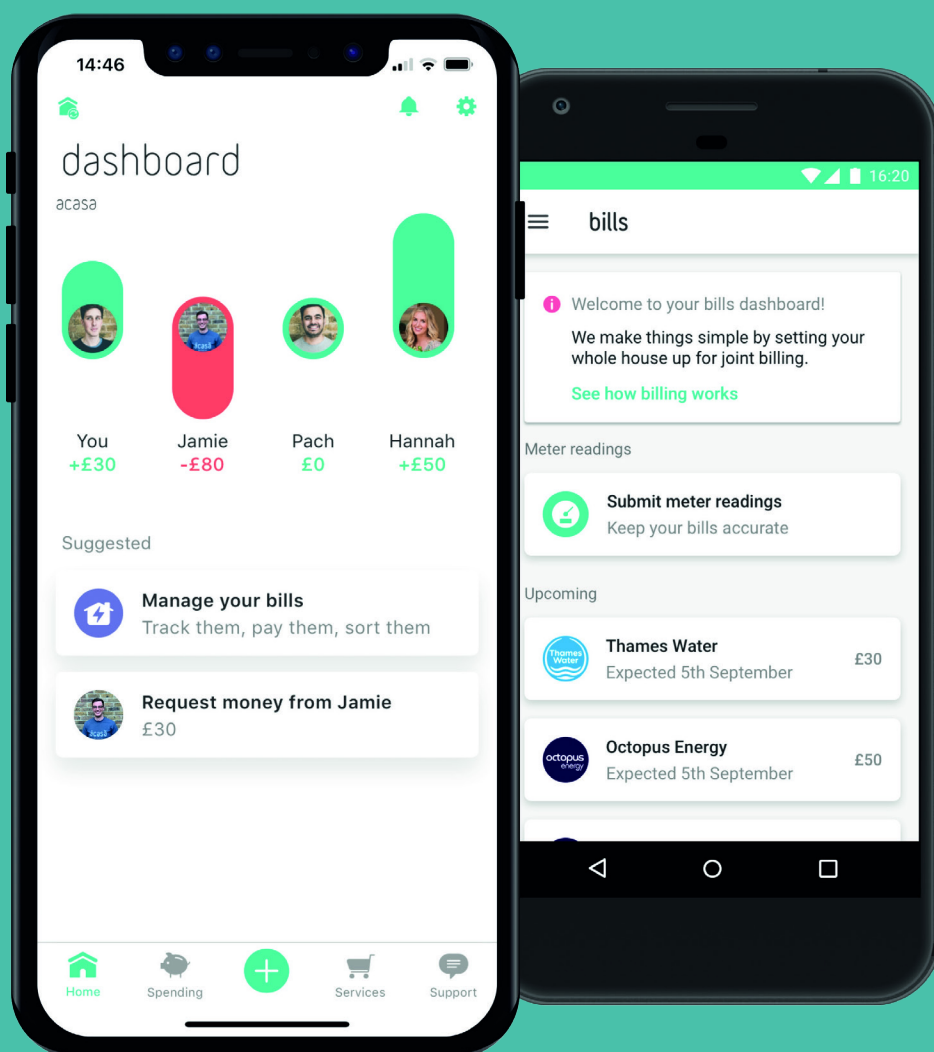
These classes are to be taught up to secondary school level with age-appropriate classes. How effective these initiatives are is something only time will tell. For now, it is imperative that as much as possible is done to eliminate sexual harassment.



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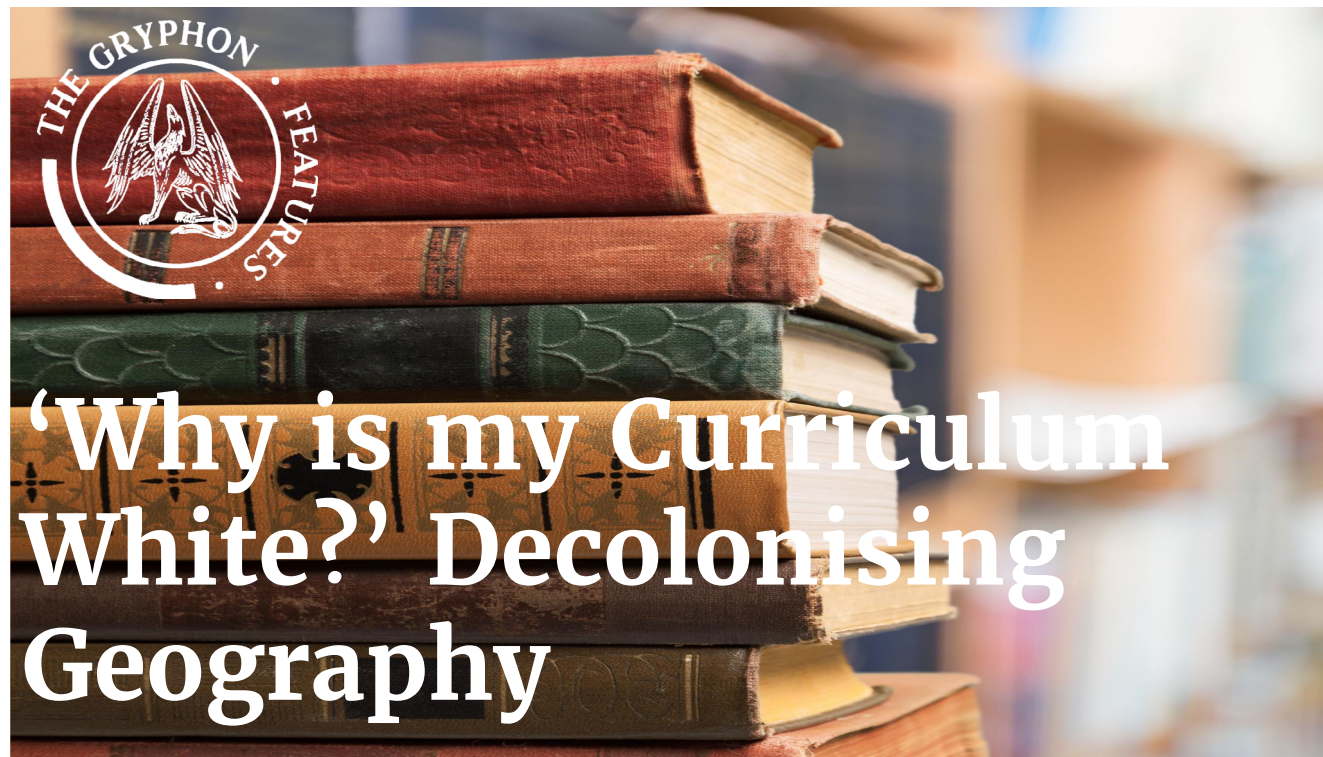
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**The Gryphon News Editors Eleanor Smith and Zahra Iqbal attended the Decolonising Geography Talk and, in this article, they outline some of the key discussions and insights from the event.**

**Eleanor Smith and Zahra Iqbal**  
News Editors

On Tuesday 5th February, a talk called ‘Why is my Curriculum White: Decolonising Geographies’ was held at the University and organised by final year Human Geography students Monisha Jackson, Olivia Andrews and Bothaina Tashani. The trio organised a panel of esteemed speakers to discuss how universities can be more accessible to BAME students and how reading lists and syllabuses should be diversified.

The evening aimed to highlight the ways in which Geography and other interdisciplinary departments focus on producing, reproducing and perpetuating Eurocentric knowledge and modes of teaching and how this can be overcome. The lecture hall was full, with hundreds of students eager to hear what the academics had to say and discover how they could get involved in this significant and long overdue change to their curriculum.

It was highlighted that the University of Leeds itself isn’t very diverse. Leeds was ranked the 11th whitest Russell Group University in a study conducted by HESA, with the percentage of white students reaching an estimated 81.88 per cent. The University of Leeds came under fire again when Monisha highlighted that Leeds is not a member of the Race Equality Charter, despite being a member of the Gender Equality Charter, nor does it have any connections with universities in the Caribbean or central African countries. Although the University of Leeds is currently reviewing its relationship with the Race Equality Charter, it was further highlighted that BAME authors are usually only on optional module reading lists and not represented on core modules.

The panel consisted of Dr. Laura Loyola-Hernandez (Lecturer in Human Geography at the University of Leeds), Dr. Patricia Noxolo (Human Geography Lecturer at the University of Birmingham) and Dr. Patricia Daley (Lecturer and researcher at the University of Oxford) as well as discussant Dr. Fozia Bora (Lecturer in Islamic studies and Middle-Eastern Studies at the University of Leeds).

To begin the talk, the speakers were asked about what decolonising meant to them.

Dr Daley started the discussion by suggesting that decolonisation is a political and intellectual process

that aims to destabilise asymmetrical power relations and that it is an individual collective process. Dr Bora proposed that it is key to create a decolonial classroom, something that she implements into her everyday teaching. Dr Noxolo suggested that it was vital to have a continuation of decolonisation and the indigenous voice. Dr Loyola-Hernandez suggested that there is a risk of decolonisation becoming the new ‘hot topic’, like intersectionalism. She explained how it is an everyday activity and that academics are perpetrating it.

Dr Daley expressed how she believes that we have to undergo a process of unlearning in order to combat this, as we are all part of Eurocentric structures. Therefore, as students and academics, we have to re-teach ourselves methods of learning in which we are not part of this. Dr Bora said that we, as students, need to carry out more dramatic acts of rejection. As fee-paying students, our opinions matter more than we think and if more students stand up and reject these structures, then universities are more likely to listen and adapt to what we see as important. Dr Noxolo, interestingly, countered the question, suggesting that we are tightly bound to lots of knowledge from various places through colonialism. For Dr Noxolo, progress is not about creating new knowledges but, instead, it is about not forgetting old ones. Dr Loyola-Hernandez’s response differed from that of the other speakers, as she recommended academics challenge what is acceptable in teaching, suggesting the use of music and other mediums as part of a collective effort.

The panel was challenged on how they think positionality and locality affect the decolonisation of the curriculum. Dr Bora brought up the point that minorities are a lot more visible in their subjectivity. For those that are white, straight, or a man, positionality isn’t questioned as they are considered ‘neutral’. But scholarship can never be neutral as everyone comes from some kind of positionality. Dr Noxolo extended Dr Bora’s point, suggesting that positionality is central to how we form knowledge. She gave an anecdote of her time at a conference where she observed Native American speakers. For them, knowledge is linked to identity and identity is linked to place so positionality is vital in their creation of knowledge. Dr Noxolo also mentioned the key fact that universities are located so knowledge is located

in the city that it is formed in. Dr Loyola-Hernandez revealed that her positionality is very important to her, as she refuses, as a Latina woman, to go to conferences in the USA as a political statement. She stressed the need for similar decolonised acts of resistance, like those of her own.

Following the prearranged questions, the floor was opened up to those in the audience. One student expressed her feeling of alienation when she entered her first history lecture and found herself to be the only black female student, prompting the panel to suggest ways to overcome future students feeling this way.

Dr Daley responded by agreeing that humanities subjects like History or Geography, in general, are alienating for BAME students when taught in schools. She suggested this could be overcome through engagement with black/brown communities in cities in less traditional venues, as university buildings can be intimidating. Dr Bora built on Dr Daley’s point, agreeing that there is a problem with the curriculum before university. For some communities, humanities can feel like luxury subjects, as students are more likely to enter vocational courses that have a direct impact on the community, such as medicine, law or dentistry.

The talk was rounded off with questions from Sheffield Hallam Student Union President, Abdullah Okud, and our own Student Union Education Officer, Serene Esuruoso, who both asked what we can do as students to help decolonise the curriculum.

The overall consensus from the panel was that we have a lot more power than we think. Dr Loyola-Hernandez suggested that to be academic and have an impact, you don’t necessarily need to be in an ‘academic space’, giving an example of the UCU strikes, which saw lectures held in other community facilities. Dr Noxolo stressed the importance of using available channels to feedback about things that matter. Universities nowadays are consumer-led so our voice and opinions matter. She suggested emailing heads of departments and highlighted the power of solidarity in numbers. Monisha, one of the organisers, agreed, revealing the amount of perseverance necessary to hold this discussion. The advice given was that all students should observe the representation on their reading lists and email their module co-ordinators and course reps. It was emphasised that when an issue arises students should complain and help their schools change and adapt their modules.

Speaking to a spokesperson from the University of Leeds after the talk, it was clear that members of staff were well aware of the institutional barriers which the four panelists had discussed. “We work hard to help everyone with the ability to succeed to access the University, and while we acknowledge that we have more work to do in terms of the diversity of our student population, we are pleased that the numbers of Home and EU BAME students have increased over the past four years. The University is committed to curriculum change based on the ‘Why is My Curriculum White?’ campaign and has developed a new post to address this.”

In addition to this comment, Dr Nina Wardleworth, Academic Lead (Student Success) said: “I am working closely with students and the LUU to bring together existing activity and to champion new diversity initiatives, which includes ensuring that BAME authors feature more centrally on curricula. I encourage students to complete the current LUU survey about diversity in the curriculum – <https://tinyurl.com/curriculumdiversity> – and also to contact me by email – [n.a.wardleworth@leeds.ac.uk](mailto:n.a.wardleworth@leeds.ac.uk).”





Image: The Telegraph

**Polly Hatcher**  
Newspaper Associate Editor

Students being strapped for cash is no shocking revelation, but what is surprising is that almost as many students turn to gambling, adult work or drug trials for money as to their university to ask for extra support. These findings came in the National Student Money Survey from 2018 and revealed that over four per cent of students turn to ‘adult work’ whilst at university in order to make ends meet. This umbrella term can encompass a range of different types of work, from having a sugar daddy to even selling images of your feet to a stranger on Instagram.

With extortionate university fees and rising living costs, many students see these jobs as a viable way to make money alongside their studies, as they are often flexible, allowing them to work on their own terms and around their university schedule.

By branding something as ‘sex work’, it can immediately lead to a negative discourse which is based on assumptions, facilitated by an absence of discussion. In order to offer a more personal view on these issues, I spoke to somebody who works as a webcam model to try and shed some light on the often stigmatised role. Nina\* has shared her experiences, explaining the ins and outs of the job, as well as discussing why there needs to be less stigma surrounding work like this.

A webcam model is a video performer who is streamed on a live broadcast to an audience made up of people who are paying to watch. Obviously, the clientele will have varying expectations so often different approaches are needed. On Nina’s site, everyone enters into a big chat room. While in this chatroom, you do not earn money, but from there people can choose to tip you or opt to enter into a private chat, for which they pay \$5 per minute.

So just how easy is it to become a webcam model? Nina says: “I saw an advert for the site that I work on and so I went on it a couple of times, just to see what it was like, as anybody can go on it. You have to be verified to make money though, so I just submitted all my information and it only took a day. It was so easy. All you had to do was send in some ID and a photo of yourself holding it to make sure you’re the same person, then a day later I just started doing it.”

For students who need cash, it can seem like a

quick fix to make some money without leaving your bedroom, but the money that you make can vary massively. “You could be on there for an hour and nobody will enter into a private chat or tip you, so you’re sat there not earning anything, or you could be on and make 100\$ in 20 minutes, so that can make it quite hard to motivate myself. When I cash out, the website takes 30% from my pay but that’s really low compared to some of the other sites which can take more than half.”

Negative perceptions often come from a place of misunderstanding and assuming that, as webcam modelling comes under the broader term of ‘selling yourself’, the job is degrading. But that’s not necessarily the case. “I’m never naked on camera and I make a good amount of money because I give what people call the ‘girlfriend experience’ – they want to sit there and have a conversation with you. The reason that the men are going on a webcam site is because they want an interaction with a real person, not just like porn. I’ve had a 45-minute conversation with someone and it was just a very normal chat, yet they’re paying \$5 per minute. Sometimes people just want you to watch them wank or talk dirty to them and that’s what I do, I don’t personally do anything sexual.”

Most people would assume that these sites are full of older men, who perhaps are lonely and have money to spare, but these thoughts are misconstrued. “I think people assume that it would be dirty old men but it’s probably like 50/50 between old and our age which I didn’t expect at all. It’s so interesting because you’ve got to occupy all the different interests and be quick at seeing what they want and make yourself be that. You’ve got to be astute at picking up what people want you to do.

“People do say weird things though. For example, I’ve had a guy tell me that he wanted me to go into a private chat with him and for me to say racial slurs, which seems to be a really common thing. I’ve had at least twenty people ask me to call them the n word or say racial slurs at them wherever they’re from, they just want me to demean and degrade them while they’re having a wank.

“There’s also this thing called CBT which someone asked me in the public chatroom if I would watch them do one on one. I then googled it and found out it was ‘Cock and Ball torture’, but by the time I realised

he had already put me in a private chat and started to get the cable ties out! It sounds bad but if people want me to watch something and I think it’s gross, like CBT or, quite often people shove things up their arses, I usually just look at the camera but have something else up on the screen. They still think I’m looking but if I don’t necessarily want to look at anything then I don’t have to.”

Back in 2015, the Student Sex Work Project at Swansea University revealed that five per cent of students had done some form of sex work, and a further 22 per cent had considered working in the industry. Evidently, sex work is prevalent within the student circle, yet conversations are often accompanied by a cloud of judgement. These negative perceptions mean that it can be hard to discuss publicly, which perpetuates this cycle of silence surrounding these issues. “Bad reactions come from a place of not knowing about it, and when friends have been judgemental obviously it’s coming from a place of worry. It’s not spoken about, so they only can go on assumptions. The stereotypical view is that people are so desperate that they turn to sex work and that’s just not the case for so many people. I’m not a full-time webcam model but some of the girls on the site treat it like a 9–5 job and can earn so much money. There is no element of necessity and they’re doing it because they want to, yet for some reason, people always talk about it like you’ve been forced to do it.

“I can report people to moderators, block them or kick them out of chats. I’m in complete control of everything I do and I think that’s what people don’t realise. I don’t have to answer to someone higher than me and I don’t have to do what anyone tells me. It’s all virtual so you’re never physically there with someone. When people get worried or say they could never do it, it’s usually because they haven’t taken the time to understand. If they sat down and talked with someone then they’d realise it’s completely different.”

To be successful in this realm of work, a lot of business skills are required that are fully transferable into the working world. However, it’s not really work experience that many employers would look favourably on if included in a CV. “Imagine if I was an online tutor and was having to schedule in times with people and ensuring I had the motivation to do it. Just because it’s translated into a context where you’re essentially selling yourself then it’s completely undermined and not valid for everyday work or life, as if it’s this whole secret you’re not supposed to talk about, as if it’s not as prevalent as it actually is.”

In September, Brighton University came under fire for having a stall offering support for sex workers. One of these comments came from The Sun, who stated that “freshers’ week stall gives students advice on ‘how to be a prostitute’” which, evidently isn’t true. While Leeds University Union has not yet offered support in this way, Nina stressed the importance of agency on the part of the students. She says: “I think that it’s really important to have an open dialogue. It’s not necessarily the University’s responsibility to provide support but I think that we should do more to be open about it and then it doesn’t need to be such a secretive thing. This stands for sex work in general – there needs to be more of a conversation. This has started recently with campaigns stating that sex work is valid work, but this needs to be done on a more personal level too. If you’re open about it then everyone else will feel more comfortable.”

With the cost of university rising, students turning to sex work is not going to stop. It’s time for the conversation to catch up.

*\*Names have been changed.*



# OnBeat for International Women's Day



**The Gryphon's Fashion Editor Elicka Ghahramani spoke with OnBeat, LUU's newest BME focused society, to learn how their passion drove the creation of the fastest growing society of the academic year.**

**Elicka Ghahramani**  
Fashion Editor

Three women who have become as much sisters as they are workmates are OnBeat's founders, Tanya, Ayesha and Alisha. The trio have used the vibrancy of their friendship to fuel the zest behind the zine, generating a buzz on campus within just a few months of its creation. In 2018, OnBeat was still a skeleton of an idea for something that had the potential to become a strong new platform for BME creatives, but what it needed was the right people to manage the project.

"I had the idea for OnBeat around Christmas 2017" says Ayesha, currently in her second year studying International Relations. "When I joined the University last year, I realised that I wanted to create a new space for women of colour in Leeds, because I didn't think a sufficient space already existed." Initially, Ayesha found it hard to find others who were as dedicated to turning OnBeat from a passing thought to a solid platform until, by chance, she found Tanya and Alisha. "I spent some time posting on different Facebook groups, trying to find anyone who would want to start this with me, and eventually I found Tanya," a fellow second year and a Politics and Sociology student. "The team has changed loads; there were a few people who got involved at the start who we don't even really know anymore," Tanya says, amused. "Yeah you quickly figure out who's really about it," Ayesha adds.

A few months later, at a poetry reading organised by a mutual friend, Tanya met Alisha, who is in her final year of studying English and Theology. The two clicked from the onset and Tanya immediately knew that they had met their third co-founder. "We went for a drink and ended up just chatting for hours, and

afterwards I called Ayesha all excited saying that I'd found someone who I thought would be the perfect addition to OnBeat." The three quickly became a close-knit team, matching each other equally on commitment, motivation and vision.

The next main step was defining the type of platform they wanted OnBeat to be. "I didn't want to create a space where we exclusively ask women of colour to write about their racial struggles, or what they've been through," Ayesha tells us. "We want our writers to understand that they can write about whatever they want: if you want to write about music then write about music, or fashion, or politics. It's just the fact that it's by a woman of colour and it's a whole space just for us."

We then move onto discussing the significant moments each founder had experienced while growing up, which made them realise that OnBeat was an essential addition to the University. "I've always loved writing, from having my own blog to being the editor of my secondary school paper, but a lot of my articles were BME focussed and I couldn't find the right space to put them in. I grew up in an extremely white area, and I felt like I was the only BME person I knew, so writing spaces always felt like they were dominated by white people, and that's where the necessity for OnBeat came from, for me."

Ayesha nodded her head in agreement, stating, "I never really had the chance to explore my culture while growing up. My parents, through no fault of their own, wanted us to assimilate as much as we could, and no one wanted to be the 'brown girl who smells like curry' in a white, middle-class area. Later, when I came to university, I saw that my situation was much the same, and I remember feeling really isolated by it. I would cook my food in first year and

my flatmates would kind of make fun of it, asking me why it smells strange and why I do things a certain way, and I started to feel really uncomfortable. I quickly realised that these were not the people I wanted to surround myself with." As with all topics so far, signifying the unity of their bond, Alisha's feelings are much the same. "For me too, I also felt like my parents wanted us to assimilate, and when I'd tell them about creative projects such as this they'd say something like 'yeah that's a great hobby, but you should probably invest your time into something more stable', and it was this whole idea that if you were a creative woman of colour, who placed your focus on celebrating women of colour, it was going to be hard for you to have your work recognised because women of colour's space was an unstable platform."

Drive and motivation was one thing needed to make OnBeat the success it has become, and these three clearly have it in bucket loads. But another key factor to creating a successful new society was the willingness to sacrifice. They each had to give up huge chunks of their free time to get OnBeat off the ground, and they also confessed to sometimes prioritising it over their university work, especially around the time of their magazine launch. "It's something we've gotten better at though," Alisha tells us, "we've learned that we can't do that and sometimes when we each have our thing to do we have to just be frank and say no, I can't do that this week, I have other commitments. It's about finding a better balance this semester."

As well as the OnBeat magazine launching at the end of first semester, they have been managing a number of other creative projects. They have started the OnBeat radio show hosted by Alisha, which is now collaborating with Social Radio Leeds, as well as holding a number of creative workshops. They have also recently won the opportunity to run a workshop taught by Paula Akpan, the founding director of Black Girl Festival, who will lead two workshops: one on personal growth and the other as a Q&A on being your most authentic self. The workshops will be open to all OnBeat members and are scheduled to take place around mid-March.

After the workshops they have decided that they will shift their focus to getting a website together so that they can publish all of the articles that couldn't make it into the print edition of OnBeat. "We had so many articles left over and we still have so many people now pitching articles to us, we just don't have anywhere to put them yet," Alisha tells us. "A website would be the most financially viable way to get everyone's work out there, but we want a site that's cohesive to the brand, and for that we need the right person to design it, which is what we are currently looking for."

When asked what their standout moments since creating OnBeat have been, they all smile at one another and in unanimity agree that it has been the chance to bring together isolated women of colour at the University. "One thing that makes us all so happy is that through our events there are a lot of freshers who have found friendships through OnBeat, and have access to a direct platform to meet people who understand their position and their culture. It means that first years hopefully won't have to experience the same loneliness or isolation I felt."

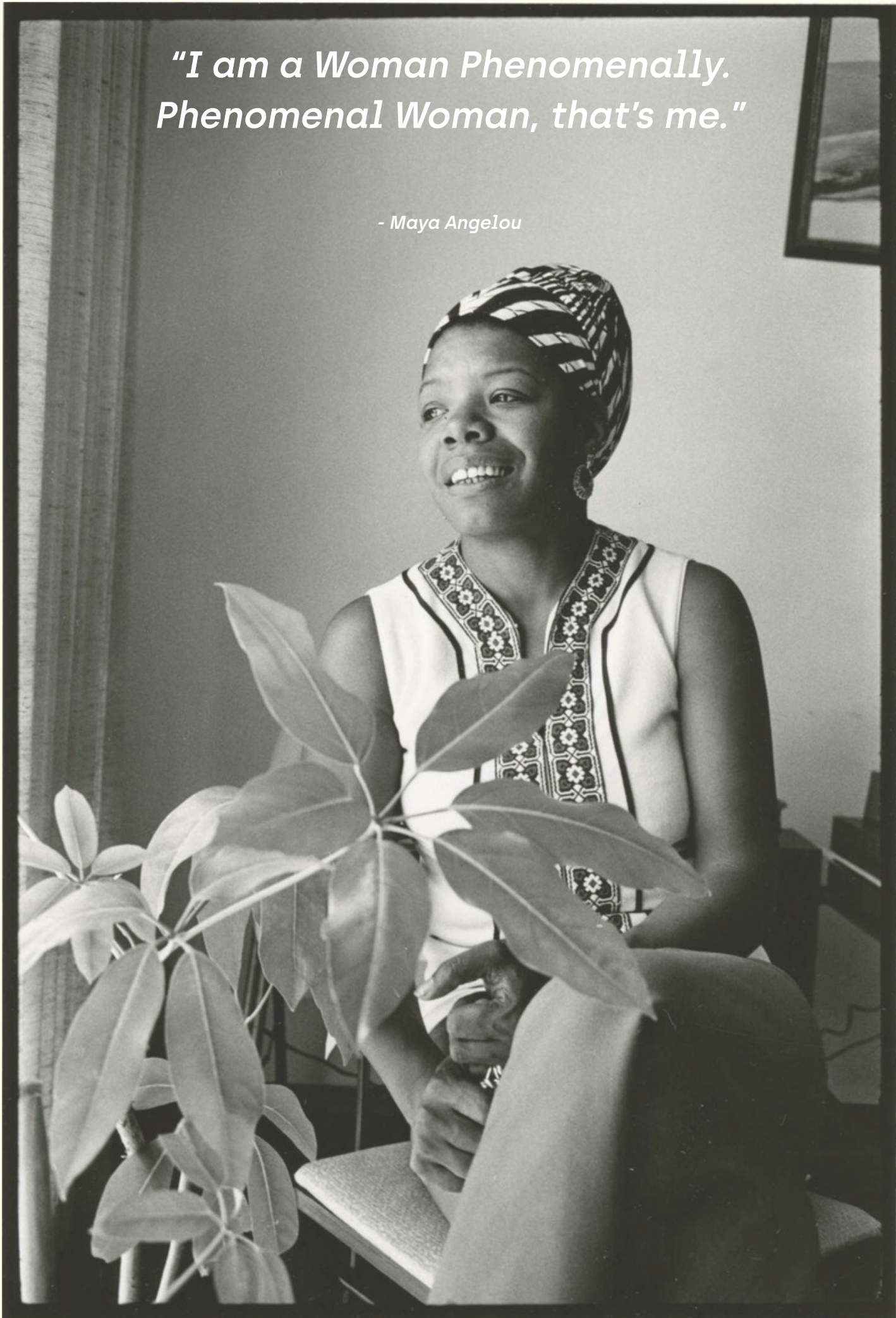
Within a matter of months, these three women have turned OnBeat from a brilliant idea into a resilient brand, and if their first semester as an official new society was any indicator to go by, the future of OnBeat is as big and vibrant as the brand itself.



# In the Middle

*"I am a Woman Phenomenally.  
Phenomenal Woman, that's me."*

*- Maya Angelou*



Music • Clubs • Fashion • Arts • Lifestyle and Culture • Blogs

## Issue 10

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# Credits

## Editor-in-Chief

Robbie Cairns  
editor@thegryphon.co.uk

## In the Middle Associate

Meg Firth  
inthemiddle@thegryphon.co.uk

## Art Director

Nat Baker



## Music

music@thegryphon.co.uk

Kieran Blyth  
Mikhail Hanafi  
Ellie Montgomery  
Jenny Pudney



## Clubs

clubs@thegryphon.co.uk

James Dewar  
Caris Dollard



## Fashion

gryphon.fashion.leedsstudent@gmail.com

Christy Bucklow  
Victoria Copeland  
Izzie Ghaffari-Parker  
Elicka Ghahramani  
Meg Painter



## Arts

arts@thegryphon.co.uk

Stephanie Bennett  
Katherine Corcoran  
Rhiannon Skye-Boden  
Hannah Stokes



## Lifestyle & Culture

lifestyle.leedsstudent@gmail.com

Charlie Green  
Caitlin Tilley  
Jade Verbick  
Mary Yeh



## Blogs

blogs@thegryphon.co.uk

Emily Merrill  
Rosie Plummer

## Brushwork

Megan Chown

## Design

Nat Baker

## Front Cover

Maya Angelou photographed by  
Jill Krementz

## Back Cover

The Phoenix Partnership



# Contents



## Music

- 5** Women to Watch in 2019
- 7** Gig Round-up and New Releases



## Clubs

- 8** Jayda G: Queen of the Dance Floor
- 9** In the Middle with Aquamae



## Fashion

- 11** Leeds RAG Fashion Show 2019:  
In Review
- 12** A Love Letter to Modern  
Femininity



## Arts

- 14** Why we Need More Women like  
Emma Thompson
- 16** Spotlight on: Women in Art



## Lifestyle & Culture

- 19** Going Beyond Performative  
Feminism
- 20** Breaking the Glass Screen: Women  
Pushing the Media Boundaries



## Blogs

- 22** The Female Empowerment Bloggers  
You Should be Following
- 23** Power Within Pages: Women in  
Literature

Twitter

@ITM\_Gryphon

Instagram

@inthemiddle\_gryphon

# A Star is Born: Lady Gaga Shines at the Oscars



Image: E!News

**As award season draws to a close, time calls for an obligatory reflection on the deserving winners, the graceful runners-up and the occasional sore loser. Although usually a charade of winners being rewarded for past contributions to cinema and the same few films predictably taking the majority of the awards, this year's award ceremonies tended to defy convention - and female achievement took centre stage.**

4

In a stark contrast to previous years of celebrity boycotting and all-too-visible whitewashing, this year at the Oscars, Netflix originals as well as the predominantly black cast of *Black Panther* were refreshingly nominated in many major categories. It seems that the establishment is beginning to critique and review those deserving of recognition beyond the same, tired faces of Hollywood.

A particularly exceptional moment of this year's award season came in the form of Lady Gaga's success. While Bradley Cooper may have been shunned for his directorial debut, a remake of the Hollywood classic *A Star is Born*, Lady Gaga's involvement with the soundtrack drastically outshined Cooper's contributions.

Gaga's digital chart-topping single from the film, 'Shallow', not only swept the charts, but joyously remained in our heads for weeks on end. Collecting an award at all five major ceremonies, it won Best Song, or the equivalent, at the BAFTA's, Oscars, Golden Globes and Critics Choice Awards, and it also grabbed a Grammy for Best Song Written for Visual Media. Lady Gaga is the first person to have ever accomplished this incredible achievement.

Lady Gaga is no stranger to the success of awards, having amassed a huge amount across her musical and acting career. Her astonishing ability to have major mainstream success across several fields of artistry is a true credit to her talent. While her success this year is no surprise, her shudderingly emotional songs and performances continually inspire women across the globe.

Fiercely committed, in her Oscar speech she explained that "all I have to say is that this is hard

work. I've worked hard for a long time, and it's not about, you know...it's not about winning. But what it's about is not giving up. If you have a dream, fight for it. There's a discipline for passion." This sentiment, as well as demonstrating Gaga's method of success, taps into her position as a figure of female empowerment. Proving that no dream is too big and no contribution is too small, Lady Gaga signals a movement towards the sole celebration of female achievement, independent from their male peers.

Collecting all five major awards in one season is a momentous achievement not only for Lady Gaga, but also for an industry that has been plagued with the disruption of inequality in so many disciplines. From the necessity of the #MeToo movement to the snubbing of females in major award categories, the celebration of female achievement independent from their male peers is still drastically lacking in Hollywood. For example, it was only recently that Greta Gerwig become the first woman to ever win the award for Best Director at the Oscars. It is sometimes baffling to see an industry so saturated with women, where the fantastic work of countless women isn't recognised to the full extent of its brilliance.

Lady Gaga is one of the many women whose achievements are remedy to the institutionalised misogyny of the music and film industries. In her award recognition, we can begin to recognise a positive shift in Hollywood and beyond. Let us all be empowered to see a woman accomplish the unaccomplished and hopefully look towards a movement of equality in the arts.

**Jessica McCarrick**



# Women to Watch in 2019

In celebration of International Women's Day, Jennifer Hyman discusses a few of the upcoming and outstanding female musical artists to watch out for in 2019.



## Emily Burns

If you're a fan of electronic pop then look no further than Emily Burns. Burns accompanies sassy and clever lyrics with vocal samples and songs that are perfect to dance along to. In 2018, she released her debut, a collection of seven songs titled *Seven Scenes from the Same Summer*, which amassed more than 15 million streams. Last month, she released her latest single 'Too Cool', and she is set to embark on her first solo UK tour this year - you can also catch her performing in Leeds on 21st March at Hyde Park Book Club.

## Lauren Aquilina

After opening for Taylor Swift on her 1989 tour, Aquilina released her debut album on Island Records in 2016. Shortly after, however, she suffered heavily with depression and put her performing career to one side. Spending a few years out of the limelight focussing on songwriting, she recently decided to return to performing and released single, 'If Looks Could Kill'. A pop number with a gritty undertone, it has over 200,00 streams on Spotify and is a clear sign that this is just the beginning for Aquilina's return.



## Poppy Ajudha

Hailing from South East London, Ajudha is a singer-songwriter whose style incorporates a blend of soulful jazz and funk. Last year, she featured on Tom Misch's album *Geography* and received airplay on BBC Radio 6 with Gilles Peterson - she also featured on *Brownswood Bubbblers*, a compilation album championing new artists that was released under Peterson's label, Brownswood. In December 2018, Ajudha released an EP titled *Patience* and this year is sure to bring more opportunities for the emerging artist. Ajudha is performing in Leeds at Headrow House on 29th March.

## HAAi

HAAi is a DJ with a difference. Focusing on crafting music that evolves gradually, rather than offering a quick release into the full arrangement of the song, her music offers a unique experience for listeners. She released her first solo release in 2017 and became a resident DJ at Phonox in London. On March 1st, she announced a residency on BBC Radio 1 and she has also recently announced several upcoming festival appearances around Europe. This signals just the beginning for the incredibly unique DJ.



## Beija Flo

Based in Liverpool, Beija Flo is still a relatively new name in the music scene but one that is starting to garner quite an impressive reputation. Her music combines electronic and rock sounds to create a captivating blend. The latest of her two releases, 'Mary', is particularly haunting and seductive in equal measure. Having released only two tracks so far, this artist has so much more to offer.

## Grace Carter

Beginning to make waves in the music scene from the release of her debut single, 'Silence', back in 2017, Carter went on to support Dua Lipa on her European tour. She also collaborated on her second album with producer Mike Dean who has worked with the likes of Kanye West, Beyoncé and Frank Ocean. In 2018, Carter released her first EP, *Saving Grace*, and began 2019 with her latest single, 'Heal Me'. 'Heal Me' offers a catchy yet emotionally driven number, stating "I'm not waiting for you to cure, you to heal me." Having already established herself as a soulful pop artist with a growing fan base, Carter looks set to go from strength to strength in the upcoming year.





# Ariana Grande isn't Exploiting the LGBTQ+ Community, Manchester Pride is

Last week, Ariana Grande came under fire after it was announced she would be headlining this year's Manchester Pride. It does, on the surface, seem to be a perfect fit; Grande has had a connection with the city since the tragic night her Manchester concert was attacked by a suicide bomber, killing 22, and from the star-studded charity concert she held afterwards. Beyond her connection with the city, the pop star also has a sizeable LGBTQ+ fanbase, heralded a "gay icon" by many.

Grande follows in the footsteps of the pop divas of old, putting out pop bangers in a moody, post-Lorde era of pop music. These divas and their unabashed expressions of femininity have always been embraced by mainstream gay men's culture; Jesser St. John, an openly-gay singer-songwriter, said in an online podcast that "these women who express that divine femininity that we are supposed to be ashamed of, that's why we latch onto it."

But because it's 2019 and things like this inevitably happen, it didn't take long for the backlash to begin.

Grande, a straight woman, was accused of exploiting the gay community for personal gain. This backlash has merit; what message does it send to have the top billing at Pride, an event meant to celebrate the LGBTQ+ community, occupied by a cisgender straight woman? We're in the tail end of the 2010s, and the progress we have made as a society means that there are an abundance of LGBTQ+ artists who could have been given top billing.

The issue is made more difficult by Pride's weekend ticket prices. Last year, a ticket which covered the whole weekend's events cost £28; this year, they cost £64.90 at minimum, going up to £74.50 at final release, representing a more than doubling of ticket prices. Some have argued that this constitutes an economic exploitation of LGBTQ+ fans on Grande's part.

Yet it is hard for me to fully lay blame at Grande's feet. She responded to these criticisms through a note on Twitter, saying that she intended to "celebrate [the LGBTQ+] community, regardless of my identity or how people label me."

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NICKY SIANO'S HALLELUJAH DISCO

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Image: Manchester Pride



Image: Getty Images

"lgbtq representation is incredibly important, and I'm always proud to share the stage with lgbtq artists!" she added. On the issue of ticket prices, Grande argued that "manchester pride sets those rates, and they're mostly out of my control."

Choosing such a big headliner also runs the risk of marginalising LGBTQ+ people at an event meant to celebrate them. As more straight people participate in Pride, the more LGBTQ+ people feel uncomfortable. After all, the most vulnerable among the community still face significant rejection amongst the general cis-hetero population; the 2018 British Attitudes Survey found that only 4 in 10 Britons were fully comfortable with a trans person working as a police officer or school teacher. Manchester Pride's choice to have grande Grande headline seems like an attempt not to cater to LGBTQ+ people, but to increase ticket sales across all demographics.

And therein lies the problem: Manchester Pride. Over the past few years, the LGBTQ+ community in the UK has been raising concerns about the corporatisation of LGBTQ+ Pride events across the UK. Manchester Pride is promoted like any other big party, with LGBTQ+ motifs feeling like theming. It has, essentially, become another celebration for straight people to wear rainbow colours to and get drunk at.

With corporate sponsors rolling in - nearly every Pride event in the UK seems to have the big banks partaking in the parades - Pride events have lost their radical spark. They are safe, sanitised, and do not challenge the cis and heteronormative structures which still govern our society. LGBTQ+ youth are still more likely to experience homelessness than their cis, straight counterparts, whilst trans individuals are more likely to have experienced domestic abuse.

Manchester Pride's website lists its mission statement as follows: "Manchester Pride campaigns for LGBT+ equality; celebrates LGBT+ life and creates opportunities that engage LGBT+ people so that they can thrive." Yet their 2019 ticket prices and the choices they have made in running Pride events the past few years has made Pride less about the community and more about the money, pricing the community out of their own events.

This commercialisation of Pride has robbed it of all meaning it had left. It is why I cannot blame Grande here; she means well, and is trying to support her LGBTQ+ fans, though her efforts are myopic. The root of the problem is Pride itself, and is one we would do well to address.

Mikhail Hanafi



# Gig Round-Up

## Jay Prince

Belgrave Music Hall,  
01/03



The 'Wonder Tour' seems an incredibly fitting name for Jay Prince's run of shows this year, as indeed that is the emotion much of the audience seemed to feel; even before the rapper took to the stage, the energy in the upstairs room of Belgrave was unmistakable. "We're here to vibe with you tonight," he declared. Clean rapping over ethereal, dreamy music is a staple of *WONDER*'s aesthetic and Prince did not disappoint by aweing the crowd with tracks 'BEAMLIGHT' and 'LUV ME'.

Whipping out a guitar at times for soulful noodly solos, which gained no less appreciation than his measured rap style and groovy beats, Prince seemed

genuinely glad to be up onstage. Expressing his appreciation for his fans, at times he completely abandoned the music to engage the audience with his thoughts on his musical process and how *WONDER* had helped him to grow as a person.

Hushing the crowd with the aid of his DJ, ChuckieOnline, Prince hunched over a tiny keyboard for something entirely new, to serenade us with a tune unfamiliar at first - that is, until he called out "It's that bump it's that funk, it's that thing that make you jump" and it became apparent that this was a rendition of his immensely popular 2015 hit, 'Polaroids'. At this point, the music and lights kicked back in at full force, accompanied by an overwhelming response of dancing and cheering.

This was followed up with an incredibly high-energy performance of Prince's most popular songs, 'In The Morning' and 'Father, Father', both showcasing his ability to work a crowd, with nearly every person in attendance bellowing the catchy hooks.

The evening was rounded off with an encore of his collaborative hit with singer Mahalia, 'I Believe In You', an earnestly feel-good sing-along that left a feeling of wonder as the lights dimmed.

Fern McErlane

## The Lemon Twigs

Stylus,  
01/03

Lemon Twigs, led by brothers Michael and Brian D'Addario, arrived as something that, on the surface, was fresh. Dig a little deeper though and you'll see a 70s-style rock band - but man are they a great 70s-style rock band. Think exciting chord progressions, banging solos, catchy tunes that do not feel formulaic or processed. Their debut album, *Do Hollywood*, was one of my favourite new albums to come out of the past few years. It got praise from the likes of Elton John amongst others and the band subsequently shot to fame on the late-night television circuit in the US. It didn't take long for them to get a good following over here. *Go to School*, their second album, released in July last year - about a musical monkey that goes to school - was a drop in form, but still, a solid album. They supported Arctic Monkeys on their Tranquility Base Hotel & Casino tour. Everything for them is going fantastically. And I am glad about that. Which means that my criticism of their Leeds gig comes with a heavy heart.

The Stylus gig left a lot to be desired, sadly. I felt awkward at parts, uncomfortable at others. The first clue was the outfits with the whole band looking like they were playing dress up with their dads' clothes from the 70s. Glam rock does not suit them. Or maybe it does, and I just do not like glam rock. There was no parallel to the earlier garms which seemed to present the band's essence as genuine; a focus on music and the songs and not the played-out persona.

It reached its limit about three-quarters of the way through the show with lead singer Michael telling an interrupted five-minute monologue about giving the guy who created The Muppets a blowie at a gas station for money and then proceeding to put a red plastic bag round his face. In that moment, I realised what the problem was. At earlier gigs, and on the terrific Jools Holland appearance they recently made, Brian led. Michael's showmanship ego might be stronger, but his vocals are not - plus the ego is just kind of annoying. It ruined the experience of witnessing one of the best new rock bands to emerge from the last few years. If they swap back, ditch the diva a little bit, they will be right on track. I am crossing my fingers for you Lemon Twigs. No more plastic bags, please.

Christopher Tobin

# New Releases

## Solange - When I Get Home



With names such as Pharrell Williams, Gucci Mane, Dev Hynes, Steve Lacy and Playboi Carti on the billing, Solange's fourth album boasts an impressive list of collaborators - a list striking enough to catch most people's attention. With one track using Tyler, the Creator, Sampha and Panda Bear (from Animal Collective) as backing singers, amongst others, it might be easy to question the album's self-sufficiency. After just one listen, however, it becomes clear that this is not the case. Knowles has written, executive produced and performed the entire album - something very rarely seen in the music landscape today.

The album is undoubtedly something that should be listened to as a whole, as it shines more as an art piece than a collection of songs. The interludes weave between the tracks, creating a blissful musical mist, perhaps sometimes taking away from the significance of the lyrics that Knowles has written. *When I Get Home* requires close attention, or else

you might just find yourself lost in a sea of jazzy chords, smooth vocals and slow, sporadic rhythms.

'Almeda' is certainly a standout. Named after an area in Southwest Houston and drawing on the traditions of her Southern, black roots, Solange demonstrates immense pride in black culture by listing solely African-American attributes. A personal favourite is 'Binz', which features The-Dream, as well as Panda Bear. The tune provides light relief from the overall haze of the album, pointing a spotlight on the lyrics and using a faster tempo that might be likened to coming up for air.

Without subsiding to the cliché of comparing successful siblings in the same industry, it is definitely important to note that Solange has established herself as an entirely separate musical entity. *When I Get Home* only further confirms that, when it comes to their art, she and her sister (Beyonce Knowles) are very much different.

Charlotte Bresh





# Jayda G: Queen of the Dance Floor

**Canadian Royalty Jayda G took to the decks at Wire on the 9th February, to create an all-night party.**

As she continues to establish herself as a world-renowned DJ and producer, Disco-House Queen Jayda G is nothing short of Canadian royalty. The past two years have seen her firmly secure a position on the dance music scene, epitomised by her 2017 Boiler Room set at Dekmantel Festival, where she played her defining combination of soul, disco and classic house whilst dancing like nobody was watching.

During this time, she has also been responsible, alongside DJ Fett Burger, for the label Freakout Cult, which adorns an array of original tracks and some of her own classics. Producing music has undoubtedly enabled Jayda to stay true to her own taste and style. When she isn't dancing behind the decks, she is studying for her PhD in Environmental Toxicology, which begs the question: is there anything this woman (or perhaps Goddess) cannot do?

On a cold Saturday in February, Jayda used the intimate setting of Wire to prove she knows how to party and the crowd definitely agreed, feeding off her energy and having the time of their lives. Mixmag have described her sets as euphoric, bringing "soul and disco back to the dancefloor," and in the smoke-filled brick basement of Wire, this is exactly what she did. In the same Mixmag feature, she continues to describe how important the

audience is to her as a DJ and this care was evident throughout the night: **"It's about connecting with the audience, about creating a positive vibe. I want people to be happy, to let go of their worries so they can be themselves."**

The start of her set saw Jayda focus more on the classic house end of her repertoire, fitting perfectly with the time of the night. As people crept down the stairs of the club, they immediately began to settle into the night ahead, getting into the mood by soaking up the energy she expelled. But as the night continued, Jayda moved flawlessly towards the disco end of the spectrum, relaying iconic tunes from 'Got To Be Real' by Cheryl Lynn to 'Ain't Nothin' But A Party' by A Taste Of Honey to The Patchouli Brothers' hit 'Magic Rhythm'. She kept topping each track with an even better one, feeding the crowd exactly what they wanted, creating a bittersweet feeling at the thought of the night coming to an end.

It is important to note the intersectional position Jayda G is in as a black woman who takes to the decks. With the representation of women, and especially black women, so limited in the industry, Jayda places herself (perhaps unknowingly) as a role model for black women who are aspiring DJs. Her position tells these women that it is possible to pursue a love of music whether that is through performing or producing, and that such representation is essential in contemporary DJ culture which is persistently white-male dominated.



Jayda G is undoubtedly one of my favourite DJs that I have seen in Leeds. The care that she shows for the enjoyment of her audience radiates through her sets and leaves everyone wanting more. Maybe this is just wishful thinking, but following her appearance with Hunee at Mint Warehouse in October and now her solo set in Wire, I have no doubt that she will make her return to Leeds to continue the party very soon.

Laura McDermott

## Who to Watch: 2019

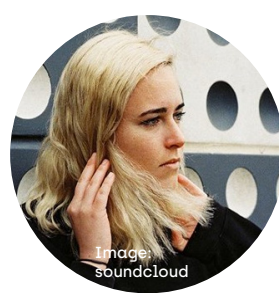
**In a notoriously male-dominated industry, this International Women's Day we're celebrating four female DJs who have not only been killing it with their unbelievable talent but are going to keep turning heads this year.**



CARISTA

A Dutch-Surinamese DJ, Carista is an innovative female artist, whose music doesn't really fit into one box. Her sets are diverse, ranging from hip-hop, to house, to disco, and everything in between. This mixed taste was nurtured by her diverse musical surroundings growing up in The Netherlands.

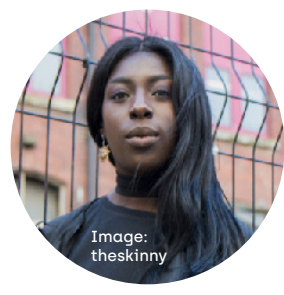
She is quickly becoming one of the region's fastest-rising DJs. You can catch her frequently across renowned Dutch clubs, such as De School in Amsterdam. But it was her triumphant Dekmantel set this year which arguably gave her the biggest push onto an international stage. Her diverse, fun and soulful sound has earned her recognition in and outside the Dutch borders and is without a doubt going to grant her continual and ceaseless success this year.



ROZA TERENZI

Few have made a bigger breakthrough this year than Australian artist Roza Terenzi. Her father, a reggae drummer and electronic music producer, spurred her interest in dance music and, after years of experimenting and fine tuning her style, she came to the surface in Australia in 2016, earning herself a resident DJ spot at Lounge – one of the most prominent clubs in the city. She has supported the likes of Avalon Emerson and Objekt and, after being introduced to D. Tiffany, the two collaborated to successfully create *Planet Euphorique*.

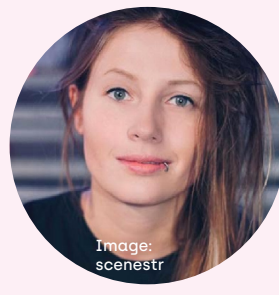
From a Perth music fanatic, to a Melbourne scene figurehead, to a female artist who is now rapidly becoming one of the most exciting DJs and producers in the warehouse scene.



ANZ

Manchester DJ and grime producer, Anz, has been smashing it this year with her music, and is someone we should be excited for in 2019. Combining her producer credentials and musical expertise, Anz sets are full of high energy and vibrant steel percussion blended with bassline, synth-work, half-time 808s, and grime minimalism.

After the release of her self-titled debut EP in the summer of 2017, her success has been boundless. She is quickly becoming revered in the music world, highlighted by her 2018 invitation to the Boiler Room. You can find her playing in Manchester at venues like Soup Kitchen and you can also hear her monthly on the Saturday night NTS radio show. She played at Wharf Chambers back in January, so hopefully she'll return soon.



CHARLOTTE DE WITTE

Initially entering the DJ world under the male alias 'Raving George', Belgian DJ Charlotte de Witte is relatively fresh on the scene. She spent years playing as her male alter ego to avoid the stereotypical expectations of a female techno DJ: "I was so young, and still very insecure," she says. "I didn't want to shout about the fact I was a female producer until people had booked me."

Just over two years ago, she began using her birth name and a fast-paced trajectory followed. Her trademark sound - headstrong, intense and uncompromising techno - secured her an essential mix debut on BBC Radio 1, a passage at Boiler room, and even the cover of DJ MAG. She's an artist whose story represents that being female is something to embrace and celebrate.

Tasha Ratti



# In the Middle with Aquamae

Stepping up to the decks with a saxophone in hand, DJ Hannah-Mae Birtwell is an exciting presence on the Leeds music scene. We asked her about what its like as a female DJ and her plans for the future.

**What inspired you to first pick up a pair of headphones and try your skills on the decks?**

Lots of different things really. Before coming to Leeds to study jazz, I'd always been interested in such a wide genre of music. My parents had a big influence on what I listened to and would often lend me their CDs and records; so I grew up listening to anything from Fleetwood Mac to Stan Getz. It was Disco music that actually got me interested in mixing myself. When I came to study at Leeds College of Music, lots of my friends who were often on the production course would set up their decks in my first year kitchen flat. I remember being so interested and excited by it, and would always watch them mixing. But, it was all so overwhelming as I knew so little about music technology then and had no idea what everything did. I also didn't know any female DJs on the scene then either so it took me a while to actually play with the idea of starting to learn myself and get the confidence to have a go.

**You studied the Jazz Saxophone at Leeds College of Music; so how was the change onto the DJ scene at the beginning? Do you like combining the two?**

Very different! I loved studying jazz at LCoM; it definitely gave me a great basis to start experimenting with DJing as I feel like my tempo and sense of rhythm was pretty solid even before I began mixing. I started playing the saxophone alongside DJs around Leeds in my second year of college, but it wasn't until my third year that I actually tried DJing myself. I learnt a lot being around DJs for two years and picked up more than I thought when playing the saxophone alongside them. I love combining the two! The excitement of mixing a tune and then picking up my sax to play a solo over the top is so fun. No one really expects it to happen, especially if they haven't heard me play before, so I especially love seeing their reactions!

**Have you found it particularly hard and intimidating or has everyone been quite welcoming?**

I've got a really supportive group of friends who come to my gigs (especially at the beginning) and spur me on, and I'm really lucky to have them. I've also met so many fellow DJs who have been really generous and shared their knowledge. For example, the 'LCoM Rotation' DJ society gave me my first proper public gig on a club set up, and I remember being so nervous. Even though it was just in the college bar, it was the first time I'd ever played out to people. They were so supportive and helped me set up and answered any questions I had. They would also be at hand if ever anything went wrong in my first couple of sets. I've always been grateful for that, as it gave me the confidence and basis to start attending open deck nights around the city myself and start connecting with a wider audience. I have had a lot of people tell me how 'difficult' it's going to be to get DJ gigs and get noticed. But like it is with everything else; nothing in life is just given to you! If you have a real passion for something and a positive attitude, there's no reason why anything should stop you!

**What's it like being a female DJ in a male-heavy dominated industry?**

It has its pros and cons. Often, when I tell people I'm a working musician, their first question is mostly always, "so



are you a singer?". I didn't really think about the whole 'female dj' thing until I started getting gigs. Obviously, I knew I was in a minority group, but I started mixing purely because I was so interested in it. After gigs, some people congratulate me on my sets and talk about my mixes/playing etc. without even mentioning my gender. Whereas others would do the same, but then add that little statement on the end "but I guess it helps you to get gigs being female." Any big gigs I've got, I've had to send in mixes and provide footage of me playing at previous events, so when I hear this after someone compliments my mixing, it kind of makes everything that person has said to me previously meaningless in a way, which is a shame. No one has ever hired me or asked me to gig purely on my appearance. I think that goes to show that yes, appearance does have an influence on artists being chosen for events, but that alone can't get them gigs. Ultimately, it's practise, determination and drive that get you places. Also, being a nice person and always being pleasant and thankful goes a long way.

**In Leeds especially, how do you feel the representation in the scene is? Do you think it's quite diverse and equal or still quite limited and could be improved?**

Even though there's definitely fewer female DJs about, I'd say the Leeds scene is doing a pretty ace job of changing that. 'Equaliser' is definitely a big part of that, they're a group of kick ass female DJs who provide free workshops for cis women, trans women, non-binary and trans people. It was in one of their workshops that I had a try at vinyl mixing which was a really special moment for me, and I'm really thankful for the opportunity. They give workshops for all abilities and are so supportive and encouraging. 'Girl Gang' are also a really cool collective of female DJs who also encourage and support the work of women and non-binary people in Leeds. I'd thoroughly recommend anyone wanting to start out to hit both of them up! They put all sorts on; learning how to mix, open deck nights, talks from inspiring women. There's always room for improvement but the more people that know about ace collective's like this, the quicker things will start changing.

**You're just starting out your DJing career. How is that process going, starting off as a female DJ in Leeds?**

It's so exciting! Leeds is such a great place to start DJing as there's so many awesome venues about with really renowned DJs. One of my favourite nights at the moment are the 'Natural Selection' events at Headrow House! They've already had some huge DJs playing, some of my

favourites being Mall Grab and Late Nite Tuff Guy, to name a few. These guys are showcasing some BIG NAMES at the moment and are definitely worth following. So yeah, having the opportunity to go and watch these ace DJs play live is really inspiring, and combined with the limitless open deck events around the city I'd say Leeds is a great place to start up as a DJ. I've met so many great players at open decks and it's always really exciting to go b2b with someone you've never even met before. Initially, I was a little nervous turning up to open decks alone, but eventually you get to know more and more people and see them more frequently as they're all interested in the same events, it's really cool!

**2019 has just started. Do you have any plans for the rest of the year?**

So my plan for the next year is to stay in Leeds and keep on building up my gig diary. I've actually just started working on producing my first EP which is really exciting! After graduating, I was a little lost in what direction I wanted to take with my music. I loved jazz and playing that on sax, but I also loved DJing and EDM... then I realised there was nothing stopping me from doing both, so that's what I'm working on at the moment and it's so exciting! I've been writing quite a bit recently, and the aim is to get a live set together this year, so definitely keep your eyes and ears peeled! Aside from my Aquamae stuff, I'm in quite a few other Leeds bands with some absolutely mega musicians! I play sax in 'Mamilah' which is an original 8-piece soul outfit - these guys are some of the loveliest and most talented musician's you'll ever meet! **We'll actually be playing a gig as part of International Women's Day.** Also check out 'TC & The Groove Family', a HUGE band that just keeps growing. We play a fusion of highlife, afrobeat and UK electronic beats including garage, drum & bass and broken beats. The first gig is Saturday 9th March at the Wardrobe, supporting the mighty KOG & The Zongo Brigade.

**You've recently played at Good Life at Beaver Works, but what would be your ultimate venue to DJ at in Leeds?**

Yeah, Good Life is always a fun night with awesome line-ups and I'm really lucky to be a part of that. To be honest, Beaver Works is such a vibe and the people there always put on an incredible night! When I started DJing a year ago, one of my aims was to play there... I just didn't realise it'd happen this quickly so I'm pretty over the moon about that. The other two venues I'd absolutely love to play at are Canal Mills and Mint Warehouse! Since moving to Leeds in 2015, going to some of their events had such a big influence of my journey into EDM. It'd be mad to get a DJ slot of my own there sometime... I'm working on it!

**Finally, how have you seen the DJ industry progress since you first took an interest? And what are your hopes for its future?**

I really hope that more women are inspired to start DJing, and I'm definitely going to keep encouraging them especially to start doing so. The industry is definitely changing; there are so many more female DJs around than there were 50 years ago, but it still has a long way to go!

**Read the full interview online.**

Caris Dollard

# Leeds RAG Fashion Show 2019: In Review

Last Thursday played host to the return of the highly anticipated annual Leeds RAG Fashion Show. For this year’s show, fashion editors, Elicka Ghahramani and Christy Bucklow, witnessed a worthy homage to leading artistic movements from across the centuries.



What were the standout moments of this year’s show?

Elicka: I personally loved the finale, when all of the models from different scenes came back down the catwalk but were allowed to drop their serious façade and just show how much fun they were having in the spotlight; it was heart-warming.

Christy: I adored the transition from the more serious Romanticism/Impressionism designs to the more energetic and fun sections of the fashion show. The designs throughout were all gorgeous, but the energy of the models and the audience really just stepped up a notch when Blue Monday started playing and the models wearing Cubism inspired designs strutted their stuff.



What looks were the personal favourites?

E: I’m not entirely sure why, but there was one look with this enormously oversized red velvet, puffer cape, just settled on top of a modest polka-dot midi skirt, that really stands out in my memory. I’m not suggesting that I would wear it personally, but it was definitely memorable.

C: I loved this particular dress in the Romanticism section which was a beautiful baby blue, sleek and elegant with a dangerously thigh high split, and black short puff-sleeves. It was a really gorgeous combination of innocence and seduction.

Would you consider it worth paying for the VIP experience?

E: Before attending the show, I assumed there couldn’t be much difference between the VIP versus standard experience, but after going I would definitely say there is. Not only did we get a snazzy gift bag



(including vitamin-C tablets and an organic face scrub), but we got to enjoy inspiring talks from representatives of the charities beforehand in the VIP room, as well as live music and complementary drinks. Additionally, you get a front or second row view of the show which makes a huge difference. On top of all that, the proceeds of the ticket go to charity, so it’s a worthy cause.

C: Elicka has said it all - the VIP experience exceeded expectations. I would absolutely pay extra for the ticket, particularly since it all benefitted some really great charities.

Did the show manage to incorporate as much awareness for the charity aspect as the fashion aspect?

E: I would say that it is easy to forget what the purpose of the annual show is when watching it and getting engrossed by the fashion, rather than the cause. However, the directors of the show, Tamika and Bella, made sure to remind the audience that it was predominantly a charity function, and it was clearly a matter close to their hearts.

C: Tamika and Bella clearly put a lot of effort into their pre and post-show speeches, which really reminded the audience of why they were there. They encouraged us all to donate using the QR code on our programmes or lanyards, which I thought was a really great idea to make it easier for people to give money to the great causes they were promoting. The great work that RAG does made watching the show and all the effort everyone had put in all the sweeter.





What would you have liked to have seen that was maybe missing?

E: Perhaps more visual effects, especially for the first scene, as I didn't find it as memorable as the following scenes which incorporated performance with the looks.

C: I loved the energy of the latter sections, so it would have been nice to see the audience appreciate the models and designs of the earlier sections in the same way.

Were there any little details or extras that really made the show exciting?

E: I loved the dance performances – I always enjoy when a fashion show incorporates more than just the fashion. I'm going to be completely basic and direct you to the Blair Waldorf quote where she states that fashion is more than just fashion, "it's movement, architecture and design", and a fashion show should represent that.

C: Fashion is more than just the clothes; it's about personal expression and freedom to do whatever the hell you like with that. Like Elicka, the dancers really made the show for me. The ballet was beautiful and really captured the delicacy and innocence of the Romanticism era. The dancers during the Surrealism section really added a cool dynamic, and the Pop Art section was electric which was partly due to the pure sass of the dancers who opened it.



What did you think of the way they set up the venue?

Elicka: They did an amazing job – I have a whole new perspective of Refectory now. I would say that maybe the seating and arrangement of spectators could've been organised a little more, as there were large clumps of people viewing the show from standing point behind a pillar.

C: We were second row and could barely see the models until they were right in front of us, with a few heads still blocking the view. So I doubt many others will have been able to see very well – stadium seating would be more effective in making sure everyone got a chance to see the designs. However, I can appreciate that the LRFS team did a great job of setting up The Refectory.

Do you think the show challenged boundaries and was inspiring as a whole?

We both think all of those who contributed did an amazing job; it absolutely challenged boundaries and was so professional as a whole. A congratulations is in order to all of those involved, it was a great show and amazing fun to be there. To top it all off, they raised over £23,000 – a fantastic amount of money which will all go towards good causes.

Christy Bucklow  
Elicka Ghahramani  
Images by Milly Hewitt, @millysphotographs



# A Love Letter to Modern Femininity

**Georgia Prichard reviews Victoria Beckham's SS19 collection.**

As Victoria Beckham's new line walked at London Fashion Week, her family sat front row to watch her vision encapsulate the alphabet of modern femininity. With smatterings of leopard print, which we have seen storm runways and shop windows this year, working alongside loose fitted skirts and dresses, Beckham demonstrated how fashion can really be the costume women wear to embrace modern femininity.

She stated that her contemporary yet retro style was for the women who are "proper but definitely not prim." This is what encapsulates the real lady of today; the working woman, the mother, the friend, the bread-winner, the boss. The collection celebrates the fashion of today, of the past, and of proposals for the future; by collaborating these together, Beckham champions the way women have broken into the world to make their mark.

Beckham's vision certainly portrays this. Her designs, including mid-length slim

fitted skirts in bold block colours and blouses and shirts, powerfully show off the dominance and confidence of a working woman. The line also included plunging neck lines which, according to Beckham, showed off the "naughty edge" this woman should have while also remaining ladylike.

Victoria Beckham made it clear that her line was for the modern woman. She herself has begun a new journey into the modern world by releasing her new YouTube channel which presents videos of her preparing for catwalks, launching new designs and live streaming her shows. Beckham has worked tirelessly to get to the position she is in today. For years, no line, brand, or designer would take her seriously due to always being seen as a Spice Girl. Her line now perfectly represents her dedication - she has well and truly claimed her space in the fashion industry.

**Georgia Prichard**



## Why are Meghan's Fashion Choices Used to Vilify her in the Press?

**Tasha Johnson looks at the underlying racism behind tabloid articles about The Duchess of Sussex's dress sense.**

"The Duchess of Sussex wore ripped skinny jeans!" "The Duchess of Sussex wore a sleeveless dress!" "The Duchess of Sussex's dress was too short!"

It feels like not a week goes by without Meghan Markle, Duchess of Sussex, making headlines for breaking one royal protocol or another. From exposing her shoulders to exposing too much leg, some people have really taken an issue with the Duchess's wardrobe, making out as if her break from tradition is one of the biggest controversies of our time.

Can you imagine the absolute scandal and uproar of a British royal wearing a one-shouldered dress...? Oh wait, Kate Middleton's already done that. And it went quietly unnoticed, despite 'breaking tradition', all the way back in 2011.

However, when Meghan Markle wore a black one-shouldered Givenchy dress to the 2018 British Fashion Awards, the reaction was slightly different. While many people still rightly praised the velvet gown for being 'stunning' and 'gorgeous', there was a notable amount of hate and

controversy over it. Headlines included things such as: "Royal SHOCK! Meghan Markle BREAKS Royal protocol AGAIN with 'VULGAR' fashion move" (The Express).

Following the backlash that Meghan received in December, Kate wore a white one-shouldered dress to the 2019 BAFTA's in February, perhaps to show solidarity, or perhaps because she was unaware. Either way, the dress was simply praised as being "beautiful", "elegant" and "giving the royal an ethereal look" (which, to be fair to all, it did), with little to no backlash.

So why the difference in reactions? Why has Meghan seemingly garnered a large amount of hate, or at the very least, disapproval, from certain people? Could it be nationalism - is it because she's American, and not British? Britain and America have always had friendly rivalry, and I can't be the only one who's had that experience of sitting in a classroom and hearing someone just randomly start bad-mouthing Americans based on their experience with two whole people. Or could it be something a little more sinister.

As one of very few non-white members of the British Royal Family, could calling this racism be justified? It certainly wouldn't be the first time headlines including Meghan had worryingly racist undertones. For example, a title of a 2016 Daily Mail article read: "Harry's girl is (almost) straight outta Compton: Gang-scarred home of her mother revealed - so will he be dropping by for tea?" Another remark, again, courtesy of the Daily Mail, this time a tweet, read: "From slaves to royalty, Meghan Markle's upwardly mobile family."

The media is no stranger to coming after powerful women over what they wear, be it something minor like a questionable Oscars dress or something more worrying, like attacking Michelle Obama for having a more casual attire now she's no longer first lady. Nowhere has this been clearer than with Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, the youngest woman ever elected to Congress. Recently, she has faced a lot of backlash for wearing expensive brands whilst being an activist - as has Meghan Markle - as if the two were mutually exclusive. Can a woman not be socially aware and active, and still care about society at the same

time? Ocasio-Cortez is working towards a more equal distribution of wealth and fair share to workers, and comments towards her by the media have included things such as: "that jacket and coat don't look like a girl who struggles" (Washington Examiner) and the heavy criticism she received for appearing in a (borrowed) \$3,000 suit for a photoshoot.

The conclusion we should draw from this is that if you're a powerful woman in the public spotlight, it doesn't matter what you do, it doesn't matter what you say, it doesn't matter what you wear - people will still find a reason to come for you. If your outfit is too nice, they'll come for you for wasting money and hating poor people. If your outfit isn't nice enough, they'll come for you for being scruffy and having no taste. So really, the only option is to just wear whatever the hell you like, and have a witty comeback at the ready.

Happy International Women's Day, everyone.

**Tasha Johnson**



# In The Middle With Bellisa X

Rosabella Allen interviews Bella, who created her own brand Bellisa X after experimenting with styles unavailable on the high street.



Photo: Guy Traynor



Photo: Lucy Rose Tindall

In 2016, Bella (centre) launched her own 'Cocktail of Jackets' collection, and her brand has grown rapidly since, launching a 'create your own tracksuit feature' and collaborating with brands such as Kingdom of Badmen.

**Can you talk through your inspirations? On your website you have named pieces after people - is that from people you know?**

I'm less inspired by particular things than a collection of personal experiences - how I'm feeling at the time and different environments. But I would say the freedom of fashion in underground rave culture has inspired my confidence to design as wacky or as tame as I want, with regards to style and fabrics. Music too - I often create my textile prints under the influence of loud music reflected to the particular environment that the print/clothes may be worn in. I like to give clothes a personality - carried from the design to marketing, as I believe how clothes make you feel is equally important as to how they look. So, I name the clothes either after someone I know or a non/ fictional character and write a bio about the person to bring the clothes to life. I always pick characters to reflect the particular garments.

**You do a lot of collaborations within your label. How important is it to you to provide a platform for new designers and creatives?**

This is where the 'X' part to Bellisa comes in to play. The X stands for collaboration on every level from the customers, suppliers to photographers and other brands etc. I think a journey is better shared - and it makes more sense to work together to

create something really special with all our ideas rather than compete from afar. This means we're always working with new models, photographers, brands and now also stock independent accessories labels on our website as well. It's not particularly easy building a brand up from scratch so a helping hand doesn't go amiss.

**You left your fashion course at university due to its effects on your mental health and creativity. Did you panic at all when you left your degree?**

Imagine you've been in a sauna for way too long and you're sweating, passing out, dehydrated, panicking because you can't see a way out, you're exhausted and feel 10x older and then you finally realise there's actually a door. It felt like a massive relief and start of something new, which is more exciting than something to panic about.

**Did you ever doubt yourself on your design course and question your passion?**

Yes. Studying fashion at uni made me hate everything about the current fashion industry. I realised they were training us to work in big fashion companies, which is fine if you like that, but I could never see myself there.

**Can you describe the difference between designing while on a university course as opposed to doing it for your own business?**

Personal opinion here: at uni you are essentially designing for a numeric grade, guided by your lecturer's experience, which is so important to value, but it's very

restricted and you're in constant battle between perhaps designing what you actually want vs what will get you a better grade. Creatively, you are pushed a lot more at uni, which is a good and bad thing, but can leave you unconfident in your ability. Bellisa X is kind of like my dream wardrobe with influences and personalisation from customers to suit them. There's more freedom, but you always have to keep in mind what your customers would like, and also convince them that they will like it too. I could create something I really love, but if no-one else does, then it's not going to sell.

**How is it to be a young person and be running your own business? Can you describe some of the struggles you encounter and how you've dealt with them?**

The main realisation I had is that if I want something done, then it's down to me and only me to make that happen. That can cause a lot of stress from responsibility and managing time. It feels like there is never enough time to complete all your tasks. Also, the isolation of running a business on your own. Imagine being in a studio perhaps up to 12 hours a day on your own every day - it gets lonely.

**What would you advise other young people to do if they have dreams of starting up their own business and what precautions should they take?**

Just do it. You don't know until you try, but if you sit there and plan it out and talk about it for years that's not going to actually make it happen. You have to do it. Start small and realistic so it's easy to

manage, and everything should fall into place and grow from there. But it's a lot more hard work than you think to start and maintain growth, and if you're not feeling the burn from working then you're probably not working to the best of your ability. Be careful not to burn yourself out - it will happen - but from this point learn to balance your time more efficiently and healthily.

**How do you feel about fast fashion?**

It's horrible and people really need to start thinking about how their clothes are made and the ethics behind them, since fashion is the second most pollutive industry in the world. What I try to do as a brand is work against fast fashion (through custom clothing), spread awareness and use our growth alongside other people to positively influence our audience.

**What are your plans for the future? How do you want to extend Bellisa X?**

I have just launched a digital 'Create Your Own' platform on the website where you can visually design your personalised garment using our fabrics on our staple pieces. I love custom products so would love to keep it this way. However, with collection pieces, I am aiming to pre-make partial stock for the next collection to minimise production and wait times. Plus more physical events such as markets! Also, I'm currently joined by my intern, Jade once a week, so as orders grow I would be looking to take on someone else.

Rosabella Allen



# Why we need more women like Emma Thompson

Arts writer Alexander Gibbon discusses Emma Thompson's influence in the entertainment industry and the potential of global movement #metoo.



Image: Mary Sue

**"We need more like Thompson: people who are willing to sacrifice personal gain to challenge institutions who put dangerous men in positions of power."**

Until last week, Emma Thompson had been due to voice a role in *Luck*, a big budget family film produced by Skydance Animation. However, after the studio hired controversial former Pixar head John Lasseter to join the production, Thompson abruptly left the project despite having begun recording the voiceover for her part. Presumably, this was as a result of the past sexual misconduct –or “missteps”, in his own words – admitted by Lasseter shortly before taking a leave of absence from his previous job at Walt Disney Company, which soon extended to a resignation.

Well, plaudits to Emma Thompson. If there were any doubts that, as one of the most outspoken critics of Hollywood's gender inequality, her unwavering principles were earnest, this bold show of courage certainly dispels them. By having the courage of her convictions and walking away from a potentially lucrative project in favour of tackling sexism in cinema, Thompson has shown how crucial it is for those with any power or leverage to take responsibility for protecting women in the industry and has provided a noble example for others to follow.

But what about those who claim that predatory men deserve a second chance? Well, before redemption can be earned, retribution must be undergone. Despite reports of “grabbing, kissing and making comments about physical attributes”, Lasseter walked out of one job and into another without so much as a slap on the wrist. Far too often

in creative fields, talent and the preservation of reputation trumps the protection of individuals, especially those found lower down the ladder. The recent wave of abusive men facing the consequences of their actions has empowered and propelled the #metoo movement forward; without the threat of adequate punishment, victims' experiences are made trivial and the acceptance of workplace harassment is normalised.

What most commendable about Thompson's move is the boldness and efficacy of her actions. Imagine if more professionals were to follow her lead: employers would be forced to create safe workplaces or else face widespread walk-outs. Wearing black gowns on red carpets now seems vapid and insincere. Seeing the stars who critique the broken system continue to work with confirmed abusers is infuriating.

Waiting for change to come from the top-down is futile. Skydance's decision makes it clear that the patriarchy is alive and kicking in Tinseltown. We need more like Thompson: people who are willing to sacrifice personal gain to challenge institutions who put dangerous men in positions of power. For the #metoo movement to have any lasting impact, Hollywood needs to get its act together, so to speak.

Alexander Gibbon



# Empowerment and Strength: Vertical Fitness at the Riley Smith Theatre



Images: Ben Hutchinson

Last week, the audience at the Riley Smith Theatre were transported into a big top, complete with cascading red and white banners draped from the ceiling, stilt-walkers, candy floss and popcorn vendors. The Vertical Fitness annual showcase brought the circus to Leeds, showing off a fantastic array of pole and hoop performances, all in aid of charity.

Pole dancing has often been subject to some adverse press, but those negative commentators have evidently never taken the time to consider the sheer strength that it takes to suspend yourself in mid-air, as well as the skill required to look graceful

while doing so. Dancers were able to defy gravity, launching themselves around the stage and elegantly pull off impressive poses around a somewhat wobbly pole.

The dances varied from strength and flexibility performances to exotic routines, where dancers strut the stage in pleasers (or eight-inch heels for those of us not versed in pole garb), while still managing to dance with poise and elegance, mixing floor work with the pole. The aerial hoop was equally as striking, with a mix of group and individual performances that saw dancers contort their bodies in ways that did not seem humanly possible.

Many of the dancers reiterated how much confidence that being a part of Vertical Fitness has given them, with one woman even emphasising that before taking up the pole, she was as “flexible as a brick” but at least now she is “an upside-down brick”. Aimee Christodoulou, the President of Vertical Fitness, stated: “I couldn’t be happier that everyone has been so confident and body-positive in showing what an art form both pole fitness and exotic dance can really be.”

The fantastic show was in aid of an equally amazing cause, as the proceeds were donated to Basis Yorkshire. The Leeds-

based charity offers information, safety and support for female and transgender women who work in the sex industry in Leeds, as well as giving intensive support to those at risk of child sexual exploitation. Vertical Fitness has supported the charity in previous years too with their showcase, as well as other fundraising events like a 24-hour Pole-a-thon.

Following the show, it is clear vertical fitness is a sport that requires strength and determination and embracing your body in this way is one of the most empowering and rewarding sports out there.

Polly Hatcher



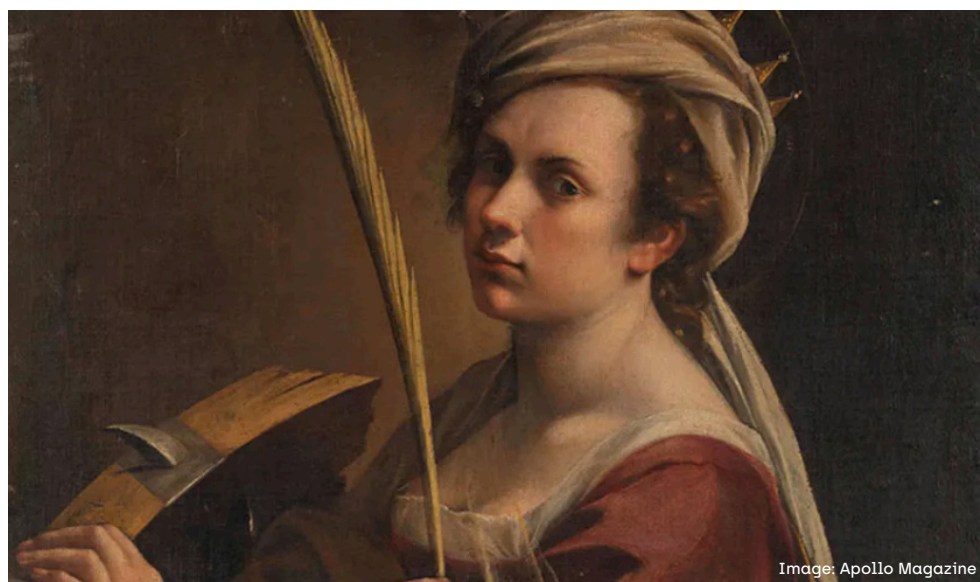
# Spotlight on: Women in Art



## Thelma Schoonmaker - Editor

Recently awarded the 2019 BAFTA fellowship, Thelma Schoonmaker has developed a reputation as one of the film industries' greatest editors. Having won two BAFTAs and three Oscars for her work, she is part of one of cinema's greatest director/editor partnerships through her friendship with Martin Scorsese. In total, the duo have worked on a total of twenty-three films together, and every Scorsese film since 1980's *Raging Bull*. Her first success came from her work on the Oscar-winning 1970 documentary *Woodstock*, as she demonstrated what would become her trademark style. She has been unanimously praised for her creation of juxtaposition through jump cuts and freeze frames. The now 79-year-old is currently finishing the editing for *The Irishman* and shows no signs of slowing down what is an inspiring and wonderfully creative career.

Matthew Moorey



## Artemisia Gentileschi - Painter

Artemisia Gentileschi was a significant and pioneering painter in Renaissance Italy who often presented brash new interpretations of classic themes. However, the seventeenth-century artist was active in a context in which women, unlike their male counterparts, were forbidden from knowledge of anatomy and excluded from academies; until recent feminist scholarship, Gentileschi's biography did not follow the conventional narrative of her male contemporaries. Indeed, her reputation and status in historical memory has been tainted by her rape by fellow painter and collaborator, Agostino Tassi. However, Gentileschi demands respect as an artist in her own right: she was both innovative and assertive. 'Susanna and the Elders' (1610), her first dated work, for example, added another dimension to the female figure; unlike other versions, we can see power and resistance in Gentileschi's 'Susanna', both to the male subjects also pictured and the male gaze more generally. Thus, not only accomplished in technique, this work is also seminal as an example of a confrontation of the customary interaction between an active male spectator and a passive female recipient, marking Gentileschi as fundamental in both art history and women's history.

Safi Bugel



## Annie Leibovitz - Photographer

Annie Leibovitz is arguably the most popular female photographer of our time. Born Anna-Lou, the artist graduated from the San Francisco Art Institute with a major in photography. Leibovitz's work is defined by "point of view" and a lack of "objectivity", in the words of the artist herself. Her intimate photographs helped to shape the Rolling Stone aesthetic and create the iconic cover featuring John Lennon and Yoko Ono. After ten years at the music magazine, she moved on to shoot for Vanity Fair and Vogue, and was the first female artist to have a solo exhibition at Washington DC's National Portrait Gallery. Leibovitz has written multiple books focusing on photography, and now offers online classes. Her works continue to be displayed in museums as well as magazine stands.

Karolina Glasek



## Agnes Varda - Director

Known as the 'grandmother' of the pioneering French New Wave cinema movement, Varda's influence on cinema is undeniable, breaking conventions with location shooting and using non-professional actors. Her most famous film is *Cléo from 5 to 7* (1962), which tells the story of a self-absorbed singer awaiting the results from a cancer screening, and her ensuing 90-minute transformation as she contemplates and fears her possible death, all the while surrounded by what is, undoubtedly, one of the most gorgeous depictions of 1960s Paris. Although Varda is known for her realistic and complex depictions of women, (supporting her own firm political beliefs, as she campaigned to legalise abortion in France), her other films like *Vagabond* (1985) touch upon poverty and homelessness, all the while questioning the bonds that draw us to connect to other human beings. Intelligent yet accessible, the 90-year-old Belgian-born director continues to direct, as well as having branched out to photography and art installations.

George Dunleavy



# In celebration of International Women's Day, the arts team pay homage to some of our favourite female creatives.



## Tessa Thompson - Actress

Starring in five feature-length films in 2018 alone, Tessa Thompson is without a doubt one of the most prolific actors working in Hollywood today. Versatile, too, as she will not only be reprising her role as Valkyrie in *Avengers: Endgame* this year, but will also be starring once again alongside Chris Hemsworth in *Men in Black: International*, as well as lending her voice to the upcoming remake of *Lady and the Tramp*. In addition to her powerful female presence onscreen, Thompson is committed to supporting women who work behind the camera. At this year's Sundance Film Festival, Thompson announced her involvement in the '4 Percent Challenge', an initiative set up by the Time's Up movement challenging actors to work with a woman director over the next 18 months. Whatever may result from her pledge is bound to be as incredible as her work thus far.

Holly Weaver



## Greta Gerwig - Filmmaker

An American writer, actress and director, Gerwig's two best-known films are *Frances Ha* (2012) and *Ladybird* (2017), which cemented her as a tour-de-force writer of what it means to enter adulthood in the 21st century. Her work typically centres around the growth and emotional maturation of the leading woman, and she is a master of twisting your emotions to feel torn between sympathising with or disliking her complex characters. Watching a Gerwig film feels like bunking on a bus to ride it until the very last stop, where you finally alight, looking back determinedly, with half-laced and scuffed trainers being the only thing guiding you home.

George Dunleavy



## Louise Bourgeois - Sculptor

Louise Bourgeois, French American artist, and one of the greatest figures in modern and contemporary art, is mainly associated with her large-scale sculptures and installations of huge steel spiders and twisting spiral-like bodies floating in the air. Her work encompasses a variety of themes, including family, death, gender and sexuality. Making art is a therapeutic process for Bourgeois, allowing her to create work filled with self-expression and exploration. "I need to make things...I need to have these objects exist in relation to my body." Her work is deeply personal, not only through using her own experiences and memories as inspiration, but also by examining female sexuality, fragility and insecurity. From the feelings of entrapment within 'In and Out' and its cold metal cage, to 'Spiral Woman' which is contrastingly simplistic and fragile through its depiction of the female form. Bourgeois does not only create beautiful, complex works of art, but also offers up a series of intimate confessions, memories and self-portraits filled with intense emotions and hardships.

Madeleine Gauci Green



## Monica Hernandez - Social Media Artist

Hernandez reclaims what it means to be an 'Instagram artist' in the digital age as she subverts the popular critique of social media as 'shallow'. Her social platform of 107k followers is a work of art that is always in progress, mirroring Monica's experimental style and her passion for finding innovative ways to communicate her feminist politics. In photographing herself, Hernandez sends the powerful message that women do not have to be reduced to muses—they can resist objectification by becoming their own artistic subject. To her, art can be as simple as filming yourself chopping your hair in front of the bathroom mirror or documenting your facial acne. She also incorporates this style of visual art to display her paintings and give the finger to Eurocentric standards of beauty. Her studio has been turned into a safe space where she can freely flaunt her hairy armpits and pose in front of oil canvases whose subjects are carefree, naked people of colour. Monica Hernandez is definitely an artist that deserves more recognition.

Maria Leontiou

# 'How to be a Beautiful Woman' - As Told by an Ignorant Twitter User



Be thin, oh, but not too thin. Bones are ugly, fat is ugly, so just be 'thin': a vague term, but if it means skipping a few meals, why not? Your body is merely an object after all - mainly for sex and display.

Be able to cook. This is an obvious one, surely your mother would have taught you. A man needs to eat, but remember not too much for you dear, you must remain thin.

Have long hair so that it will mop the floor behind you, so that it shall sweep up the crumbs. But beware, hair growing from your head is the only hair acceptable. Any other areas must be painfully stripped bald. Acceptable methods include shaving, waxing or laser hair removal.

Wear makeup. Again, not too much since it is superficial, but cover those imperfections. Please note, we don't want to be able to see the makeup, don't slap it on.

Blah, blah, blah. The list continues, but it's slightly too nauseating to go on. You

get the gist - you know, along the lines of 'wear pink,' 'listen to men' and 'be sensual,' etc. But seriously, are we regressing? Patriarchy may consume all, but aren't we supposed to be wriggling out of its grasp these days?

What this tweet brings to light is that, no matter how much feminist academia and novels we read or how many protests we see, these ideals are still ingrained into certain people's perception of what makes and 'ideal woman'. This list constructs a mutated caricature, a deformed creature who is at once strangely bald in places and has long tresses of hair in others. A creature who must be "fashionable" and must remain "graceful" even when banging together your dinner. This ideal looks for a specific type of perfection, but surely, humans are inherently imperfect. Is that not what makes us unique anyway?

Unfortunately, Alexander J. A. Cortes, I am not beautiful to you, neither are any of the women I know. Because, to be frank, pink isn't my colour. And, makeup? Everyday?

Not for me. Do you not realise the faff of having long hair since you seem to prefer the pony tail as well?

Cortes' definition of 'beauty' does delve beneath the skin. We have a mutual understanding that beauty is not merely surface level. Yet, we agree for merely a millisecond, as the internal attributes of beauty for him are that we "love men" and "listen to men."

I don't think Alexander J.A Cortes loves women. In fact, he despises them. Because let me tell you what a women is, it's a short list:

Whatever she wants to be.

Let's not let tweets like this pollute the twittersphere. Instead, here are some inspirational women to follow; @rgay, @ShappiKhorsandi and @ginamartin\_uk.

Delphie Bond



# Going Beyond Performative Feminism

**In this digital age, where information is so readily available and easily accessible, and at a time in which our desire to be 'on trend' has increased exponentially, performative feminism has emerged – and it is both pervasive and deeply damaging to the gender revolution.**



Image: Toowasted

Spurred on by celebrities and opinion leaders, the feminist movement has been popularised and commercialised in recent years, resulting in a pandemic of performative feminism. From politicians such as Hillary Clinton using feminist values to garner support for their electoral campaigns, to fashion designers such as Dior plastering the word 'feminist' across their clothing, the feminist movement today seems a far cry from its humble origins. Surely being a proponent of gender equality goes beyond simply asserting that you are a feminist, declaring an allegiance to a celebrity who states they are, or donning a t-shirt which expresses your support for the movement?

The real question is – how do we begin to apply feminist principles to everyday life?

We should begin with education. Being able to apply feminist values to everyday life is a near impossibility without having an understanding of them in the first instance. The issue of performative feminism stems, in part, from passivity. People acknowledge that their favourite celebrity supports the movement, so they do too, but they fail to acknowledge its underpinning principles, and have only a superficial comprehension of it. It involves active participation and some critical reflection in order to take it further than the performative. What's more, since much of the discourse around feminism unfolds online, a great deal of information about the movement is unregulated. Again, this requires us to not simply digest and accept what we read about feminism, but to look over it with a critical eye in order to ensure that what we understand is accurate, and thus its principles can be applied accordingly.

Another way to ensure feminist principles are upheld is to hold the institutions claiming to support equality of the sexes to account. In order to allow gender equality in the workplace to really flourish and go beyond the performative, it is imperative that corporations translate their ethic across to practice, and that they are held to account in doing so. All too often, businesses fall short in adhering to the feminist principles and practices they vow to support, as demonstrated in the pay inequity that still exists in such large companies as Amazon and Sainsbury's. In order to tackle this institutionalised sexism, and encourage businesses to take their support of feminism beyond the performative, we should hold corporations to account, scrutinising and challenging both their composition and their pay roll.

The easiest yet most overlooked way to apply feminist values to everyday life is to stamp out the everyday sexism that is deeply embedded in cultures across the globe. Telling someone to not behave 'like a girl' or using 'woman' as an expression of exasperation is something many of us may be guilty of – after all, such attitudes appear to be ingrained in our global cultural fabric. However, they are not to be trivialised for the flippant manner in which they are often expressed because, in actual fact, they perpetuate misogynistic sentiments, and insinuate that being a girl or a woman is something to be ashamed of.

Making small adjustments to the comments we make, or paying particular attention to the implications of our remarks will ensure that such sentiments are eradicated, and take feminism far beyond the performative.

# Breaking the Glass Screen: Women Pushing the Media Boundaries



## Rachel Bloom - Writer & Actor

Rachel Bloom is the amazing and multi-talented driving force behind the show *Crazy Ex-Girlfriend*. The actress/comedian/singer/songwriter has used the TV show's platform on the CW to push the boundaries of representation over its four year run. She speaks (and sings) candidly of the realities women face, eschewing the portrayals of perfect, two-dimensional women that grace the small screen in larger numbers than we'd like to admit. Bloom takes on the common stereotypes and tropes that plague television writing and turns them on their head. Whether it's representing the spectrum of sexuality or portraying mental illness realistically, *Crazy Ex-Girlfriend* never shies away from difficult and complex topics with strong storylines and a catchy song. With the show coming to an end this year, we can only be excited for Rachel Bloom's next endeavour.



## Gina Martin - Activist

Gina Martin is a creative, a campaigner and a chic earring enthusiast who rocks the Instagram world through her pastel posts and uplifting yet starkly natural Instagram stories. Through coining the hashtag '#bethechange' and managing to pass a law against up-skirting, she is the epitome of the modern woman (if there even is one). Gina shares rawness like no other, through her relentless Instagram stories documenting the challenging realities of passing a law, and the everyday struggles of being a woman, from protesting outside parliament, to shouting at her neighbour to turn his porn down. Her Instagram allows room for flaws, there is no false, unattainable depictions of beauty, or what it is to be a woman, just aesthetically pleasing and meaningful, practical activism. Her daily empowerment and physical fight for an equal future shines a bright colourful light through the dark realm Instagram has a tendency to take. She is also just seriously cool, her earrings and artistic flair really beam individuality - one also mustn't forget her pet tortoise Garry, who is quite sensational.



## Shonda Rhimes - Showrunner

No list about women in media can be complete without Shonda Rhimes. As the showrunner for some of the biggest shows on television, including the likes of *Private Practice*, *Scandal*, *How to Get Away With Murder* and, of course, *Grey's Anatomy* - which just made history as the longest-running primetime medical drama - her phenomenal has changed the landscape of pop culture for the better. With diverse casts and well-written stories, Rhimes has created some of the most compelling characters to grace the small screen, including Cristina Yang (Sandra Oh), Olivia Pope (Kerry Washington), and Annalise Keating (Viola Davis). Rhimes' commitment to diversity and complexity in her work makes every project one worth watching.



## In honour of International Women's Day, Lifestyle & Culture takes a look at some of the women changing the media landscape for the better.



### Ash Sarkar - Journalist

Even in 2019, it isn't as rare as it should be to see panels on political news programmes completely made up of stuffy white men, spouting their party line or cliché sound bites with a demeanour of dour pomposity. However, thanks to journalist, academic and left-wing activist Ash Sarkar, political discourse in the media is being given the shake-up it needs. With her personable charm, sharp wit and forward-thinking ideas, she has become one of the leading voices of Britain's socialist youth. Who can forget her heated clash on Good Morning Britain which, after she was straw manned by Piers Morgan as a devout Obama fan, ended in Sarkar proclaiming "I'm literally a communist, you idiot"? Simply iconic. Alongside her impressive TV performances, she has also been a fierce supporter of intersectional feminism, reminding people that the feminist movement can often marginalise the experiences of women of colour and can treat transgender women like the enemy. In essence, we need far more women like Ash Sarkar in the media.



### Ruby Tandoh - TV Personality

After coming to prominence in 2013 as a runner-up in *The Great British Bake-Off*, Ruby Tandoh made her rise from reality-TV contestant to powerful culinary reformer seem like a cakewalk. An ardent critic of the food representation in the media, her work in dismantling the dangerous body-shaming often found in food writing and "wellness" culture is truly enlightening. Her decision to step down from her post at The Guardian due to the "elitist" nature of the industry, proves her convictions aren't just filled with empty calories. If that wasn't enough for Tandoh to earn a spot on this list, she also launched the zine 'Do What You Want', a publication focused on mental health, with all profits going to charity. It's no wonder she was voted GBBO's favourite past contestant.



### Constance Wu - Actor

Best known for her role in the comedy series *Fresh Off The Boat* and the 2018 film *Crazy Rich Asians*, Constance Wu is an actress who has consistently been outspoken about social issues including sexism, whitewashing, and the lack of Asian representation in Hollywood. Wu has a history of using her social media accounts as a platform to call out social injustice and drive conversations about topics that would otherwise be brushed under the rug. Though this outspoken nature of hers has resulted in loss of offered roles and parts, it does not stop her. She declared, "I'm a woman & human first. That's what my craft is built on." While recently she has been less expressive on social media, Wu continues to speak on important social injustices through other channels, such as interviews, and is an incredibly inspiring and courageous woman.

# I am All of the Other Girls

**Georgie tackles the phrase “I’m not like other girls” this International Women’s Day.**



I am an amalgamation of every woman I have ever known, every book I have ever read and every film I have ever seen. I am not like the other girls. I am all of the other girls.

Just as there is no original thought, there is no individual that is totally original either, and to insinuate that I am anything other than a product of every brave, strong, wonderful woman I have spent my life with, is not only

naïve, but insulting. I am proud to be like my mother - witty, resilient and consistent in my dreams. I am proud to be like my friends - genius, compassionate and selfless. I am also proud to be like my father - stoic, kind and patient. I am, just as everyone on this earth is, a messy, complicated selection of all the best qualities of those around me.

In every lecture, every important meeting, every social situation I have a 50% chance of being heard and engaged with, according to my ‘non-girly’ attire. Jeans equate to equality, a real shame given I’m a sucker for a flowy dress. From what I have experienced and from what I have heard from other women’s experiences, the legitimacy of my perspective is only received according to a male understanding of how untypically girly I am, provoking the phrase which I have had recited to me countless times throughout my short existence: “You’re not like the other girls.”

My femininity is not my weakness, my weakness is giving time to anyone who argues otherwise. Women are the strongest people I know. I am proud to be a woman, proud to be surrounded by women. We comprise half of the worlds population and yet have always been seen

as lesser, for a reason that seems to change shape with every passing generation. To describe myself as ‘not like the other girls’ is false and ignorant and unappreciative of every person who has gotten me to where I am now.

Why can I only be seen as important, intelligent and powerful when compared to other women? I want to be able to stand tall and shine for every aspect of my being, including and most importantly for the parts which have been ingrained upon me by the wonderful women who have surrounded me since day dot. I want to be able to head into a conversation and know I will be given the same acknowledgement and attention that my brothers, father and male friends would be given without a second thought.

I am tired of being hushed or silenced with a raised hand, I am tired of being disregarded because of my vagina or my makeup or the clothes I wear. Women are strong, intelligent and go through so many hardships that men will never know. And yet we are still seen as weak.

I am not important because I am not like the other girls, I am important because I am all of the other girls. My femininity is not my weakness.

**Georgie Fuhri**

# The Female Empowerment Bloggers You Should be Following

**Andri writes close to home for the Blogs section, all about female empowerment bloggers.**



You’re sat in bed entering a deep scroll through Instagram, seeing post after post of fitness pages, beautiful air-brushed models and super healthy food accounts.

Whilst some might call this ‘inspiration’, being exposed to the same type of content everyday can cause a constant self-comparison.

Here are some accounts that will help re-vamp your social media feed that ooze sass, wittiness and female empowerment. I recommend you give these accounts a follow to help you push the negativity aside, motivate yourself and give yourself a good old confidence boost.

**Chidera Eggerue (The Slumflower)**

Author of the best selling book, *What a Time to be Alone*, Chidera Eggerue is the older sister we’ve always wanted; she empowers her (primarily female) audience by championing body positivity and promotes embracing our own uniqueness (or what society would call “flaws”) through her viral online campaign #SAGGYBOOBSMATTER.

I’ve followed her on Instagram since I was in year 10 and feel like I’ve been on a journey with her booming account as she’s been my self-help guru; guiding me throughout my teenage years from break-ups, bad skin days to periods of time where I’m just not feeling myself.

She has been a guest speaker on the BBC, TED talks and numerous podcasts, so I recommend you give those a listen for when you’re in need of a confidence boost.

**Breeny Lee**

Although a cursory glance at Breeny Lee’s Instagram feed could see you confusing it as a classic beauty and lifestyle blog, after watching Breeny Lee’s YouTube videos, you’ll see how she promotes female empowerment mostly through a relationship perspective. Fundamentally, she inspires women to “know your worth” before settling down for anything less.

Whilst I don’t necessarily agree with all of her perspectives, her analogies are powerful and can help clarify your outlook on situations you may be going through as well as your feelings towards them. Her YouTube video playlist, ‘Soul Surgery’, is a really insightful watch as she speaks through her own self-development, struggles and break-throughs.

**Recipesforselflove**

This Instagram account is made up of unique illustrations emphasising the beauty of the female psyche and her long detailed captions explore important topics such as society’s perception of menstruation, female acne, chronic illnesses, race and sexuality.

**Andri Neocleous**



# Power Within Pages: Women in Literature

Combining World Book Day and International Women's Day, Megan talks women in literature.



With World Book Day and International Women's Day being celebrated on the 7th and 8th of March this year, what better time is there to reflect on female literary characters who have defied the concept of the 'damsel in distress' cliché character?

Here are some of many powerful females in literature who inspire the readers of their stories to break away from convention and show that women can be just as heroic and strong as their male counterparts:

**Jo March – *Little Women*, Louisa May Alcott:**

The tomboy out of all her sisters, Jo March is bold, outspoken, and is never afraid to get her hands dirty. She has an incredible passion for writing, and even gets some of her stories published in newspapers throughout the book. Jo's ambition is admirable, as can be seen through her frustration at not being able to fight in the war with her father, and she never feels compelled to conform to societal needs or norms of women.

**Katniss Everdeen – *The Hunger Games* Trilogy, Suzanne Collins:**

A fighter and independent character who stands up for what she believes in, Katniss Everdeen goes from being a 16-year-old girl in the poorest district, to being the face of a revolution following victory in the 74th and 75th Annual Hunger Games. Before the games, she also is the principal provider for her family – she hunts, sells her kill to make money, and knows the survival skills essential for living in District 12 and protecting her family.

**Hermione Granger – *Harry Potter*, J.K. Rowling:**

Arguably the most intelligent character in the entire *Harry Potter* series, every girl wanted to be Hermione Granger at one point or another whilst reading these books. But it's not just her brains which make her a powerful female figure, it's also her bravery and resilience. She's not afraid to speak her mind and will defend her friends regardless of the situation. When young adults think of powerful literary figures, Hermione is always one of the first who comes to mind.

**Lady Macbeth – *Macbeth*, William Shakespeare:**

A slightly different character for my last pick. Although a dark and manipulative figure, Lady Macbeth is also very cunning and is able to control many of the male figures which surround her. We see her plotting a murder, goading her husband into killing the King, all whilst ensuring that she herself is separate from the action. Although later committing suicide due to the guilt she feels towards her actions, there is no doubt in my mind of the power she has as a character, as well as her fear factor.

**Megan Wall**

## Why I am Walking Out of Union International Women's Day

Across the UK, women & non-binary people will be striking on the 8th of March for better rights and services.

**Here's why this strike should also involve university staff and students.**

The International Women's Strike, coinciding with International Women's Day, is a global movement asking women to strike and refuse all the work we usually do in whatever capacity we can. "If women stop, the world stops with us" is one of the slogans of the strike, aiming to highlight how it is women's labour – both paid and unpaid – which sustains the world.

This is because women are highly concentrated in reproductive industries such as care work, service industries or public services and are the primary workers and carers at home, performing 26 hours of unpaid labour a week. Such crucial labour has only been made more difficult to perform by wage stagnation, privatization and benefit cuts, as austerity continues to ravage the UK. By stopping this work, we are seeking to make our absence felt and assert that we will no longer accept the conditions we endure as women and gender minorities.

Universities too are hubs of sexism and misogyny where such relationships are perpetuated. Only a few weeks ago students led a 1000-person-strong demonstration at the University of Warwick protesting management's decision to allow students, involved in a chat saturated with rape threats towards their female peers, to return to the university. The perpetrators ability to hire lawyers and threaten the victims who reported their story to the press with lawsuits was likely to have scared the university into not pursuing further disciplinary action. This incident underscores not only the levels of rape culture that continue to permeate our campuses, but how the profit seeking drive of universities is enabling it by leading them to prioritise their reputation over the wellbeing of vulnerable students.

The same ideology that is driving austerity and neoliberalism is turning universities into markets and education into a transaction, having dire effects for women. Whilst neo-liberal universities pretend to stand for equality by promoting women to high-paid positions and marketing themselves as diverse, this offers no solace to most of us.

The gender pay-gap in Higher Education stands in average at 15.9% and in its worst-case amounts to a staggering 37%. This is because more women continue to do lower paid jobs such as cleaning, in which workers are often outsourced, having little to no sick pay, maternity leave, holiday leave or pensions – something which persists whilst vice chancellors (often men) sit on six figure salaries. With a crisis of mental health blighting our campuses and little support available to students, women lecturers are also expected to take an extra unpaid shift of providing that care for students.

Finally, the perpetual diminishing of financial aid for students means more are turning to sex work to get by – a highly feminised job which remains criminalised in the UK, making for poor working conditions and insecurity.

Join us at Briggate during your lunchbreak on the 8th of March – walkout from your university and workplace to transform our campuses and society!

**More information on our Facebook page: Women's Strike Assembly Leeds.**

**Helena Navarrete Plana**



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# Selfridges – Ethical Capitalism in Action?

Alexander Wilde

Luxury department store Selfridges has announced that they will put an end to the sale of exotic animal skins, following their ban on the sale of fur in 2005. What does this actually say to us about the businesses we buy from and their social responsibilities?

From the outset, it might look like Selfridges is a shining example for other businesses. After all, over the past decade, people have increasingly emphasised the social responsibilities corporations have to animals, the environment and the impoverished. But to me, this only serves to confirm what I already believe – that a business makes an ethical decision for profit and that it's our responsibility as consumers to make sure they do so.

Businesses work based on a series of promises: the most obvious being that a consumer will exchange money for goods and services and the promise between owners and shareholders for an increased profit in exchange for investment. Often, social responsibility isn't factored into the decision making at big corporations. This, to me, is with good reason – corporations are not people.

However, there are people behind these decisions, people with bottom lines to worry about and pesky promises to keep, promises that maintain the entire

structure of the economy. Sure, Selfridges is a great example, but not of how a corporation 'ought' to behave. It's an example of how other business owners can hope to achieve higher profits, and more importantly, how we, as consumers, can get a business to behave more ethically.

I would bet a reasonable amount of my student loan that no CEO of Selfridges is waking up in the middle of the night cold and sweaty because they're worried about the crocodiles being used to make handbags. Banning the sale of exotic animal skins is just a savvy business strategy with the same amount of social justice crusading as trying to get bigger tax breaks.

But to me this is one of the wonderful things about the relatively free market under which we live. Normal consumers on the high street have an enormous amount of power over the different businesses vying for their cash. Most of us walk around in a sort of dormant haze, readily accepting business practises we find repugnant because "well corporations are just evil, aren't they? Nothing we can do."

Well no. We aren't in a kid's film from the eighties, business owners aren't one dimensional villains rubbing their hands greedily as they watch a rainforest get bulldozed. And there isn't nothing that we can do. Far from it. We can boycott, take to social media, destroy reputations and give other, more ethical,

companies our support.

We do it every day without thinking twice when a business does something trivial we don't like. Many of us know a person who refuses to use one car insurance company or another because of their dreaded adverts, or a friend on social media warning us about why a chain should be avoided due to the smallest perceived slight from a shop assistant. We have so much influence that it made national news when the Cream Egg recipe changed because of how many thousands of us swore them off. Why not direct some of that brilliant righteous indignation to major social issues?

To me, the act of a purchase is as strong as a vote; you buy from who you like, avoid who you don't, and these respective companies face the realities of their profits. Selfridges hasn't banned the sale of exotic animal skins because it, as a sentient entity, wants to. It's done it because, as consumers, we have become more ethically aware and we have begun to vote against the devastation of our world and the higher-ups in their ivory towers know that. Ethical behaviour has become profitable.

So, to be honest, do I think there's a role for business in animal rights? Yes. The role to increase profits by doing what we want. But this can only work if we pay attention and use our free market vote effectively.

# Homelessness In Leeds: What Next?

Molly Butler-Crewe

Anyone walking from university into town would struggle to miss the homeless scattered along the street. It becomes an especially noticeable problem when the cold winter months remind people of just how hard it must be for rough sleepers to sleep on the street during freezing conditions, unaware of when the next hot meal might come.

On one night in November last year, 33 rough sleepers were counted in Leeds, but the Council knows of up to 130 people who sleep rough at some point. Other problems related to homelessness have been on the rise, including the number of cases of misuse of the drug spice, which increased from 16 in September 2017 to 66 in July 2018.

Homelessness is not necessarily defined as the traditional view of not having a home to live in, visiting shelters and living rough. Invisible homelessness is on the rise, which applies to other groups of people, such as young people sofa-surfing or whole families living in the spare bedrooms of friends. This means firm statistics are always hard to establish.

Leeds Council has drafted a new plan to help eradicate homelessness in the city after the Government established its own strategy last summer to halve rough sleeping by 2022. The initiative is based around both support and prevention for the homeless. The council is aiming to have 14 rough sleepers by next year and just eight by 2022. This seems to be an incredibly optimistic goal, with much to be done to improve quality of life and prevent further homelessness. The Council has decided to place a significant emphasis on mental health and addiction treatment.

However, while mental health and addiction issues are common problems for the homeless, they may not necessarily be causes, as some find these arise whilst



out on the street. Homelessness can be an incredibly difficult cycle to break out of, with the homeless often being portrayed as lazy or their situation being their own fault. A large proportion of homeless people find themselves in their situation due to a relationship breakdown, meaning anybody could become homeless.

It is thought that, after just a few weeks of being homeless, people become engrained in the cycle and used to the street community, making it harder to leave the street.

There are many successful charities in Leeds that offer support to the homeless, like Emmaus, Leeds Housing Concern, Simon On the Streets and St George's Crypt. Students can even join the Union's volunteering society Homed. These charities work to make day to day life easier for the homeless, but also to offer support and attempt to build a relationship with rough sleepers, who can trust and rely on the charity workers.

This work is invaluable to helping the homeless

with things that quickly fall away in their lives like encouraging access to healthcare.

Anyone can help the homeless, whether that involves making sandwich runs, fundraising, or working to break the stigma surrounding people who have lost everything.

So far, not enough is being done to help those living on the streets, especially during the cold winter months that make life even harder and more dangerous.

Some progress has been made, but a huge amount more needs to be carried out to enable further counselling and help for the homeless, as well as reducing the stigma attached to homelessness. Much more must be done to support the most vulnerable homeless, including young people, LGBTQ+ people, domestic violence victims, asylum seekers and refugees. We can all do more to help our community and to help those that have fallen on hard times and had to resort to a last option.



# Rejecting Neoliberalism and the Fight Against Climate Change

Eloise Barry

The end of February saw the warmest winter day in Britain on record, just weeks after global walk-outs by school children demanding greater government action on climate change. The pupils were ironically labelled “truants” by the UK government; yet there were only ten Conservative MPs in attendance at one point during the first debate on climate change in the House of Commons in two years.

But maybe it is more than just apathy. For years, politics in Britain has been guided by the principles of neoliberalism – deregulation, privatisation, individualism – which are enemies of environmental wellbeing. While cutting public spending on welfare and public services under austerity, the government has committed £4.8 billion in subsidies to oil, coal, and gas companies since 2010, in comparison with £39 million to renewable sources, according to Greenpeace. Meanwhile, privatisation has led to a small number of big energy providers dominating the market. But who benefits from this? Britain suffers the worst levels of fuel poverty in Western Europe, affecting nearly twenty per cent of all households, while energy companies see their profits soar.

Last year, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change warned that we have twelve years in which to stop global temperatures rising by 1.5°C. President Trump’s withdrawal of the world’s second highest carbon emitter from the Paris Agreement is not the only obstacle faced to achieving this goal. The G20 nations have been accused by Oil Change International

of “talking out of both sides of their mouths” after a report by a coalition of NGOs found that G20 provides four times more public funding to fossil fuels than to renewable energy.

Furthermore, UK-based NGO Influence Map found that oil and gas provider BP, alongside other global companies, was directly responsible for blocking EU targets to increase financing for renewable energy. BP’s push for gas as an alternative led to the EU commission outlawing most clean energy subsidies. A leaked document to the Guardian in 2015 highlighted the company’s tight grip on British politicians, as senior BP officials urged ex-business minister Vince Cable “to reinforce your supply chain” in “Iraq’s oil and gas sector as [it is] a significant opportunity for UK companies.”

*“The individualistic ethos of neoliberalism is a weapon used to deflect blame from big businesses and put the onus on us ‘greedy consumerists’ to foot the bill”*

With a political system concerned with corporate interests, and an economic model obsessed with boundless growth, the buck is passed to individual citizens to make a difference. We are made to feel guilty if we do not reduce our carbon footprint by taking public transport, while rail fares have increased by thirty-seven per cent in the last ten years. We are demonised for buying clothes that are designed to fall apart, despite most sustainable

fashion being unaffordable. We are told to cut our meat and dairy consumption to reduce the associated CO2 emissions, but we are charged 20p more per litre for milk substitutes.

What we need is a political system that recognises and builds on the link between environmental and economic health. Perhaps G20 governments choose not to care because if or when environmental disaster strikes, it will be developing countries who are hit first and hit worst. Neoliberal extractivism, which exploits developing countries’ natural resources in order to top up diminishing levels of oil in the West, damages these countries first, and the rest of the world later, once the reserves have dried up.

Advocates of the energy democracy movement highlight that any transition to renewable energy is a political struggle with the oil companies. The former promotes grassroots, community-based action to create and sustain publicly owned renewable energy systems. This could particularly empower the countries already exploited by the G20 nations, bringing jobs and energy equality as well as the obvious environmental benefits.

The individualistic ethos of neoliberalism is a weapon used to deflect blame from big businesses and put the onus on us “greedy consumerists” to foot the bill. For any chance of discernible change, people need to join together to reconfigure politics. Voting for parties that put the environment at the centre of their policies is essential, because ultimately the longevity of any other policies rest on the wellbeing of the planet as a whole.

## PMQs: Scrutiny? Or Just For Show?

Harriet Davidson

Prime Ministers Questions takes place every Wednesday and is a unique chance for MPs and the opposition to question the Prime Minister. Few, if any, legislatures are given this opportunity, but I feel our parliament is not utilising its chance to host debate and hold the Prime Minister accountable.

If you even watch a minute of PMQs you will see name calling, jeering and behaviour that would not be accepted in my house! This is not just an issue on one side of the political aisle, but both. The people who are meant to be representing us and our interests are behaving like naughty children in a primary school – that’s not right. These people have been elected by the public and are the face that Britain presents to the world. Are these petty, personal and pointless squabbles the image we want?

More than just presenting Britain in a bad light, the behaviour of MPs in the chamber are letting down their constituents. They are meant to represent our interests, but the rowdy and uncontrollable nature of the Commons makes this task near on impossible. How can a backbencher make an effective point when the Prime Minister is barely listened to at times?

PMQs should be a time when policy can be debated, and the Prime Minister can be held accountable for their actions – one of the only public times for this. One example is David Cameron in 2016, criticising the opposition leader, Jeremy Corbyn, for the way he was

dressings rather than what he was saying about the NHS. The debate is not focussed on the issues, but rather used by the Prime Minister and the leader of the opposition for petty, political point scoring. Even this week Laura Kuenssberg noted that the debate concerning Brexit during PMQs was nothing more than the “usual ritualistic formulae.”

Therefore, it’s difficult to argue that MPs and ministers are using PMQs in the best way possible when on one of the biggest political issues that Britain has faced in a generation, debate simply follows a formula.

But it is more than just PMQs where it feels that meaningful debate is lacking, it is the Commons in general. With the constant jeering and attacks to gain media attention, it is difficult to see where oversight and policy debate really takes place. It has been suggested that the leaders of the main parties should meet to try and improve the behaviour of their MPs, but, considering the personal attacks between the leaders alone, this looks unlikely.

Jeering and rowdy behaviour distracts from the issues at hand and limits the quality of debate possible in the House of Commons. This is an issue that needs to be dealt with because, as the country goes through the Brexit process, and commons and parties appear more divided than ever, effective scrutiny and meaningful debate is key for the future of our country.

The nature of parliament is built into its design; with



the two opposing party leaders facing each other and the opposite benches, heated debate is encouraged.

However, while rowdiness is to be expected, that doesn’t mean debate has to be meaningless and not focused on policy. While the nature of parliament has always been loud and boisterous, in recent years there has been an increase in personal attacks and debate has consequently suffered. This is particularly evident in PMQs, where each side simply use it as a way to grab the media’s attention.

So, while debate can’t always be fully effective, we should expect more than what we get now. The behaviour of our MPs is letting us down. They are not using the opportunities given, particularly at PMQs, to carry out the job they were elected to do. We deserve better than the Commons are giving us.



# An Hour's More Sleep a Day Keeps Bad Grades Away?

Michael Turnbull

A recent petition to allow later starts to the school day was debated in parliament last week, and was met with mixed responses from MPs. The petition, signed by over 180,000 people, argued that teenagers are simply too tired to be starting school at 9am, which in turn is impacting their productivity and overall results.

Recent projects like Teensleep have been conducted by scientists to provide sleep education programmes in a select number of schools. Meanwhile, other colleges such as Sir George Monoux Sixth Form College in east London have been trialling a 10am start, garnering very positive feedback from staff and students. But is there a scientific case for this, or are teenagers just exercising their angst by trying to pass off their laziness for alleged sleep deprivation?

According to the National Sleep Foundation, adolescents, as well as younger children, need an average of 8 ½ to 9 ¼ hours sleep a night to ensure optimal performance, health and brain development. However, surveys have shown that, by the end of secondary school, most teens are getting on average fewer than seven hours sleep per night, and report feeling tired during the school day as a result. This is due to a biological shift in teenagers' body clocks called a sleep phase delay, that is caused by melatonin secretions occurring later in the evening for teens as they mature. Hence, adolescents fall asleep later –

and therefore wake up later than adults or younger children.

The Teensleep project, provided schools with ten pilot sessions to educate their pupils about sleep education. The results, however, were somewhat mixed. Whilst the study suggested an improvement in sleep-related behaviour – for instance, the students reported napping less – no evidence was found to support that students' sleep in general was improved. Furthermore, the study showed that 25 per cent of teenagers had clinically poor sleep. Would a universal shift to a 10am start be worth it if only a quarter of students would benefit?

Interestingly though, studies have also shown that circadian rhythms in teens can be reset with light exposure management. In other words, if adolescents refrain from using their phones or electronic devices for at least half an hour before sleeping, as well as wearing eyeshades to block out natural light, melatonin secretions (to trigger sleep) moved significantly towards a desired time. Clearly it would be difficult to encourage all teenagers to do this, but if education about this was given in schools, it would make a big difference. Even in doing research for this article, I came across tips that I did not know which would improve my somewhat questionable current sleeping pattern.

In my personal experience, waking up for school was never an issue – granted I lived a ten-minute walk from my school, but still. To be honest, even

when it was difficult for me to wake up at 7:30, particularly during Sixth Form, it was out of pure laziness and bad sleeping habits. I would argue that my body clock and fatigue are far worse now than they ever were in school, and I think it is because I am no longer waking up at a set time and executing a set routine five days a week.

Perhaps a 10am start would benefit pupils and boost student performance, but I think the key issue is the lack of awareness concerning good sleeping habits for teenagers. Make sleep education part of the curriculum first, and then if students are still struggling, adjust the timetable. A later start on its own will not achieve a great deal.



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# Gender Bias in Job Ads: Subtle or Strong?

Will Southall

It will come as no surprise to hear that employers are no longer allowed to use any form of discrimination when hiring new staff. Anti-discrimination acts have been in place for many years and, on the face of it, they seem to do the job. But more recently, evidence has suggested that the way job advertisements are presented can result in attracting more applicants from a particular gender and ultimately lead to a sustained lack of diversity in the workplace.

A number of different research studies suggest that the way in which a job advert is worded can have a profound impact on the ratio of male to female applicants. Back in 2011, the Journal of Personality and Social Psychology published a report, which claimed that “women were less likely to believe they belonged in a particular job when the advertisement used masculine wording.” In 2016, these findings were backed up by an augmented writing platform called Textio who, after further research into the use of language in job applications, also found similar patterns. They suggested that there are a number of key words and phrases which, when used in an advert for a job, would result in significantly more men to apply than women, or visa-versa.

So, what are these male or female orientated words? Well, it has been suggested that men are particularly drawn in by applications which contain the

following words: ‘leader’, ‘competitive’, ‘dominant’, ‘fearless’ and ‘enforcement’. Women, on the other hand, are supposedly more enticed by job adverts which use words such as: ‘transparent’, ‘support’, ‘interpersonal’ and ‘understand’.

*“Perhaps the next logical step is to add advice on how to avoid gendered wording in recruitment, so that wage disparities don’t arise before men and women have even started working”*

Whilst it cannot be proven that we all fall subject to the use of gendered wording, the research does show a significant correlation between adverts using words associated with male characteristics and jobs which tend to be male dominated. The concern is that raising the likelihood of a particular gender applying for a role, increases the chance of gender disparity within the workplace and even more worryingly enforces gender and social stereotypes which surround certain occupations.

Adzuna, the search engine for job advertisements, carried out extensive research into the area last year. They discovered that consultancy job adverts had the most male bias and domestic help and cleaning adverts had the most female bias. This could go some way to help explain the sustained gender pay

gap, because it seems the best paying occupations have been putting off women from applying and the worst paid occupations are predominantly targeted at women.

It seems that there is therefore an argument for stronger rules to be put in place when it comes to discrimination before and during employment. The government website already states that where you advertise might cause indirect discrimination, such as advertising in men’s magazines only. So, perhaps the next logical step forward would be for the government to add advice on how to avoid gendered wording in recruitment, so that wage disparities don’t arise before men and women have even started working.



Image: Marketing Week

## Sexism Doesn’t Fly With Us

Annabel White

Earlier this week, Virgin Atlantic announced that their air hostesses would no longer be required to wear make-up on the job. The airline also included a trouser option for its female employees, a luxury they previously did not have. Whilst many have been praising Virgin for taking the first step towards combating sexism in the aviation industry, it does make us question how we made it into 2019 without change occurring sooner. It only takes a look into other airline policies to understand the misogyny that continues to characterise the industry today. Established airlines, such as British Airways and American Airlines, maintain the make-up enforcement and many companies take the issue a step further by requiring flight attendants to wear heels during the flight. In January, Pakistan International Airlines gave all flight attendants a ‘6-month warning’ to comply with newly enforced weight limits, justifying this policy as concern to keep employees “slim, smart and fit.”

It is incomprehensible that airlines continue to get away with such blatant forms of discrimination. So, before we run to congratulate Virgin Atlantic for their move in the right direction, we should consider how the airline industry sexualises their female employees from the moment they set foot on the aircraft. Recent surveys indicate that the majority of female flight attendants have experienced harassment at the

hands of their passengers. In 2017, the problem hit headlines when a Scottish passenger was prosecuted after verbally attacking a female flight attendant by shouting “get your tits out!” and “show us your minge!” during a flight to Ibiza. It is sadly unsurprising that passengers adopt this mentality considering the message promoted by the airlines themselves.

Let’s look at budget airline Ryanair as an example. Their infamous cabin crew calendar, which is sold in-flight, features bikini shots of real staff members. Whilst it is understandable that airlines want to promote a glamorous flying experience for passengers, this excuse in no way stretches to the obvious sexualisation and degradation of its employees. Any customer’s motivation for flying with Ryanair, or any other budget airline, is always cost-driven. No British Airways gold cardholder is going to choose Ryanair because of an increased chance that they would be surrounded by attractive flight attendants. Not only is this type of marketing offensive, it is unnecessary.

But we can apply this message to many other industries. The aviation industry highlights an

example of misogyny that exists in many other sectors. We only need to recall the 2016 Nicola Thorp scandal, whereby a PwC receptionist was sent home for not wearing heels in the office, to understand that the problem does not just lie 50,000 feet in the air. Men are valued in the workplace for their job, whilst women are valued for their appearance. There is a clear difference between requesting formality and discriminating against workers and this is a concept that, across many industries, we are failing to grasp.

For the time being, we should not jump to pat Richard Branson on the back for his respect for women. We should instead use this policy change to assess how much harder we must work to combat the sexism that continues to haunt the workplace.



Image: Conde Nast



# Women in Leadership Improving Inclusivity for All

Julia Constable  
Business Editor

According to the World Economic Forum, it will take over 200 years to close the global gender pay gap. Globally, women are paid only 63% of what their male counterparts earn, but as females remain underrepresented at every level in the corporate sphere, is significant change within our lifetime possible?

Less than 29% of FTSE 100 board positions are held by women. Worldwide, only 10 women are serving as Head of Government and only 11 women are serving as Head of State. In the UK, fewer than one in five small to medium-sized enterprises are led by women. The facts speak for themselves: women in leadership roles are almost as rare as unicorns. But in a fast-paced world, in which the 24-hour news cycle reports endlessly on disastrous events across the globe, it's easy to become desensitised to the stark reality of the gender gap problem.

However, for Sophie Tew, President of the Leeds University Union Women in Leadership Society (WILS), empowering women to become catalysts for social change is her number one priority. The mission of the society is to "empower students to reach their full potential irrespective of gender, ethnicity, social status or religion," with a view to creating a more diverse and inclusive wider world and workforce. Sophie believes that the core value of the society is inclusivity: "we can't reach gender equality without including men. The society is not just for self-identifying women, but in fact for all people who want to champion female leadership, from any background."

The society doesn't just pay lip-service to this promise of inclusivity and equality: membership to the society is free and WILS only partner and collaborate with firms that reflect their shared values. Often, this means extensive research into the gender board reports of potential sponsors and the initiatives that speakers have supported to enact social change and promote diversity. Declining sponsorships or speakers from certain firms who don't meet these criteria is

only one of the many ways in which the society fights back against exclusivity. Sophie explains that the society "has four different sectors and is trying to reach out to students in finance, business, arts and humanities as well as STEM" and is committed to creating a "conversation and dialogue which calls out the problems we are facing" as a society.

Having been founded in 2017, the society has been growing exponentially ever since and now has over 1000 members. But they're still looking to expand further: "we are privileged enough to attend a great university and have opportunities that some people don't have access to so we want to use this privilege to support others and gain support ourselves. We want to support and encourage more students to have the confidence to own their skills and talent and go into the workforce to become a leader in that industry."

Are such ambitious goals really achievable? So far, WILS has hosted an incredible list of events and campaigns to get the ball rolling. Numerous high-profile speakers have given motivational speeches and advice based on their personal experiences in the workforce; Labour Party MP for Leeds West, Rachel Reeves, discussed the barriers facing women in politics; Funmi Abari, Student Doctor and founder of the Empower Us Project spoke about the challenges of maintaining work-life balance as a young professional and mum-of-two; Richard McCann, motivational speaker and Sunday Times No. 1 bestselling author, explained his tremendous effort to navigate life through trauma after his mother was murdered by the Yorkshire Ripper when he was just five years old.

In addition to a whole host of speakers from diverse and representative backgrounds, WILS has also launched the #FirstTo online campaign to highlight the stories of men and women who have been the first in their family to do something, such as attend university or move away from their home. "Considering the university has quite a large population of middle class students whose parents have attended university before, we thought that it was necessary to raise awareness of the challenges First generation students face and to celebrate the First gen!"

Sophie's passion and commitment to social mobility has become a key driver for change and a core value behind the ethos of Women in Leadership Society; Sophie herself is an Associate for upReach, a UK charity which helps disadvantaged students to realise their potential. Not only does the charity support those from underprivileged backgrounds, the initiative also champions students from black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) groups. Successful candidates for the Associate position receive free careers support, as well as mentoring to help improve their employability skills. As part of this initiative, Sophie attended the upReach Student Social Mobility Awards ceremony held at the House of Lords in December 2018, enabling her to connect with people with similar stories to hers: "you need to be able to see people who look like you

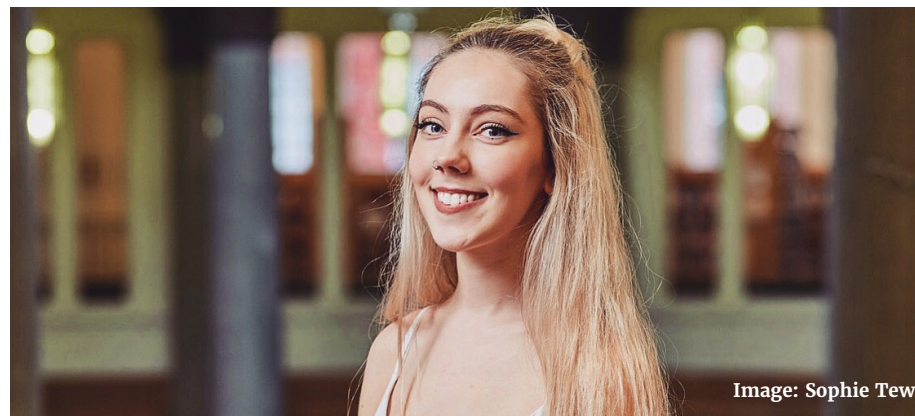


Image: Sophie Tew

and talk like you to then be able to envision yourself in their position and have that confidence that you don't have to be a white man who speaks in Received Pronunciation to be successful."

This key message inspires the WILS mentoring scheme, where third year students are paired with freshers in order to offer them support and advice and bridge the confidence gap which often holds people back. Having the confidence to strive for success can be made easier by hearing from those who have actually achieved their goals, regardless of their initial circumstances. Combining this mentoring scheme with key speakers and events is all part of Sophie's aim to show that "there is no one model of a woman and what women in leadership look like... you can be the definition of what it is, you and your traits and your characteristics."

Ultimately, to enact real social change, we all need to fight for equality of opportunity and inclusivity. Women in Leadership Society is a small but fiercely significant part of this movement to ensure that "fairness of opportunity doesn't just start at university."

If you want to be part of the change that we need to see, WILS are launching their gender pay gap coffee campaign in the Union this Friday: female customers pay less for their coffee proportional to the University of Leeds reported pay gap of 22.5%. Sophie encourages everyone to get involved and "grab a coffee on International Women's Day to engage in conversation about supporting more women from all backgrounds to become leaders!"



Image: Sophie Tew



Image: Sophie Tew





# FACT: 89% of Statistics Online and in the Media are Misrepresented

**Alec Sims**  
Science Editor

A petition to ban plastic water bottles from the Leeds University Union Co-op gained traction earlier this week, securing over 1500 signatures in 48 hours. As with any controversial issue, an assortment of vicious social media skirmishes were started and fought to their bloody finish beneath Facebook's blue banners; comments, replies and reactions whistling ominously overhead. These battles are usually futile – nobody's ever changed their mind because of a Facebook comment.

Then a point was made that caught the eye: "while we're on the subject, fishing is responsible for 50 per cent of the world's plastic pollution." A statistic! A somewhat irrelevant one to the point at hand, but at least an attempt to support an argument with actual data. And staggering data at that. So staggering indeed, it beggared belief. It certainly merited a Google.

The search revealed this statistic is, essentially, as garbage as the floating masses of rubbish to which it refers. Despite appearing on a multitude of vegan sites, the main source of this 'fact' is a (published and peer reviewed) Great Ocean Cleanup (GOC) study which found 46 per cent of the trash in the Great Pacific Garbage Patch – the largest floating mass of rubbish in our oceans – to be fishing gear.

However, at a total 80,000 tonnes, the GPGP is not representative of the entire ocean (the study estimates we pump between 6 and 13 million tonnes of plastic into our oceans each year) and the same study goes on to estimate "fishing, aquaculture and shipping to be responsible for 28.1 per cent of global plastic inputs into the ocean." Still an astonishing figure, a disturbing one, and one that demands action.

But it's 28 per cent (not 50); it's fishing, shipping,

and aquaculture (not exclusively fishing); and it's the oceans (not the entire world). The data from the study had been mangled and reformed to drive home the appropriate (in this case, vegan) agenda.

It might seem incredibly pedantic to pick out the detail in a single social media comment but it's symptomatic of a wider problem.

*"Influencers and the media... should be delivering the data in a way that accurately reflects its significance instead of converting it into clickbait"*

Well researched and rigorous academic studies and convincing figures are consistently reduced to drivel in order to make a point. And to be clear, this isn't the users' fault – people read the headline figure, see it is supported by a study or numerical data, and (appropriately) are convinced. See: £350 million a week for our NHS.

The responsibility lies with influencers and the media, who should be delivering the data in a way that accurately reflects its significance instead of converting it into clickbait and/or politically motivated garbage. Without proper interpretation, energy and action will always be misdirected, and the road to solving these critical issues simply becomes more convoluted.

This is particularly evident in another example that recently resurfaced in a widely-circulated post, the 'it gets worse' speech from Facebook user/influencer Marc Doll.

Very emotive and convincing stuff, and featuring a rephrasing of the eternally popular 'Just 100 companies are responsible for 71 per cent of global emissions' stat. An old friend for smacking the nasty big business companies over the head and for salving any of our own guilt about excessive consumption, it's a statistic that fundamentally suggests the key to battling greenhouse gas emissions and climate change lies in holding these companies accountable. But this isn't the case.

First, this report considers 'industrial emissions', and so omits the contributions of land use, forestry, and agriculture – all well established and significant

contributors.

Second, the report assigns to these companies what it refers to as 'Scope 3' emissions, which represent those released by the end user when they combust fossil fuels for energy: i.e. coal in a power plant or petrol in a tank. These 'Scope 3' emissions make up 90 per cent of those considered in the report.

This is why all 100 companies in the report are fossil fuel extractors/producers/sellers. These companies should be working to develop alternative fuel sources, yes, but the data shows onus lies with us on the demand side too.

In any event, climate change hasn't arisen solely from a bunch of heavily moustached and top-hatted big business barons cackling evilly in front of a furnace as the misappropriated statistic suggests.

So how do we go about tackling the issue? It's certainly disconcerting to think that, in the age of click-bait, the headline figures from the Guardian, Telegraph etc. are often about as reliably reported as the 'study shows gin drinkers are sexier' numbers from BuzzFeed.

*"Real data doesn't make great news, and isn't as exciting as the fantatised figures we end up receiving"*

We need better and less politicised interpretations of the data, and there are some great sources: Full Fact are an independent fact-checking charity, and podcasts like the BBC's More or Less help build an appropriate level of statistical cynicism. A great way to be sure of what the study is saying is to have a read yourself – and for this most of the time, the introduction is plenty.

Though not every academic study is reliable (think the original anti-vaxers), we should at least be able to trust our influencers and media to report their findings accurately.

But real data just doesn't make great news, and isn't as exciting as the fanaticised figures we end up receiving. They make for a very powerful point in an argument, but as long as they persist, we'll continue to misdirect the public's energy and action.

*"It might seem incredibly pedantic to pick out a detail in a single social media comment but it's symptomatic of a wider problem"*



# A Blue Planet Short on Water

**Laura Krusin**  
Science Writer

Earth is commonly referred to as ‘The blue planet’ by astrophysicists, documentaries, and David Attenborough himself. But for a ‘blue planet’, we are drastically short of usable water. From space, the earth looks like a sphere of water, but the vast majority of this is salt water. Only 1 per cent of the water on the planet is fresh, and of this 1 per cent, only 1 per cent can be easily accessed from lakes and rivers, with the rest locked in ice sheets or mountain snow. So, it’s fair to say our supply of available drinking water is actually pretty scarce.

Water shortages are an issue felt globally and haven’t been limited to areas with arid climates.

Cities once considered pioneers in the world of water have felt the impact of recent droughts. Even Rome, famous for harnessing freshwater since the days of its empire with aqueducts, had to turn off all public water fountains in the city in 2017 due to a shortage of water. Such events are not a rarity and are indeed increasing due to mismanagement and lack of governance around water.

No limits are put on usage until a drought is imminent, it is fairly cheap in most countries and many resources require water for their production. All of these factors lead to an overuse of water by both businesses and the public. When did you last think about how much water your shower uses? Or how much it costs? Probably not a thought that crosses your mind very often; the UK rarely feels the strain of

water shortage and it’s far from most people’s biggest cost.

However, with climate change worsening, the occurrence of droughts and water shortages is increasing and will continue to increase if we maintain a business as usual approach. Despite vast research into the exploitation of water and ways to prevent it, we still use it like it’s going out of fashion. The consequence of this is that, by 2040, as many as two billion people will be affected by a groundwater shortage as we will be extracting more than aquifers can replace. This will affect agriculture as well as the environment, and could exacerbate social unrest and economic issues.

Furthermore, industries like fast fashion are exacerbating the problem by using vast amounts of water, as well as polluting the supplies we do have with chemicals and heavy metals from clothing dyes. An example of this excess consumption can be found in the production of cotton goods, with the production of one cotton t-shirt requiring 2,700 litres of water, more than one person’s drinking water for three years. And yes, that is how much just ONE t-shirt requires. The loss of the Aral Sea, once the fourth largest inland sea, and the presence of arsenic in drinking water, have both been attributed to this overuse. It might well be that curbing your shopping habit is an effective way of saving water worldwide.

It is not only fast fashion exploiting the limited fresh water we have on this planet, as the production of drinks such as Coca Cola is also contributing to shortages. It has been suggested that producing one litre of Coca Cola can take up to nine litres of water. And this process is happening in some of the world’s most arid regions already, such as Rajasthan in India.

Fast fashion, fizzy drinks, and rising global temperatures are all contributing to the disappearance of our water. Not only does this increase desertification and therefore the loss of important biodiversity, it also impacts human health. If the impact on our own health is not enough to help us reduce our exploitation of water, what will be?



Image: Sanbi.com

**Anna Davison**  
Science Writer

Probably best known for its red list, in which the status of species are classified from least concern to extinct, the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) is heavily consulted by researchers in a wide variety of fields. While the list acts to provide a wealth of knowledge to inform conservation efforts worldwide, it is far from comprehensive. Many species are listed as data deficient, a category making up 18 per cent of all animal species evaluated, or simply not listed at all. This lack of data is also not distributed evenly through the taxonomic groups, with less than one- per cent of birds listed as data deficient

compared to 22 per cent of amphibians. So, while the IUCN provides an excellent resource for the more charismatic endangered species, those not so gifted in the looks department can receive less attention and therefore enjoy reduced conservation efforts.

Of course, it takes a long time to evaluate and classify each species and some habitats are not particularly hospitable, making data hard to gather. Species with small populations are also inherently hard to find, making them more likely to be listed as data deficient, when often their status should be closer to endangered. This is the case with two species of anole lizards on Utila island in Honduras which have been assessed by local scientists to be at least vulnerable, if not critically endangered, but currently

## Lacklustre Red List: The IUCN’s Endangered Omissions

don’t even feature in the huge database of species on the IUCN red list website. These lizards occur in such a small area that any change to their habitat can be devastating, and neglecting to include them in the list means they get less attention from prospective researchers and conservationists.

But how can we increase the number of species assessed without decreasing the quality of the evaluations? There is no easy solution, but not knowing which species are at risk and why is a dangerous situation to be in. In an age of accelerating extinction, it is difficult not to recognise the futility of conservation efforts. However, as the climate change strikes prove, there is hope that new generations can drive change for the better.



# Battling Broncos Buck the Odds

Newly promoted London Broncos claim an early and surprising scalp with a win over troubled Wigan.



Image: Rugby-league.com

**Jonathan Burnett**  
Rugby League

Reigning champions Wigan Warriors remain without a point in Super League 2019 having succumbed to an 18-16 defeat at the hands of newly promoted London Broncos.

Reminiscent of a champion side, the Warriors got onto the front foot early, with youngster Liam Paisley crashing over from close-range with ten minutes on

the clock.

Second-Row Willie Isa added Wigan's second on the half-hour mark, again going over from close range following a set play on London's line.

The Broncos' response to this was swift and skilful. A smart ruck play between London's front-rowers resulted in Eddie Battye outmuscling the Wigan defenders to score. 27-year-old Battye, in his first season in Super League, is looking more and more like a top-flight prop by the week.

No sooner had Battye's try been converted than London were in again, Matty Gee's fantastic take from a Jordan Abdull grubber put the Broncos' back rower under the posts, sending their fans into uproar.

London were gifted an extension to their lead after half-time by Wigan's own doing. A seemingly-well executed back-line move came up short at the final hurdle when winger Tom Davies knocked on with the Broncos' line at his mercy. The loose ball was quickly snapped up by London's Kieran Dixon, who raced away untouched to score a 100-metre special and put his side ahead by a converted try.

The Broncos' surprise lead clearly frustrated the ill-disciplined Warriors, who conceded a penalty for holding down just 20 metres from their own posts. Dixon gladly took the chance to extend his side's lead to eight points and raise his own personal tally to ten.

Wigan's eventual response finally came in the 58th minute. An orthodox play close to London's line saw Tony Clubb barrel over against his former club, closing the gap to just four points. Zak Hardaker nailed the conversion, but his earlier miss from Paisley's early try meant Wigan still trailed 18-16.

The resolute Broncos defence held out for the final quarter of the match, to give the newly promoted side a famous victory in the capital. The champions, wearing their crown rather shakily in 2019, remain without a point so far this season.

Although a successful appeal to their salary-cap-related points deduction will get Wigan's points tally up and running this season, they remain languishing near the bottom of the table; below London, whose famous victory will surely give them hope that they can stay in the Super League beyond 2019.

# Tom Daley – Back with a Splash

Tom Daley took away two medals in his return to diving, at the World Diving Series in Sagamihara, Japan.



Image: Twitter-@britishswimming

**Millie Frain**  
Diving

Tom Daley took away two medals in his return to diving, at the World Diving Series in Sagamihara, Japan.

Balancing parenthood and competing on an international level may seem impossible for many, yet British diver Tom Daley proved his talent once again by winning two medals on his return to the diving board since becoming a father in June 2018.

The Plymouth-born diver shares a son with his husband Dustin Lance Black, with the couple previously admitting they are "besotted" with their boy, Robbie Ray. Yet it was back to business for Daley last week, who competed at the season-opening Diving World Series in Japan.

The former World Champion won silver in the men's 10m platform and bronze in the mixed 3m synchro with Grace Reid, as well as narrowly missing out on another medal, claiming fourth place in the 10m synchro with his new partner Matty Lee.

This marks a huge achievement for Daley, who told BBC Sport "if anyone had said I was going to come into this with 580 points, I would have taken that and ran with it."

He still has a chance to go one better though, with the next World Series event being held in China, where he will come up against his rival Yang Jian, who beat him to gold in Japan.

However, Daley wasn't far behind Yang Jian on the scoreboard, with the Brit falling short by just 6.35 points, although Yang will have home advantage in Beijing.

Despite Daley's achievements, he will need to be mindful of China's dominance. In the synchro events, they finished with two additional gold medals, and in both the men and women's 3m springboard the Chinese won gold and silver medals. But Daley was not the only Brit to claim a spot on the podium, with British diver Jack Laugher achieving third in the men's 3m springboard.

Nobody can deny Daley's had an eventful few years, which saw him lose his father, who acted as his coach, and then becoming a parent for the first time. Perhaps this is what is most remarkable about his return to the sport, claiming medals left, right and centre. After taking time out to prioritise his child, many now see him as a strong competitor to help take Great Britain to the next level in the upcoming competitions.



# UFC 235: Jones vs Smith

Jones retained his Light Heavyweight title against Anthony Smith, despite an illegal strike almost leading to the champion’s own DQ.



Image: Zuffa LLC

**Udit Shankar**  
Mixed Martial Arts

Jon Jones produced a dominant display to defeat Anthony Smith via unanimous decision at UFC 235, retaining his light-heavyweight title.

In a punishing five-round contest, Jones outgrappled and outstruck the 30-year-old Smith, using a wide array of kicks to control distance, which prevented Smith from entering the pocket to utilise his close-range striking skills. Jones came into the fight as the overwhelming favourite and whilst this was not the type of vintage display that many fans have become accustomed to, all three judges scored the contest 48-44.

However, the night could have ended very differently. During the fourth round, Jones landed an illegal knee to Smith’s head causing referee Herb Dean to call a timeout. Dean then consulted Smith who agreed to continue much to the relief of Jones. Had Smith said that he was unable to continue, Dean would have awarded him a win by disqualification and consequently, the light-heavyweight title. Instead, Jones was only deducted two points.

When Joe Rogan brought up the incident in the post-fight interview, Smith said, “I know as well as anyone, I could have sat there and taken the DQ win, but, man, I wanna win and I don’t wanna steal it.”

In the co-main event, Nigerian Kamaru Usman stunned the world to claim a dominant unanimous decision (50-44, 50-44 and 50-45) victory over long-time champion, Tyron Woodley. Over five rounds, Usman wore down arguably the greatest welterweight of all time, outgrappling Woodley whilst hitting him with a constant flow of body shots. Usman extended his winning streak to 14 fights and maintained his unbeaten UFC record, whilst also becoming the first African-born UFC champion.

34-year-old ‘Funky’ Ben Askren also made his long-

awaited UFC debut. Ever since the UFC announced his signing, Askren has not shied away from calling out other fighters, with his trash-talking quickly making him a fan favourite.

However, in the first minute of his octagon debut, it seemed he had already met his match in the form of former UFC welterweight champion Robbie Lawler. Lawler slammed Askren to the canvas head first in spectacular fashion before unloading a barrage of strikes, which opened up a significant cut on the side of the newcomer’s face. With the fight close to being stopped, a visibly dazed Askren managed to get to his feet, reverting to his famed grappling skills to regain his composure.

Minutes later, Askren secured a bulldog choke and Lawler’s right arm went limp. Dean thus stopped the contest assuming Lawler had passed out. However, Lawler leapt to his feet immediately after Askren released him. Lawler initially protested the stoppage, but in a display of respect for the sport and Dean, he accepted the result before congratulating Askren. Given the controversial stoppage, Askren’s post fight interview was arguably cocky with him crowing to Dana White “is that the best you’ve got?”

In the night’s other fights, former bantamweight champion Cody Garbrandt’s bid to work his way back into title contention was dealt a major blow as he was knocked out in the first round by Brazilian Pedro Munhoz. Meanwhile, rising Dagestani star Zabit Magomedsharipov secured a close-fought unanimous decision victory over veteran Jeremy Stephens. 26-year-old Brazilian light-heavyweight Johnny Walker secured a spectacular flying knee knockout over Canadian Misha Cirkunov after just 36 seconds. However, in celebration, he attempted the ‘worm’, but dislocated his shoulder in the process, much to his own amusement. “If I can survive myself, I can survive anyone else”, Walker joked whilst being propped up by his trainer.



### BUCS Fixtures 13th March

Full Fixtures and Results at [bucs.org.uk](http://bucs.org.uk)

Badminton Womens 2nd vs Beckett 1st  
2.30pm, The Edge

Badminton Mens 2nd vs Beckett 1st  
2.30pm, The Edge

Badminton Mens 3rd vs York St John 1st  
2.30pm, The Edge

Basketball Mens 1st vs Sheffield 1st  
5.30pm, The Edge

Basketball Mens 2nd vs Teeside 1st  
7.30pm, The Edge

Football Womens 1st vs Northumbria 2nd  
2pm, Sports Park Weetwood

Football Mens 1st vs York 1st  
2pm, Sports Park Weetwood

Football Mens 2nd vs Sheffield Hallam 3rd  
1.45pm, Bodington Playing Fields

Football Mens 4th vs Leeds Trinity 3rd  
2.15pm, Bodington Playing Fields

Hockey Womens 2nd vs Beckett 2nd  
12pm, Hockey Pitch, Headingley Campus

Hockey Womens 4th vs Sheffield 4th  
2.30pm, Sports Park Weetwood

Hockey Mens 5th vs York 2nd  
1pm, Sports Park Weetwood

Lacrosse Womens 2nd vs Newcastle 2nd  
3pm, Bodington Playing Fields

Lacrosse Mens 1st vs Durham 2nd  
1pm, Bodington Playing Fields

Netball Womens 2nd vs Sheffield 1st  
1.30pm, Gryphon Sports Centre

Netball Womens 5th vs York 2nd  
3.30pm, Gryphon Sports Centre

Rugby League Mens 2nd vs Hallam 1st  
2.30pm, Bodington Playing Fields

Rugby Union Mens 2nd vs Beckett 4th  
2pm, West Park Rugby Club, LS16 9JR

Rugby Union Mens 3rd vs Huddersfield 1st  
2pm, Sports Park Weetwood

Rugby Union Mens 4th vs Beckett 5th  
2pm, Bodington Playing Fields

Squash Womens 2nd vs Durham 3rd  
2.30pm, Gryphon Sports Centre

Squash Mens 2nd vs Durham 1st  
1.30pm, Gryphon Sports Centre

Tennis Mens 2nd vs York 2nd  
12pm, David Lloyd Leeds



# University of Leeds: Social Sport



Image: Will Pickworth, pictured third from left.

## The Gryphon spoke to George Hewetson, captain of Free Entry Before XI, about the benefits of participating in a Social Sport league.

**Will Pickworth**  
Football

Playing sport at university can be intimidating or unreachable, so it is testament to the University of Leeds that they provide opportunities for participation through Social Sport leagues.

They run netball leagues and 5, 7 and 11-a-side football leagues. The majority of these teams in the various leagues are societies such as Business, History and Engineering departments. However, there are a few, and in what seems to be a growing trend, non-societal teams competing amongst the societies. This week, The Gryphon spoke to George Hewetson, captain of Free Entry Before XI, who play in the Wednesday Football 11-a-side league.

Free Entry are predominantly made up of fourth years who have returned from placement years or years abroad. Hewetson saw the opportunity to play “officiated 90-minute competitive games of football with your mates on exceptional university sports facilities” as one too good to miss, citing the alluring £150 sign-up fee compared to hefty prices to play at other places such as Powerleague or Goals. He was aware of interest from some other friends about setting up a side who were similarly “frustrated at a

lack of competitive sports opportunities” and, once inquiring about the opportunity he “jumped on it.”

In terms of organisation, Hewetson acknowledged that the initial effort required in “organising kit, collecting funds, setting up a Facebook page and sorting training slots” was time consuming. However, he pronounced the effort as “so worthwhile”, labelling Wednesday afternoons as “the highlight of the week”, seeing the opportunity to play competitive football as a “great break away from a hectic final year workload.”

Looking at the highs, Free Entry finished in fifth position out of 10 teams last semester and are currently in fourth place this semester, just three points off current leaders, Leeds Medics & Dentists. From a team that was unfamiliar at the start of the year, with a variety of mutual friendship groups, the captain takes great pride at the “drastic improvement in the level of performances coinciding with the increased togetherness of the group”, with the team securing some fantastic wins along the way. A core group of players has now emerged from the team which Hewetson “considers amongst his closest mates”, demonstrating the social and physical benefits of organised sport.

As is the case with a group of mates setting up a

team, there have been socials that have enabled a great team spirit to be built, with an Otley Run capping off their season this semester.

Social sports often suffer with low turnouts as other priorities crop up throughout the university term such as deadlines. Nevertheless, Hewetson believes a successful team can be built through providing “minutes for everyone, while maintaining a competitive, will-to-win mentality, which creates a team spirit and means that there are no issues with regards to turnout.”

His only regret is not setting up a team sooner during previous years at university and advises anyone thinking about doing so to be organised and ready to enter as spaces in the league are highly competitive, so soon fill up. Ultimately, he believes the key to running a team is to “find a core group of mates who are keen, as no doubt others will soon show further interest.”

The story of one of the University’s flagship social sport teams, Free Entry Before XI, is fascinating and should be a great example to anyone thinking of setting up a team. At its core, It shows the great opportunities that the University of Leeds provides for its students that want to play sports competitively, enjoy themselves and build lasting friendships.



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