



THE GRYPHON

The official newspaper of Leeds University

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Image: Robbie Cairns

The End of 'Essay Mills'

Universities have sought to bring about a ban on professional essay writing services.

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A discussion on the motives behind skin-lightening products, as well as their dangers.

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University of Leeds Takes Varsity Crown

Ian White
Newspaper Associate Editor

The University of Leeds recorded its first ever Varsity win last night, ending a run of 13 straight defeats.

Despite a humbling defeat to Leeds Beckett in the rugby finale at Headingley Stadium, the University of Leeds were victorious in the overall competition.

Beckett have traditionally dominated the annual contest, having won the competition every year since its inception in 2005. But it was Leeds Uni who pipped them to the post in a tightly fought contest.

With 30 wins to Beckett's 29, the underdogs secured an extremely close run and hard fought victory over their local rivals.

Wednesday was, however, a night to forget for Leeds Uni fans, who saw their rugby team outclassed by a rampant Beckett side who ran out 51-5 winners in a one sided contest.

Lauren Huxley, the Activities Officer for Leeds University Union, was there to lift the trophy on behalf of the Leeds Uni sports teams.

Speaking after celebrations had died down, Lauren said:

"For the first time ever we triumphed over Leeds Beckett in the overall scores at Varsity and took the Trophy! I'd like to send a huge congratulations to everyone who was involved - we are so proud of every team, every member, and everyone who helped with the fixtures and events in any way."

Over 10,000 students from the University of Leeds and Leeds Beckett crammed into Headingley stadium to hear news of the historic win, which was announced at half time.

The atmosphere was slightly subdued amongst the Leeds Uni fans, however, due to the ongoing redevelopment of the North stand.

For the full match-report, turn to page 23.



Exclusive Corbyn Interview

Turn to page 7



Editor of the Week

Meg Firth

While working round the clock to edit ITM, Meg also published her own magazine, *Nice People*, which you can pick up from Hyde Park Book Club on Saturday. Well done, Meg, we don't know where you find the time!

Quote of the Week

“See that girl, watch that scene, dig in the *Dancing Queen*”

Theresa May

Credits

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- Associate Editors** ~ Polly Hatcher
Ian White
- Digital Associate** ~ Bella Davis
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- Sport** ~ James Felton, Cian Fox, Will Pickworth, Ryan Wan
- Design** ~ Robbie Cairns, Polly Hatcher, Ian White

Editor’s Letter:



Dear Readers,

“Another year, another Varsity loss”. Those were the words with which I started my editor’s letter, which was originally written two days before the finale – such is my lack of faith in my own University. Therefore, a congratulations is in order for all the sports teams who competed in the competition. Whether you won or lost your individual battles, you are a credit to your university, and should hold your head high, no matter how hungover you are. But now that I have to rewrite this entire letter in a very short space of time, I’m going to talk about something ever so slightly more important than kicking an egg-shaped ball through some oversized goal posts: Black History Month.

Every October since 1987, Britain has celebrated the history of Black individuals and the communities they have created across the country. It is a time for reflecting on the racial injustices which still plague our society, and for understanding how appropriate explorations of Black culture contribute to a fairer, less prejudiced, and less insular Britain. As such, we have dedicated this week’s edition of ‘In The Middle’ to featuring and discussing the work of Black artists who continue to campaign and work in the name of racial equality across the globe. I sincerely hope we have done our commitment to covering Black History Month justice, using grayscale images to envelop the thematic content within a tasteful colour scheme.

Clearly, since you may have noticed the Debenhams own-brand chequered lumberjack shirt that I’m wearing in the photo which accompanies this letter, I’m quite painfully, painfully white. In fact, I’d say the only person whiter than me is my predecessor, Reece Parker, a man whose unfaltering dedication to the Stevenage grime scene makes Eminem look like the upper echelons of white Middle-Class culture. That being said, I have spent the past few years studying race relations in American literature, and I know how important coming to terms with the lasting effects of racial prejudice and white privilege is to an accurate understanding of racism – both individual and institutional.

However, by designating one month to Black History, are we reserving the rest of the calendar for ‘white history’? Who gets left

out by the definition of Blackness that this month perpetuates? And how do we prevent the month becoming merely a mode of token awareness rather than a bastion of lasting change? All are legitimate concerns. Nevertheless, Black History Month is essential because it provides students with an opportunity to learn more about the institution around them which is predominantly, in both its cohort and its curriculum, white.

Alongside Black History Month, tomorrow also marks the end of Mental Health Awareness week. Mental health at university is something we should all take very seriously. It’s no coincidence that, as issues of depression and anxiety are on the rise, mental health funding is steadily falling. All too often, students shoulder their burdens instead of adequately exorcising them.

Although I do not wish to detract from the importance of Black History Month, take myself as a case in point. At the start of my third year at Leeds, me and my girlfriend of three and a half years broke up. The months that followed involved intense feelings of loneliness made worse by a state of self-perpetuated hunger, sleeplessness, and ultimately, unhappiness. I lost a lot of weight and my confidence was non-existent. You see, a lot of people see me as an always-happy, always-smiling, always-winning-at-FIFA kind of guy. But the truth is, for a really, really, fucking long time, I forgot how it felt to be happy. And that’s no exaggeration.

Thankfully, I’ve had a wonderful support network of friends and family available to me throughout my life, which meant I was always confident I would get back to my normal self. It feels good to have the rose-tinted glasses back, to look around and see the world in technicolour again. But this reminds me of something Wes Nelson said on this summer’s Love Island, when he was considering ditching Laura Anderson for the *cough* love of his life *cough* Megan Barton Hanson. Torn between the two, Wes told the islanders: “I’m happy, but I could be happier.”

As someone who has experienced what it is to not be happy, thinking to yourself that you could be happier is dangerous. Many times over the past two years I’ve achieved something that I should have been proud of, only to hear a voice inside my head tell me “you could be happier.” As young students developing in an intensely complex social circle, we shouldn’t take our mental health for granted. Cherish every single moment that you can look in the mirror and know that the person staring back is happy. And in the end, if you’re anything like me, you’ll be able to look back on your time at Leeds and know, without hesitation, that you were happy here.

Stay Classy,

Robbie Cairns
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Wow, and if by magic campus comes back to life! The past week has been so refreshing, with everyone on campus bringing an electric and vibrant feel to every corner. Before starting our roles as your student Exec, we were told that it wouldn't feel "right" until September – I can now confirm that this is true.

Whether I've been giving welcome talks or wandering about the Freshers Fairs, it has been great to see the

Freshers has finally come (and sadly gone)! I hope you enjoyed the weird and wacky events that were on, and made the most of all the freebies on offer. It's been really great watching campus come to life as all the new and returning students join those who stayed here over the summer. (Post-graduate researchers, I'm looking at you!)

It may sound like a cliché, but Freshers Week was the best and busiest week of my life. Engaging with a range of great individuals over the course of a short week was a real pleasure, and I somehow managed to get some work done during all the fun!

I've been helping out with welcome talks in halls and in different departments across the university,

What an amazing couple of weeks it's been! Firstly we had our Freshers fairs with all our brilliant clubs and societies and I couldn't be more proud of all the committees for all the hard work they put in with their demonstrations, and just for being so welcoming and enthusiastic. I had several moments where I felt a bit giddy at the thought that I actually get to represent you lovely lot as a job!

These last couple of weeks have been super exciting. The Sensory Garden opened last Monday at Charles Morris, and it's so lovely that we have something so accessible on campus. Spending a lot of my time in Common Ground, the smell of freshly ground coffee and the sight of everyone meeting new or old friends was genuinely such a nice moment.

I spent the week doing embarrassing

And breathe... Freshers Week is over and teaching has begun. I hope everyone's settling in a bit better to their life at Leeds, but don't worry if not – it's okay if it takes some time.

Last week I spent as much time as I could wandering around the Union, meeting people and finding out about clubs and societies I didn't even know existed! If you didn't get along to the

excitement as people have met each other, connected over new activities or, as I overheard last week, managed to find the opticians in the Union.

Alongside the fun of Freshers Week, Serene and Tamsin have been working to the wire to put together a wide range of events for Black History Month, and I've been lucky enough to work with them on the Give and Take, a new panel event (a bit like Question

I also spent summer in Leeds, settling into this role and seeing what else I could do this year. As well as the stuff I mentioned in last week's paper, I'm also really interested in three other areas; improving the experience of post-graduates, and making sure every single student can get something out of their academic society. I also want to improve the student voice so all of

providing a friendly face for returning and newly-arriving students. It's been especially nice chatting to postgraduate students, who can sometimes feel a little left out in all the craziness of Freshers Week. The Postgraduate Welcome Party in Pyramid was lit – the turnout was great and we even ran out of food.

I also got the chance to get stuck

As an Exec, we've also been delivering loads of welcome talks in schools across campus and halls to tell every student that they BELONG at Leeds. It's so important to us that every student feels like they can engage with LUU and that we represent them whether you're a home or International student, PostGrad, UnderGrad, Mature, Part-time... WE ARE HERE FOR YOU!

Welcome Talks that involved multiple laughs but very few jokes, not ideal – still quite fun though! You may have also caught me on the LUU Instagram showing people around the Freshers Fairs, and it was great to see people doing what they love.

At the end of the week, the transphobic organisation 'A Woman's Place' were coming to Leeds. We as an Exec stood against them, releasing a

Time). Matt and I are working on a hearing protection campaign and a new partnership (which we can't quite tell you about yet), but an exciting one!

There's loads to get involved with in Leeds and if I can give you one bit of advice, make the most of it – the time you have here will fly by!

you are heard in your schools. Speaking of which, course rep deadlines will be closing in a few weeks so if you're interested in raising the student voice on a local level, consider applying! You can find out more from your SSO. If you don't think being a rep is for you, you can still make change by getting in touch with your school or course rep, and sharing your ideas.

into some pottery classes in Common Ground. Serene, Tamsin and I chose the winners for the best designs. After that, I was involved in a video shoot focusing on the Hyde Park community, which will be aired at the Hyde Park Picture House.

One minute you're failing to make pots, the next minute you're on the silver screen. Next stop: Hollywood.

And of course we WON VARSITY! For the first time ever we triumphed over Leeds Beckett in the overall scores and took the Trophy! So a huge congratulations to everyone who was involved, we are so proud of every team, every member, and everyone who helped with the fixtures and events in any way! Unaaaayyy!

statement of the reasons why we see them as a toxic, hateful organisation standing completely against our values. I'm really proud of the response we got, and it made me realise why I do this job – to stand up against people that try and spread hate towards others, instead creating a safe space for everyone within Leeds.

improve support for our students with regards to mental health, and have been approached by so many enthusiastic students who want to spark more conversation about it! Great things are to come, I'm sure.

Freshers fairs you haven't missed out though – you can look online for all of them in a far less daunting environment (e.g. bed!) whenever you like.

I've been getting to work building partnerships with and learning great things from some amazing drug harm reduction charities, and can't wait to see what lies in store. I've been having great discussion about how best to

Campus Watch



1 University of Glasgow University Owns Up to Slavery Wealth

The 'Slavery, Abolition and the University of Glasgow Report', published last month, has revealed that the University of Glasgow received as much as £200 million indirectly from the slave trade throughout the 18th and 19th centuries.

While the University has long acknowledged its indirect links to the slave trade, it has often been overshadowed by the institution's self proclaimed 'proud record of anti-slavery activity'. This includes playing a significant role in petitioning for the abolition of slavery in the UK, awarding an honorary degree to emancipist William Wilberforce and educating James McCune Smith, the first African American to receive a medical degree.

Nevertheless, the University has expressed its desire to deliver

'reparative justice'. This will include the creation of a centre for the study of slavery, a memorial to those enslaved, and hopes of signing a Memorandum of Understanding with the University of the West Indies, facilitating greater academic collaboration in the future.

Beyond Glasgow, this report has raised uncomfortable yet important questions for institutions nationwide in regards to the slave trade, and it is expected that similar investigations will be carried out elsewhere in the future.

Joseph Bellamy

2 University of Cambridge 'Learning Together' Scheme Offers Bursaries to Prisoners

The University of Cambridge, in partnership with 'Learning Together', is offering prisoners bursaries of up to £5,000.

Beginning in October of this year, any current or past convicts of five years are eligible for the scheme, provided they show academic talent and pass the 'Learning Together' programme.

Learning Together is a partnership that offers educational courses to prisoners, however Cambridge is the first University to actually deliver these courses on campus.

Amy Ludlow, co-director of the 'Learning Together' initiative, and Senior Research Associate in Criminal Law and Justice at the University of Cambridge said that "Learning Together's ultimate plan is to enable prisoners to gain a whole university degree, even when they are behind bars."

The bursaries, funded by the University and the Longford Trust, are striving to give convicts a second chance at rebuilding their lives, and are awarded no matter what crime was committed.

Amelia Cutting

3 University of Cambridge Student-Led Exhibition Celebrates Black Alumni

Beginning in October, the University of Cambridge are opening an exhibition dedicated to black alumni. The exhibition, located in the library's Royal Corridor will feature 14 portraits of Cambridge black graduates, old and new (known as Cantabs).

The Black Cantabs Research Society was formed by students in 2015 and have created the exhibition with the intention of discovering and displaying the histories of some of Cambridge's famous black graduates.

Portraits in the gallery include Cambridge's first black scholar, Francis Williams who studied in the 1720's and the university's first black female graduate of 1945 - Gloria Miller.

More recent faces include James Bond actress Naomie Harris and Diane Abbott MP. Speaking about her time studying history at Cambridge, Abbott said: "I was passionate about history...(but) there was no possibility of learning anything about Black History."

The free exhibition is running from the 1st October until the end of December and is open to the public.

Amelia Cutting

4 University of Sheffield First-Class University Offers Class A Advice

Sheffield University has released a guide on how to take drugs safely.

The University stresses that, while they do not advocate taking drugs, they understand that some students will take drugs and want them to be as aware as possible. This guide was released with the intention of informing students about the risks of taking drugs, and reducing the potential harm that taking the substances can cause.

It gives clear instructions on taking drugs safely: starting with smaller doses, staying hydrated and never injecting alone are some of the tips given on their website. The university commented that it wanted to minimise the potential risks for students who do make the choice to take drugs.

The guide has come under criticism from some students, many of whom argue that the University should be looking after their students and not promoting dangerous substances. Particularly, those opposed believed that the guide 'normalised drugs as part of student culture'.

Sheffield University have responded to backlash by ensuring they don't promote drug use, but want those who do take them to be as safe as possible.

Charlotte Wood

5 Montana State University, USA Bear on Campus Ensures Grizzly Start to MSU Semester

Students at MSU got a fright recently, after reports that a bear been seen roaming the University grounds.

University officials sent out an emergency alert at 1am, urging students to be aware and cautious when on campus. Officials advised students not to approach the bear.

Campus police searched the area but didn't find the bear, believed to have made its own way off campus.

One member of staff commented: "Usually, they're not looking to eat anybody, they're looking for garbage cans. Just don't get between them and the garbage can and usually you're all right."

Campus police say the bear did not hurt anyone, but recommended that students be cautious, as bears do frequent the area around this time of year.

Megan Cummings

62% of Students Experience Sexual Violence, Report Suggests

Chloe Williams

The Rape Crisis Organisation defines sexual harassment as “unwanted behaviour of a sexual nature”. This includes anything from non-verbal actions such as wolf-whistling to physical harassment, like groping.

In a report carried out by Revolt Sexual Assault and The Student Room, it was found that an overwhelming 62% of students experienced sexual violence during their time at university. However, only 2% of students who reported an incident to their university felt ‘satisfied’ with how the occurrence was handled.

In response to these high levels of harassment, many bars, clubs and UK universities have adopted policies to ensure that there is help for those who find themselves feeling vulnerable to sexual harassment.

Thanks to organisations such as the National Pub-watch website, campaigns such as ‘Ask For Angela’ have been backed by many bars and other student venues.

‘Ask For Angela’ aims to give discreet help to those who feel as though they’re in a vulnerable position, or, as the campaign states, if the situation they find themselves in starts to ‘feel a bit weird’. The scheme works by the customer who is seeking help, going to the bar or to a member of staff and asking for Angela.

The member of staff will then take the customer out of the situation and make sure they get home safely, whether by taxi or by being picked up by a friend or family member.

The Leeds University Union has adopted the ‘Ask For Angela’ campaign and has other schemes in place such as ‘We’ve Got Your Back’. The intention of this campaign is to work with other organisations in Leeds to create a city with no sexual harassment. The LUU have claimed that, ideally, they will achieve this by making sure staff are ‘adequately trained in what to do if an incident arises’.

Although several schemes have been enforced, their effectiveness is questionable. With only 2% of students satisfied with how their university dealt with reports of sexual harassment, it calls into question the usefulness of these schemes, or whether they’re used at all. However, reform may be on the horizon; the University of Cambridge has reviewed the success of their current schemes, and has launched their ‘Breaking the Silence’ campaign to provide more effective support and guidance for students who have experienced sexual harassment.

If you feel you need support or to talk to someone about an experience with sexual harassment, please contact organisations that are available to you:

Support After Rape and Sexual Violence Leeds

Freephone: 08088023344

Email: support@sarsvl.org.uk

Text: 07797 803 211

Survivors UK

Phone: 02035983898

Email: help@survivorsuk.org



Universities Call for Criminalisation of ‘Essay Mill’ Companies

Fiona Linnard

Heads of 40 British universities have called for a legislative ban on professional essay writing services.

The use of these services, where students can pay to have their essay written, is currently banned in universities, but is not illegal. 46 Vice Chancellors and heads of higher education bodies have called on the government to bring in legislation to end these operations and their advertising, saying they want to crack down the companies producing the essays, not the students using them.

The Quality Assurance Agency, which “safeguards standards and improves the quality of UK higher education”, found that companies charge between £15 and £7,000. In the last four years, up to one in seven graduates may have cheated by using these ‘essay mills’. A study by Swansea University saw a 15.7% rise in students who admitted cheating between 2014 and 2018.

Universities Minister Sam Gyimah appears to support their demands, insisting that new legislation was “not off the table”. Gyimah stressed the existing work of the government to combat cheating in universities, claiming credit for “the likes of YouTube removing adverts for these essay mills”. Advertising these services to students appears a very real issue; last year posters advertising essay writing services were found at London Underground stations near

universities, while another company was found distributing flyers at Queen Mary University in London. However, he also suggested that change should come from universities themselves as well, “for example, by tackling advertising of these services in their institutions” and “educating students about...[the] possibly life-changing penalties they face”.

Despite all the bad press they receive, some have argued in favour of ‘essay mills’. Daniel Dennehy, chief operations officer of UK Essays suggests there are two types of company. Some, like UK Essays, “don’t promote cheating and try to stop it”, while others “promote cheating and couldn’t care less about academic integrity”. According to Dennehy, UK Essays sets out a ‘fair use’ policy, which states students should use the essay as a “basis for [their] own further research” and not submit it as their own. He argues that using a model answer is another way of seeking help, where other students might go to a private tutor or family member.

This is not the first time there has been a crack-down on essay mills. In January 2017, universities called for fines to crack down on companies selling their services. Universities across the country currently use software that detects plagiarism, as well as blocking ‘essay mill’ websites on university computers. Regardless, although students may face academic penalty, there remains no consequence for the ‘essay mill’ companies facilitating their cheating.



Labour Seeks Conference Compromise

Elinor James
Co-Chair of Leeds Labour Students

After a difficult summer for the Labour Party, the 2018 conference was the perfect time to take stock of the past year's successes and failures, and showing the country what Labour plans to do next. Thousands descended on Liverpool's Albert Dock from the 22nd to the 26th September, following internal Labour Party elections, which were a resounding success for Corbynite candidates.

Thankfully, overt factionalism, which has so often plagued the Labour Party, was not the theme of Conference 2018. Instead, it was dominated, like so much of this year, by Brexit. Constituency Labour Party and trade union delegates voted for Brexit to be one of the main topics of debate alongside Windrush, Palestine, housing, education, the economy, in-work poverty, and government contracts.

Shadow Secretary of State for exiting the European Union, Keir Starmer, unveiled Labour's new proposal: Theresa May should put her Brexit deal to a parliamentary vote. If the vote was lost by the government, a general election would be held. If said general election was won by the Labour Party, Labour would then propose a people's vote on the final Brexit deal. Crucially, Starmer stressed that this does not rule out an option to remain in the EU. The proposal appeared to be overwhelmingly supported by members on the conference floor. This news was welcome to many who had felt that Labour had lacked a straightforward position on Brexit.

The debate on Palestine was always going to be contentious, following a summer of controversy surrounding issues of anti-Semitism within the Labour Party. Emily Thornberry and Jeremy Corbyn explicitly condemned the actions of the undisputedly anti-Semitic elements that exist on the left. There was an emotive display of solidarity with Palestine, and fantastic speakers, such as Open Labour's Steve

Lapsley, demonstrating how easy it was to condemn the actions of the Israeli government and fight anti-Semitism at the same time.

The Shadow Chancellor, John McDonnell, received a standing ovation for his radical economic proposals. He claimed that 'the game is up', for tax-avoiding businesses in the United Kingdom, and pledged that the Labour Party would give more power to the workers by introducing 'inclusive ownership funds'. He voiced Labour's intention to give shares in large companies to their workers, and to allocate more seats on company boards specifically to ordinary workers.



Angela Rayner, Shadow Education Secretary, also brought the house down with her proposals to reform education. These included co-operative schools, cementing Labour's support for free higher and further education and, crucially, an end to forced academisation, and a return to local authority control of education. This appeared to coincide with similar frustrations many speakers had vented on conference floor over the course of the week.

Labour emerged from their 2018 conference a much more united front, with clear and coherent radical

policies on key issues. It will be interesting to see whether they will have the chance to put them into practice before 2019's conference.

George Mueller-Waite

Following a summer of discontent, Labour emerged from its annual conference intact, putting the main focus on their domestic agenda rather than confronting the Brexit shaped elephant in the room.

Labour is putting McDonnell's new 'Ownership Funds Plan' to the centre of their platform. This would give workers a non-tradable 10% share in their companies and control over one-third of the board. It builds on Corbyn's promise that renationalised industries would be run by their workers, rather than returning to the bureaucratic model where the Prime Minister appoints industry heads. Labour is modernising by embracing workplace democracy.

Some good news for students: Rebecca Long-Bailey's five point plan to save the British high street includes free inner-city bus travel for the under-25s, as well as plans to scrap ATM charges and expand the rollout of free wifi in city centres across the UK.

Shadow Cabinet Secretary Kate Osamor was amongst those discussing the future of Labour's drug policy. Advocates of change argued that current policy criminalises the mentally ill and gifts oppressive gangs the market. It drew comparisons to 1930s American prohibition, which gave the Mafia control over the alcohol market. It showed a clear departure from the days when no MP dared attend these fringe events.

That being said - the membership, the same membership who twice overwhelmingly voted for Corbyn - have now backed a pledge to keep a second Brexit referendum on the table, against the wishes of the party leadership. Labour may have avoided a damaging Brexit split at this year's conference, but the membership and the leadership remain divided over what to do next.

NUS Survey Finds that 70% of Students Feel 'Peer Pressured' to Drink Alcohol

Zahra Iqbal
News Editor

The National Union of Students (NUS) recently conducted a survey of 2,215 students in higher education to gain a better insight into their relationship with alcohol. Alcohol forms a key part of Freshers Weeks and many societies' socials. Despite this, many students have expressed the necessity for more sober socials, and 21% of students admitted that they have never drunk.

NUS are also promoting more alcohol-free socials after the study found that 70% of students think they must drink alcohol to fit in with their peers, as 'Dutch courage'. Peer pressure was found to be the main contributing factor to excessive drinking among students; examples of this include freshers initiations and society pub crawls.

Furthermore, 38% of students admit it can be difficult for them not to drink too much. The study

reinforced the idea that heavy drinking is a key aspect of student life, and leads students to frequently to go over the alcohol limits.

1,683 of those interviewed admitted that they think there is an expectation for students to drink and to get drunk. Moreover, 47% said that before arriving at university they thought that students spent all of their time getting drunk, proving that the archaic association of university life and excessive alcohol consumption is still alive and well.

NUS Vice President (welfare) Eva Crossan Jory said: "It is concerning that university life is still strongly associated with excessive alcohol consumption" and that "Unsurprisingly only 1% of students have been part of safe or responsible drinking campaigns at their university."

NUS want to encourage university unions to support their Alcohol Impact initiative, which aims to reduce the negative impact of harmful levels of alcohol intake. The programme wants unions to provide more

support for excessive drinkers in the long term. It also aims to accommodate students who don't drink as much, especially in freshers week.

The initiative aims to show students the negative effects of drinking too much, and will hopefully lower the amount of students who feel pressured into drinking excessively.



“I’m Not Calling for Another Referendum”



LSR, LSTV and The Gryphon sat down with Labour Party leader Jeremy Corbyn to discuss Brexit, anti-semitism and higher education ahead of his talk to politics students at the University of Leeds.

Jeremy Corbyn welcome to the University of Leeds, thank you for taking the time to speak to us.

Pleasure to be here.

So, the last time you were in Leeds and spoke to students, I believe, was during the 2017 general election campaign. You stood outside the Brudenell Social Club, stood up with Alex Sobel on a box and said vote for this man.

And he won.

That’s the thing. He wasn’t expected to win that seat and he ended up winning by about 3000 votes. Do you think that day may have had an impact on his victory?

Probably. Because we got so many people there who were really enthusiastic about the idea that we could win, that we could get Alex elected and we could get a Labour government and that was one of the turning points in the campaign because that meeting was supposed to be a couple of hundred people getting ready to go door knocking, and it grew to four or five hundred in the car park and then it grew to thousands in the streets. I was actually generally concerned for the safety of some of the students who were hanging off trees. The branches were strong it turned out and they were okay, but I was worried.

I believe everyone was okay and it was, Leeds North West, which is Alex’s constituency, which ended up having the largest increase in student registration in the country. What are you and Alex planning to do to give back to all the students who have supported you on this campus and in this area?

Develop a society and an economy that works for all, to develop an education system that does genuinely

give cradle to grave education for all and above all, a society that genuinely cares for all. We have too much greed in Britain, too great an inequality between the richest and the poorest, and too little done to help those having the hardest time in their lives. And so it is about the minimum wage, a living wage of £10 per hour, it is about investment in housing, it is about ending rough sleeping and it is above all about investment in industry for the future through a national investment bank and regional investment funds.

Now you see what you haven’t mentioned there, which was talked about quite a lot in the election campaign is reducing the burden of student debt and/or cutting tuition fees. This I don’t think has been mentioned by the Labour Party in quite a long time. Has your position changed on this?

My position hasn’t changed at all. I’ve mentioned it a great deal actually. I said cradle to grave education and that obviously includes university education. What I want to do is end student fees, return to a grant system for those that need support to be at university, but also to have an equality of esteem between vocational as well as academic qualifications, so that you get good quality training in engineering or whatever you choose to do as an apprenticeship, as well as academic qualifications.

For those that have a very large student debt, we have to look at ways at both raising the income level at which you’ll start to repay, removing the interest payments that are currently on it, because many former students are now paying incredible amounts of interest on a loan they never wanted but were forced to take out in order to get a university education. I think university education is an investment for all of us.

Now what you’ve touched on there is that really debt and fees are contributing factors in what is becoming a national epidemic of mental illness. The average wait time for students in the UK to receive mental health treatment is four months, this can be deadly. In the event of a Labour government getting elected, what provisions would you put in place to improve access to mental health care for students?

One, we put in parity of esteem to the Health and Social Care Act in 2012. Labour did as an amendment, said parity of esteem between physical and mental health. It hasn’t happened. The government has not funded it properly and you’re quite right that there are people going through a mental health crisis, go to a GP and ask for help and are told to wait four/five/six months and many universities and colleges are in exactly that situation. The biggest killer of young men in our society is suicide from mental health stress.

So, it needs two things, one is investment in treatment, in support, in counselling, but it also means a different attitude in our society. Stop making jokes about people going through stress, stop making jokes about mental health, recognise it is a condition you or I could suffer from, and recover from, provided we’re given the help and support. But when somebody does go and see a GP, I’m talking to somebody on the South Coast, Southampton, the nearest urgent bed they could get, because they were having a very serious crisis, was Bradford. Now there’s nothing wrong with a bed in Bradford absolutely, of course not, that’s not the point. The fact is the family couldn’t visit and also that bed ought to be available for somebody locally and not from somewhere far away.

Continued on Page 8.



The Leeds Student Media Societies with Jeremy Corbyn

Now one of the many things that can contribute to mental health problems is abuse. You say you stand for a kinder, gentler politics. There are over 1000 Jewish students on this campus, many of whom have left the Party over abuse perpetrated in your name. Do you think your Labour Party is a safe space for Jewish students?

Absolutely a safe place for all students. Anti-Semitism is a curse in our society as it has been historically, it is a curse anywhere, as is Islamophobia or any other form of racism, and we do not tolerate it, do not accept it, do not allow it and take action against those that perpetrate it.

Now the University of Leeds and Higher Education as a whole has benefitted from European Research funding. How would Labour protect these benefits after Brexit?

We'd maintain membership of the appropriate European agencies and certainly maintain membership of the ERASMUS scheme.

Would that be possible?

Yes, it will be possible, we have discussed all this with a lot of people in Europe. It is very important we maintain those otherwise we end up reducing both our own academic status and abilities in Britain but also European universities that benefit from that relationship and so I would make sure it carries on.

“Anti-Semitism is a curse in our society as it has been historically, it is a curse anywhere”

Now bear with me one second, one of the main drivers behind Brexit votes happening was that people felt they weren't being listened to in Westminster and that their vote didn't count. Do you think it's dangerous, I mean you spoke at the conference last week and Labour appears to have reached some kind of ground on, correct me if I'm wrong, not ruling out supporting another referendum on the Final Deal with an option to remain? Do you think it's dangerous to tell people to keep voting until they get the right answer?

The referendum happened, it gave a result, not the one I wanted but it gave a result and I think it's the incompetence of this government on their negotiations. Two and a half years in, we're still very unclear what they want. We've set down our six tests which obviously include the trade relationship with Europe and Northern Ireland border and maintaining rights in the workplace and so on, which we inherited from the European Union. I think we have to have a relationship with Europe which maintains that and maintains that trade, whereas the Tory right are essentially heading in the direction of a trade deal with Donald Trump which is quite dangerous.

With respect that's not really the answer to the question that I asked. Won't people feel like they, people who voted for Brexit because they thought they weren't being listened to, won't they think that their vote still doesn't count if there's another referendum?

I'm not calling for another referendum. What I'm saying is there has to be effective negotiations and we have to decide in parliament how we vote on them. If they don't meet our six tests we will vote against them. After that, we will see what happens but clearly what happens then is that the government should either resign or go back and negotiate something better with the European Union, but they wasted two and a half years on this.

I still don't think we've quite answered the question there, but I have to move on I'm afraid we haven't got much time. Still at the conference, it's public knowledge that Momentum were pushing for a change in the rules for leadership nomination in the event that you step down. Their change seemed designed to make it possible to nominate a more Corbyn-like successor than MPs would be likely to back. What's less well known is that your office was also pushing for this rule to be changed in some way. Were you after Momentum's suggested rule change?

I'm happy that the Party has made a rule change which means that to be a candidate for a leader, you have to get the support of ten percent of the parliamentary Labour Party and you have to get five percent of either Trade Unions or constituency parties to go with it which means for the first time ever in the history of the Labour Party, the election of the leader is

partly in the hands of either affiliated or full members of the Party, not just MPs. Up until the 1980s, MPs alone elected the leader. I would not be the leader if it hadn't been an extension of the franchise.

“I'm not the solution. We, all of us, are a solution”

Finally, you're here at the University of Leeds to talk to a room full of politics students. What are you going to tell them to convince them that you are the solution in a world gone mad?

Well I'm not the solution. We, all of us, are a solution. That solution is you look at economics in a different way, you look at social justice in a different way, you look at the environment in a different way. We cannot go on in a world which is destroying itself environmentally, which is a society that is grotesquely unequal and getting more unequal and call it successful. What you have to do is recognise the need to support everybody and that means social policies that work, it means housing policies that work, it means education policies that work, and it means an international agenda based on the principals of human rights and justice.

Jeremy Corbyn, thanks very much for speaking to us.

It's been a pleasure, thank you very much.

To watch the full interview, visit LSR, LSTV and the Gryphon's Facebook pages on Monday 8th October.

Questions by Patrick Carter



Does Volunteering Make A Difference?

Hannah Grover discusses her experience volunteering in Greece, where she taught Yazidi refugees German.

Hannah Grover

As students, we are incredibly privileged to get such long holidays, but at the start of August 2017, I found myself daunted with the prospect of having an empty couple of months ahead of moving to Munich, where I would carry out my third-year placement. I began to look for work experience with charities and discovered greecevol.info, a website putting aid organisations in Greece in touch with volunteers that want to help out with the ongoing refugee crisis that is still taking place.



Judging from the amount of coverage that it receives from the British media, it seems as if the refugee crisis has been resolved. Yet at the time when I travelled to the refugee camp, there were still approximately 62,000 individuals stuck in limbo in Greece, many of whom were waiting to be transferred to Germany so that they could be reunified with their families.

On the website I visited, a large amount of the requests were from organisations looking for German speakers to teach German to refugees who were desperate to learn the language before their move. Within twenty-four hours I had heard back from a few organisations and decided to go to one in Northern Greece to work with Yazidi people who were living in a camp there.

The Yazidis are an ethnic and religious minority from Northern Iraq who have faced persecution for many years. Their religion is distinct from others in the region as they believe in a single god who created seven guardian angels to watch over earth. Four years ago, ISIS labelled the Yazidis as devil-worshippers, following which they began to systematically kill their men, enslave and rape their women, and started indoctrinating their children to kill.



I had very little time to think about what I was getting myself into until the day of the flight when I began to panic. I knew hardly anything about my working or living conditions, I questioned whether my German was of a high enough standard to teach and I was nervous about possible secondary trauma, something many aid workers experience.

These concerns were not entirely unfounded. I slept on an air mattress on a balcony in an apartment with six other volunteers, taught on a tarpaulin in an abandoned park with lessons constantly interrupted by the antics of local Roma children, spent my first few lessons trying to convince some classes that I can speak German, despite it not being my first language, and there were a few conversations with pupils that kept me awake at night. However, the greatest challenge was dealing with the demand for German lessons. Complications within the organisation itself meant that I left earlier than I had wanted to, but in the twenty-four days I was at the camp, I taught over ninety lessons to around 45 students ranging from just 6 years old, up to those older than 50.

The ability of the classes varied from illiterate women to teens who could be entered for GCSE or AS exams in the UK, and class sizes went from just two men (after the other three had been transferred to Athens) up to eighteen teenage boys and over twenty in my women's class when they all decided to start bringing their young children along to learn the basics. Despite the unpredictable atmosphere of these classes, the enthusiasm for learning and the warmth that each one of my students held for me and the other volunteers was apparent every single day. Their thirst to learn as much vocabulary as possible and to hear insights about day-to-day life in Germany was like nothing I have ever seen in my school career and, collectively, my pupils proved every stereotype of inspiring, hard-working, resilient and generous refugees right.

Often it is questionable whether volunteering does make a difference, especially when middle class young adults fly out to countries and cultures they know nothing about and only stay for a few weeks, coming home with an all too polished photo album that arises suspicions about the purpose of their trip. It is beyond doubt, however, how much the volunteers at this camp impacted these people this summer. As far as I saw, it is almost entirely due to the work of volunteers that refugees are getting any real support in Greece, other than basic shelter from the UN, so everything I taught them was highly valued.

The demand for German teachers in camps is still very high and if this is something you're interested in helping with, visit: greecevol.info



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Books and Bevs: The Importance of Your Academic Society

This week our Society Editor, Rose Crees, caught up with the LUU English Society to suss out why getting involved with your School's society is so important. Connie Lawful, the society's President, and Don Pickworth, one of the Social Secretaries, explained how handy academic societies can be for those new to Leeds.



Rose Crees
Society Editor

The move from an intimate sixth form classroom setting to a massive university lecture theatre is a huge jump. Transitioning from a small class where everyone knows each other relatively well to a huge room with hundreds of people in, none of whom even know your name, is sometimes unexpected and usually terrifying. Fortunately, Leeds University Union offers a network of societies representing the schools across the University of Leeds that help students, both old and new, integrate themselves amongst their peers.

Leeds University Union English Society is just one example of the student-run groups aimed at making your academic experience about more than just the books. Running socials from club nights, Otley Runs and pub quizzes to trips within Yorkshire and abroad, a Christmas ball and intramural netball and football teams, they are breaking down some of the seminar-room stuffiness with fun.

"It can be very anonymous studying a subject like English when you've got one lecturer but to them, you're just one face in a sea of 300, so it is vital to enable these more intimate, face-to-face interactions"

Connie, the President of the English Society, and Don, one of the society's Social Secretaries, stressed how such opportunities to socialise within one's school outside of lectures and seminars is crucial. "We're always open to collaborating with the School and last year we did quite a lot with the weekly English Teas," Connie explains.

EngSoc run a free weekly tea and biscuits morning where students can come to chat, relax, read and meet with the committee and staff. They added "if staff in the School of English had new work coming out

or they were running a particular event, they came and spoke to students and promoted it at the English Tea which we think is a great opportunity. It can be very anonymous studying a subject like English when you've got one lecturer but to them, you're just one face in a sea of 300, so it is vital to enable these more intimate, face-to-face interactions."

This sense of allowing students the space to express themselves runs through the society's ethos. "Seminars are intense with the need to squeeze the discussion of multiple texts into just one hour. They can be a source of dread for some people so anyone you meet could give you a strange impression of themselves - they might seem really awkward or overly loud and come across as obnoxious!" expressed Connie.

Links with the School of English have created unique opportunities for students to seek more contact time without academic pressure. Last year saw the beginning of the 'School of the Night' run by the University's award-winning Professor of Poetry, Simon Armitage, comprising regular poetry readings. Furthermore, this year's Equality and Diversity Secretary, Serena Smith, is collaborating with the School's new diversity panel to ensure that the society are offering the support its members need.

However, English Society is not just about the books. Offering a wide range of socials on an almost weekly basis, the society are cultivating a very welcoming environment with a community feel. "It's great because you end up seeing the same faces week-after-week" explained Don. "One of the key elements to supporting friendships on courses with few contact hours can be trips. If you're new to the area or if you're only here for a year, you might want to see some things that are quintessentially Yorkshire and Northern with literary ties. We offer trips to Howarth for Brontë fans and Whitby for those who love vampires."

The society offer excursions further afield too. Connie mentioned "we usually do two overnight trips per year. In the past we've been to places like



Budapest, Prague and Amsterdam and so far this year we've organised our first trip to Dublin. I went to Dublin in my first year not knowing anyone and I was put in a random dorm but I met some really nice people and that's how I made friends on my course. I think the trips are really good for that because it's an intense weekend away to really spend quality time together." Don cut in here, exclaiming "but not too intense!"

This intensity could be a concern for students when joining a new society, especially in terms of drinking. When describing the kind of socials he'll be organising, Don was clear to emphasise how "this year we're trying to make sure that we get to meet up in more chilled out settings. They are mainly alcohol-orientated socials which can be great and an easy way to make friends."

"But they're a quick fix and not for everyone" continued Connie, "some people find that they're a bit different when they're drunk so we're putting on a film night soon in addition to the English Tea. We want to do one dedicated, non-alcoholic social per term, which is a step in the right direction to cater for everyone's needs."

While most of the society's events are aimed at Freshers, postgraduates and busy third years are welcome to any and all events too. "Most of our events tend to be aimed at undergraduates earlier on in their degrees simply because there's so much more of a need for that support at the beginning of a low-contact hour course like English. We've all been there and it's really daunting!", they explained.

Academic societies help integrate students both academically and socially. They are integral to satisfaction with one's subject if they're able to seek support from committees and peers. With something out there for everyone, studying at Leeds is as much about enjoyment as it is about education.

See what your School has to offer at: www.luu.org.uk/clubs-and-societies/academic/

In the Middle



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

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"It isn't where you
came from; it's
where you're going
that counts."

Ella Fitzgerald
[1917-1996]



Image: *Pure Ella* Album Artwork

Re:Imagining B.I.G.'s 'Ready To Die'



Editor-in-Chief Robbie Cairns reviews the recent orchestral rendition of The Notorious B.I.G.'s 'Ready To Die' at the O2 Academy.

I remember it better than I remember most things these days. I remember, the first time I sat down to listen to The Notorious B.I.G.'s seminal debut album *Ready To Die*, being struck by the orchestral nature of its 22 year-old curator's dark and powerful musings. This was not the vicious lo-fi electronic beats of West Coast gangsta rap or the smooth pedestrian grooves of G-funk; this was something different, something visionary in its blend of divine instrumentals with gritty tales of the Brooklyn streets. It's this inherent quality which made *Ready To Die* the perfect case study to receive the 'Re:Imagine' treatment.

Revisiting timeless classics, the fantastic musicians over at Re:Imagine make use of a 16-piece orchestra of string, percussion, woodwind and brass instruments to resurrect past heroes with a classical twist. Opening with an emphatic rendition of 'Things Done Changed', the sounds that cannoned between the booming bassline of the baritone saxophone and the piercing shrill of the violin trio enveloped *Ready To Die* in a sheet of sound. With this constant interplay, there was an unbroken nature to the gig, as if you were sat at home listening to the album itself. But the intermittent brass solos reminded you that you had, in fact, left the house, with the mind-melting talent of the musicians on full display. A xylophone is probably the last instrument I would have associated with The Notorious B.I.G., but when it comes to life alongside 'Big Poppa', you'll wonder why you never thought of it before.

While the orchestra provided the anthemic live backing, the three rappers – Johnny Voltik, Chima Anya, Simba BMagic – provided Biggie's hypnotizing lyrics. Flowing in their enunciation but tight in their stage presence, the overlapping vocals relentlessly added to the gig's already ready-to-burst atmosphere. Driving the show from start to finish, and jumping into the crowd on two separate occasions, the lyrics came naturally to the three rappers, as if they didn't have to be practiced because they were so thoroughly ingrained. Add to that a female

vocalist with a voice that could lift the roof off the O2 Academy and you've got yourself as close a rendition to the original album as you can possibly get.

Most modern hip hop, rap or R&B gigs have fallen into a repetitive and underwhelming strain: you pay for a ticket and then subject yourself to an hour and a half of your favourite artist rapping over a pre-recorded backing track. It's a safe and uninspiring way to perform and listen to a genre which was born out of resistance to oppression and poverty. But Re:Imagine's sound has breathed new life into the hip hop scene, and restoked the embers of rebellion. This is how hip hop should always sound: raw, organic, spontaneous, unpredictable, rapturous, live.

The gig had a more important purpose than simply providing entertainment for the crowd, however. It has been 21 years since Biggie was murdered in a drive-by shooting in LA on the 9th March 1997. But through projects like Re:Imagine, the legacy which Biggie carved out during his cut-short career continues to inspire artists and audiences alike. It was obvious in the emotionally charged performance of 'Who Shot Ya?'. It was obvious in choral screams of "I live for the funk, I die for the funk." But it was most obvious in the fact that a diverse range of people travelled from miles around to pack the O2 Academy and bear the brunt of the ridiculous prices (£5.20 for a can of Carlsberg!? #!*@ Me) to hear an album which, despite being released 24 years ago, is yet to gather dust.

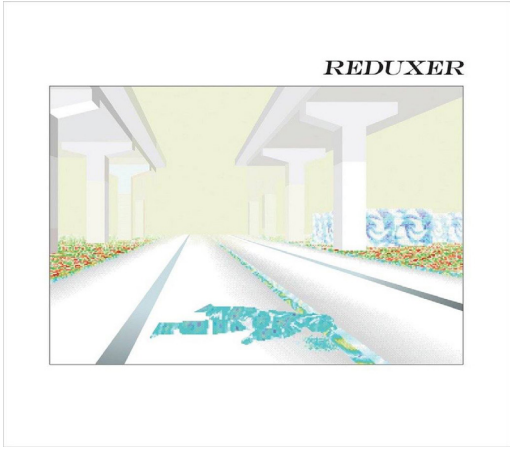
In short, it was as if Biggie was born again on the sticky floors of some dingy dancefloor in Leeds. Biggie Biggie Biggie, can't you see, orchestral instruments aren't just for the Mozarts and the operas of this world; sometimes, they're for the Detroit players, the hooligans in Brooklyn, the Biggie Smalls in all of us.

Robbie Cairns



Albums of the Week

alt-J - REDUXER



Only one year on from their last album, RELAXER, alt-J have returned with a whole new host of music. Yet, it's far from the intricate brand of indie rock that we've grown to expect. Instead, remix album REDUXER is a foray into the realms of hip-hop: an unlikely collaboration between alt-J and the rappers of today. The album is a star-studded 11 track compilation, reinterpreting each and every song from RELAXER.

It kicks off with the OTG version of '3WW', which sees alt-J's original vocals reduced to an echoey background, bringing hard-hitting verses from Little Simz to the forefront. The combination of OTG's crawling, slow-beat hip-hop, Little Simz's prophetic rap and the original's future-folk sound makes for a foreboding entrance into alt-J's new musical chapter.

Twin Shadow's version of 'In Cold Blood' ft. Pusha T then enters the spotlight, possessing a hip-hop bounce that is somewhat surprising on first listen, but really does work quite well. Then, just as you think you're getting used to 'hip-hop alt-J', the album takes a completely different turn with Tuka's take on 'House of the Rising

Sun'. Melancholic verses are interspersed with synthetic electronic phases, ODESZA-like in style, making for a soft breather before the confusion of the next track.

Then comes the golden trio of songs in the middle: the renditions of 'Deadcrush', 'Adeline' and 'Last Year'. 'Deadcrush' was already a fan favourite from RELAXER, and the Alchemist x Trooko version is just brilliant. Again, it seems to emanate an ominous tone, and the soft sounds of alt-J meet Danny Brown's abrasive vocals in an unexpectedly well-matched marriage: a yin and yang combination the world never knew it needed.

Rejjie Snow's take on 'Hit Me Like That Snare' makes for a relaxed but confident final song: the conclusion to alt-J's dabble in hip-hop. Snow masterfully reinvents this song, not overpowering it with his vocals, but leaving plenty of breathing space to recline into this laid-back hip-hop affair.

REDUXER is an album very few people would have predicted alt-J to release, and for that alone it's something special – a mark of unprecedented innovation in their musical career. Although it doesn't perhaps completely fit as a whole, the stand-out songs are truly brilliant, and have completely taken me by surprise: and it's always great to see so many artists from all over the world come together like this.

Hollie Griss

Brockhampton - iridescence



A beautifully crafted project rising from the ashes of past controversy comes *iridescence*, a confirmation that Brockhampton are still dominating new sound within the hip-hop, pushing the boundaries of sound, theme and message.

iridescence manages to recapture the raw intensity and energy that this fourteen part collaborative are known for. Never playing it safe, Brockhampton have devised a collection of sounds that, when on paper, should not work. The amalgamation of talent, however, which the "greatest boy band in the world" possess, means each track is stronger than the last.

Conceptually the album is fluent in themes of negativity that delve into self-reflection and social commentary, bringing to light issues close to the group. The album manages to do so whilst maintaining a harshness in terms of sound that upholds Brockhampton's edge. Each track exudes strength – a fire that can only be deemed excessive in the most positive of ways. With the darker themes that radiate most prominently at first listen, it could be easy to get lost in the bitter tones of 'J'OURVET' and 'WHERE THE CASH AT'. Yet, thanks to the presence of subtle intimacy scattered cautiously over the course of the fifteen tracks, *iridescence* is perhaps the antithesis of Brockhampton's earlier work. Its softer moments sculpt the fragility present in each mind, creating a coherent narrative that can be related to on most levels. Ending with three tracks that leave a delicate taste in the mouth, *iridescence* shimmers with distinctiveness as an album that is truly ahead of its time. Diversity of sound is truly present.

Jessica McCarrick

Gig Round-Up

Bill Ryder-Jones

Howard Assembly Room, 21/09



In addition to producing arguably two of the best English debut albums of the year (The Orielles' *Silver Dollar Moment* and Our Girl's *Stranger Today*), Bill Ryder-Jones has also found time to record a new album. To be released in November, the former guitarist in The Coral will be touring the breadth of the country. Thus, nestled in the heart of Leeds on a crisp Friday night, an opera house was converted into a conservatoire for the sweetest melancholic indie bliss around today.

Our Girl christened the stage with their divine fuzzy guitar. Together with the addition of Fern Ford from The Big Moon on drums, the three musicians showed their true musical prowess alongside lead singer Soph Nathan's truly haunting vocals. Peering down from the balcony, the audience turned from simply a crowd of bobbing heads into a wave of synchronisation. Set seating turned what could have been a vaguely rowdy crowd into domesticated listeners. Even retuning required a sarcastic joke to stop the awkward silence from bubbling over.

Although we were sat down for the best part of two hours; a numb bum was compensated by an auditory piece of Jones' soul. Emerging onto stage with only his trusty guitar for company, the slow tempo of 'Seabirds' (the closing lullaby from West Kirby County Primary) washed over everyone.

Entrancing the audience with the simplest strum, Bill played three more unaccompanied songs before bringing his four-piece band out onto stage.

New song 'There Are Worse Things I Could Do' combined classic Jones lyricism with a Pixie-esque vibes, ended in the most intensely layered wall of sound which reverberated throughout the whole building.

It's always hard playing an album tour prior to its actual release, but Jones managed to wet the audience appetite for the new whilst not forgetting "the hits" as 'Satellites' brought the night to a close.

Jenny Pudney

Body and Soul: The Black Women Who Pioneered Jazz, Blues and Soul

Their songs are iconic; their voices unforgettable; their influence on music history irrepressible. They are the Black women who pioneered soul, jazz and blues, remaining timeless and a constant source of inspiration, vision and respect. Here are five important women who brought Black music into the spotlight.



Mamie Smith

As the first Black woman to record a blues record, Mamie Smith blazed a path for other Black people in music. As her versions of Perry Bradford's 'Crazy Blues' and 'It's Right Here for You' sold a million copies in their first year, Smith set the standards and opened doors of recording studios for Black jazz, soul and blues artists.



Billie Holiday

Billie Holiday is considered to be one of the most influential jazz singers of all time. Effortlessly owning any room she was in, Lady Day performed with unparalleled passion, grace and ferocity. With 'Strange Fruit', a protest song against the lynching of Black Americans, Holiday chilled the blood of those who listened and solidified her place in music history, later being initiated into the Rock N Roll Hall of Fame in 2000.



Dinah Washington

Nobody could deliver a lyric with precision, wit and class like Dinah Washington, who consistently made an ineradicable mark on her listeners. Rising to fame in the 1940s with risqué blues records, Washington evolved into one of the world's best female jazz singers thanks to her urbane, jazz-inflected sophistication. Like her idol, Bessie Smith, Washington was a highly influential singer; inspiring and enchanting predecessors such as Esther Phillips and Nancy Wilson in



Ella Fitzgerald

A woman who needs no introduction, Ella Fitzgerald undoubtedly sits in the pantheon of the world's greatest singers. Her discography is a treasured collection of vocal performances, the standard of which has never been equalled. One of the greatest and best-loved jazz singers of all time, Fitzgerald used her wonderful voice and improvisational scat singing to achieve worldwide renown and an international fan base. Her records, like 'Flying Home' and 'Lady Be Good', are said to have completely changed the way jazz was perceived, with her series of songbook albums recorded for Norman Granz's Verve label in the 1950s establishing her as one of the greatest voices of the 20th century.



Gladys Bentley

Gladys Bentley came to prominence during the 1920s Harlem Renaissance. A hub for numerous great Black artists, Harlem brought notice to great works that might otherwise have been lost or never produced, with the irresistible syncopations of jazz enticing the ears of white America for the first time. A brilliant vocalist and pianist, Bentley's performances were snug with wit, relaxed precision and effortless perfection. You'd find her playing at Harry Hansberry's Clam House - a popular gay speakeasy - often performing in a white tuxedo and top hat and flirting with women in the audience. She enamoured crowds with her powerful voice and obscene parodies of blues, and would transform popular tunes of the day with raunchy and playful lyrics.



Awesome Tapes from Africa: An Appreciation of African Music

Molly Langley introduces us to Brian Shimkovitz, a man who uses his Western platform to spotlight and uncover African music.

Music can be described as a gateway to various cultures. This idea certainly precedes the notion of music as storytelling; through it, we are able to dive into lives of individuals around the world. One continent whose music - due to being less economically developed - has remained somewhat a mystery, is Africa. Consequently, few musicians are able to have their music heard outside of this continent and often the music African people listen to at parties, on the radio and in clubs is overlooked.

Ethnomusicologist, blogger and record label owner Brian Shimkovitz is the founder of Awesome Tapes From Africa. Starting off as a blog, Shimkovitz now tours under the aforementioned name and with a suitcase full of cassettes, plays hidden African treasures to his audiences.

Shimkovitz's passion began after a yearlong trip to Ghana, in 2006, where he was studying hip-hop music on a University scholarship. This trip led to him returning to the US with a trunk full of cassettes, sparking a desire to uncover African music. Fast-forward to today and Shimkovitz has created a solid name for himself in the global club scene, appearing at the likes of Field Day, Lost Village and Berghain.

Purchasing cassettes wasn't necessarily a medium of choice for Shimkovitz. The nature of the places he was visiting meant that these were the main option available in music shops, and from street vendors. Yet, this was a blessing in disguise as it meant there was more musical variety. This retro aspect of music purchase only lends more uniqueness to the work that Shimkovitz is doing. However, introducing the music to fresh audiences is not without its difficulties. The fact that cassette tapes are easily copied and distributed means that the origins of the original label it was produced under get lost, and the artist of the tracks remain as obscure as the tracks themselves. A lot of Shimkovitz's job involves tracking down the rightful owners of the songs, and when he manages to



hunt down the music's producers, he splits the revenue from the records 50/50. The records are available to purchase on his blog, and are re-released under his record label, *Awesome Tapes From Africa*.

The unique idea behind this blog has changed Shimkovitz's passion into his full-time job. A quick scroll on Awesome Tapes and you will immediately be presented with an eclectic mix of genres from all over Africa. It is like scrolling into a new world and your eyes are battling with which tape to listen to; the album covers alone are enough to spark curiosity. The colloquial way in which Shimkovitz describes each record draws the audience in further, as he is able to construct a friendly atmosphere, and you are driven to explore more of the musical wonders that the site presents.

One notable story comes from Shimkovitz's first upload to the blog, a song by Ata Kak that gained a lot of interest from his listeners. Ata Kak was unaware of how popular his music had become until Shimkovitz was able to, finally, track him down. In an interview with Red Bull, Shimkovitz

noted that no-one in Ata's neighbourhood in Kumasi knew that he had a former life as a musician or that he reissued his tape worldwide. From this discovery, Ata was able to celebrate his music with wider audiences and his songs are firm favourites for Shimkovitz to play in his DJ sets. Shimkovitz has even been able to build friendly relationships with the musicians he promotes. Hailu Mergia was keyboardist in Ethiopian jazz band Walias Band, producing popular jazz and funk beats in the 1970s to 1990s. Shimkovitz was able to reach out to Mergia after discovering an old tape he had solo-produced - *Hailu Mergia & His Classical Instruments* - which he notes as one of his favourites. The record was so well received online that it helped to re-launch Mergia's musical career, and since, Shimkovitz has released more of his music online.

Whether it is Nigerian hip-hop, local Sudanese pop, Senegalese mbalax - the national popular dance music of Senegal and the Gambia - or Ethiopian jazz, Shimkovitz creates unique and fun performances, celebrating the rich history from the extensive variety of African music: 'One of the things I've been trying to do with Awesome Tapes is to try and surprise people and expand the concept of what a lot of people think African music is.' The aesthetic quality of the cassettes creates a lo-fi sound, emulating a raw attribute to the music, tending to a more personal feel to the song and subsequently the DJ performance. Brian connects to the audience and allows them to celebrate African music and black history. The obscurity of the songs he unveils lends for a unique clubbing experience as the audience is guided on a musical tour through Morocco, Ethiopia, Somalia and many more.

What better way to celebrate black history than listening to a unique collection of songs by attending one of Shimkovitz's gig's or simply by browsing his blog where all the music he finds is uploaded, ready for free download or purchase.

Molly Langley

An Insight Into Jeff Mills: The Techno ‘Wizard’

Detroit laid the foundations for the techno culture we all love and appreciate in today’s clubbing scene. Take the time to thank and acknowledge the people who paved the way, with one notable character being Jeff Mills.

Jeff Mills was a part of the second generation of the Detroit techno scene, his predecessors being the likes of Ken Collier and Staacey “Hotwaxx” Hale. He progressed away from the disco movement and towards a dance/synth techno collection. Mills then joined forces with Mike Banks to create Underground Resistance, where in an interview with Red Bull Music Academy Lecture in Berlin in 1998 he states how they founded this collective by looking at what others were failing to do in Detroit. He saw how legends like Kevin Saunderson was mixing more commercial stuff and thought “the original idea of Detroit techno was being lost”, so they decided to be bolder and do everything everyone else didn’t do.

This progressive idea, focusing on more experimental music which would elicit a self exploration and an independence, is what helped establish himself in the techno industry, drawing interest in Germany where he went on to have a residency in Tresor, the infamous Berlin club (yes, you’ve not done Berlin right if you haven’t been). When he relocated back to the US but now to Chicago, he set up his own record label, Axis, where he continued to create and produce a number of albums including Time Machine (2001) which was inspired by the H.G. Wells novel The Time Machine and Metropolis (2000), a score written from the influence of the silent film with the same name; he was heavily inspired by sci-fi and how these realms can

take techno into the future. Additionally, he produced two DVD’s, which delves deep into his electronic capability and way of thinking, called the Exhibitionist and the Exhibitionist 2.

Jeff Mills is a techno pioneer, preserving his Detroit roots which has influenced many DJs who are about today, focusing on escapism and catering for a both crowds who appreciate techno and who love to dance. He is an influential Black musician, producer and composer, who has helped establish himself as one of the faces of the techno culture we have in our clubbing scene today because of his trailblazing persona.



Name: Jeff Mills
Date of Birth: 18th June 1963
Birthplace: Detroit, Michigan, USA
Occupation: DJ, composer, record producer and a member of the Techno Collective.
Career started: 1980s
Known as: The Wizard

Caris Dollard

Flux Returns

After its annual summer hiatus, Flux returned to its spiritual home of Beaver Works on Wednesday night for the first party of the year.



The line-up for this one was impressive as ever, boasting the likes of Berghain label Ostgut Ton’s Prosumer, alongside the masked electro titan, DJ Stingray, resident Dan Shake and Lobster Theremin’s rising star, Shedbug. These names were importantly complimented by an array of local and student DJs, including those from Rubik, who brought Ben Rau to the Bunker, Primal Sound and of course, Flux.

It was former Leeds student Dan Shake who impressed early on, his set in the cramped red room effortlessly moving through and blending funk, disco, house and squelching acid. Elsewhere, Ryad’s Justin Gardner provided some warmth in the Beaver Works Bar, mostly playing African and Balearic house rarities.

3AM, however, marked the night’s watershed moment as DJ Stingray, whose set clashed with

Prosumer’s, packed out the basement. The first hour followed predictable lines as he selected wall-to-wall slamming electro, the kind that he has come to be defined by. However, those still present for the sets denouement would have seen Stingray draw for some Grime and Dubstep classics, most notably Kahn’s Abattoir, which was met with riotous cheers from the basement’s revellers. There was definitely something momentous about seeing a Detroit master showing such an appreciation for the underground UK culture.

Given the imminent closure of both Canal Mills and Mint Club, Flux’s status as a figurehead for the Leeds house and techno scene is now more profound than ever. If the night can maintain its current level then Leeds partygoers can rest easy, at least for the time being.

James Dewar



Victoria's Secret Fashion Show Castings 2018

Christy Bucklow discusses the improvement in diversity of the much-anticipated 2018 VSFS castings.

This year's Victoria's Secret Fashion Show is headed in the right direction with confirmed castings showing that this show is set to be one of the most racially diverse in its history.

In recent years, Victoria's Secret has taken many positive steps towards improving its inclusivity on the runway. In 2015, Maria Borges chose to rock her natural afro on the runway instead of wearing extensions; a year later saw a record number of Chinese models cast. This year, nearly

50% of angels chosen to walk the runway are POC, with names such as Duckie Thot, Herieth Paul and Isilda Moreira appearing on the 2018 cast list.

Kelsey Merritt will be the first Filipino to walk the runway, while Winnie Harlow makes her proud debut after not being chosen as a Victoria's Secret Angel last year. "Thank you mommy for praying with me everyday for the past 3 days," Harlow shared in an Instagram caption. "And thank you so much to my fans who

have been pushing me forward to this point in my career." Duckie Thot also shared the news, writing "this moment means the world. Always believe you can do anything."

The big break was especially poignant for model Winnie Harlow, who lives with vitiligo - a skin condition that causes patches of pigmentation loss in skin. In an exclusive interview with Vogue magazine after finding out she had made the cut, she stated "representation is so important,

and I want to [stand for] all women. Every single woman." It is especially important for models who come from ethnic minority backgrounds to have a place in the show, as a chance to have a positive and powerful impact. The Victoria's Secret Fashion Show will be aired in late November or early December, with an official date yet to be confirmed. Approximately 5.5 million people will be watching.

Christy Bucklow

"Black Girl Magic"



Porter UK, September 2018



Vogue UK, September 2018



Elle UK, September 2018



Marie Claire UK, September 2018

In The Middle With: Cassandra Joseph

Featured on PhotoVogue Italia in May 2018, Leeds-based photographer, Cassandra Joseph, garnered recognition for her breathtaking visual styling. In this issue, we gain an insight into the creative mind behind the eye.

At which age did you begin to create the content that you do now?

I was around 18 when I began to experiment with photography and fashion. That process helped me to find the style that I possess now.

Who/where did you find the inspiration that kick-started the desire to create?

I was raised around a very creative family, so creativity was always encouraged. It is something that comes naturally to me. I grew up dancing, painting and designing. Looking back, I realise that I have repeatedly used my creativity as a way of communicating. Being dyslexic, I find it much easier to express myself through art rather than words.

What do you aim to communicate through your artistry?

I create work that I feel like my younger self needed to see whilst growing up. I want to represent the underrepresented. It was rare to see any models of colour in fashion magazines when I was little. I had few role models that looked like me to choose from in the media, which left me feeling a little isolated. It suggested that fashion had no space for Black women, so the empowerment and celebration of women of colour became my primary reason to shoot.

What are the current projects that you are working on?

I have been doing a lot of freelancing at the moment which has been amazing. My most recent project has been with Leeds-based Jewellery brand, Omo Lola. Everyone should check out their site, the jewellery is beautiful and I am in love with the campaign that we created together. I also have a few more collaborations lined up that I am extremely excited about.

Which direction are you hoping for your work to lead you in the next five years?

Honestly, I just hope to be creating. Whether that's through photography, directing, editing, etc. As long as I am actively doing something creative I will be happy. I hope to explore creative direction in the near future.

How closely would you say your own personal style is translated into your work? Which elements of it?

I always put a little bit of myself into my work whether it's my own fashion, make up, hair styling etc. Let's just say I am a one-man show and cover a lot of the elements involved in a photoshoot. I love it; I am a self-confessed control freak. By being so involved I can't help but project



my own personal style into my work. I guess I don't know exactly what the elements of my style are but I've been told that all of my photographs contain that certain 'Cassandra' touch.

What is the most important thing that you have learnt about your personal style over the years? How has it changed and how do you think it will evolve?

The type of work I do now has really developed over the past four years, that's when I started to photograph seriously rather than as a hobby. My bold and colourful style is something that I have always displayed but now it is more exaggerated. I used to create work that would fit in alongside other photographers but now it's quite the opposite. Now, I deliberately try to create work that is difficult to categorise. I hope that my work is regarded as surreal; I have many



extra-terrestrial imaginings that I want to execute. I can only hope that my work grows bigger and bolder.

How do you use styling, imagery and fashion to influence cultural awareness?

Fashion and imagery are great tools that can influence cultural awareness. In a project I did last year called "Queentessentially British", I explored the cultural aesthetics that belong to Black British women today and documented them in a zine. It acted as a visual catalogue of the many attributes that make up an African diasporic woman's wardrobe. I work with my models closely and include

elements of their personality and character in the photograph, and often that includes their culture.

Why do you think that communication of cultural awareness through fashion and imagery is such an effective method?

Fashion and cultural awareness (executed in the right way) can help to inform people on culturally specific styles and origins. It can also celebrate and uplift cultures too. The collaboration of imagery and cultural awareness can provide the all important representation of people from minority backgrounds.

Questions by Elicka Ghahramani



You Should Be Following...

Fashion editor Izzie Ghaffari-Parker runs down a list of movers and shakers in the Black community to add to your feed for a dose of style inspiration.

Chanté Joseph



Insta handle: @chantayyjayy
Age: 22
Occupation: Blogger and writer
Followers: 2,566
Why you should follow: University of Bristol grad Chanté has written for gal-dem, Wonderland, and most recently the i newspaper, where she called out the racist and sexist treatment of Serena Williams after the US Open final. She also founded 'Bristol is the New Black', which highlights Black individuals shaping culture in the city.
Personal style: Chanté has the casual and cute ensemble nailed, with frequent pops of orange and yellow, wide leg trousers and flowery wrap dresses. She also has an enviable collection of bikinis which will have you already planning your Summer 2019 wardrobe.

Khalid



Insta handle: @thegr8khalid
Age: 20
Occupation: Singer songwriter
Followers: 4.3 million
Why you should follow: Khalid's debut album, *American Teen*, explores relationships, loss and adolescence in the social media generation. But it also serves to break outdated stereotypes about what it means to be 'American'. As he explained to Rolling Stone: "I'm an African-American man with an Afro... and people are looking at me like, this is 'The American Teen'."
Personal style: Khalid's Instagram features frequent snaps of his stylish ensembles, which often incorporate high-end pieces from brands like Burberry and Prada alongside staple light wash denim and brightly coloured tees.

Chimamanda Adichie



Insta handle: @chimamanda_adichie
Age: 41
Occupation: Writer
Followers: 250k
Why you should follow: Award-winning author of *Americanah*, *Purple Hibiscus* and *Half of a Yellow Sun*, Adichie is boldly feminist and delivered a TEDx talk in 2012 about why we should all be feminists too, which was famously sampled in Beyoncé's '***Flawless'.
Personal style: Adichie's Instagram is completely dedicated to documenting her project 'Wear Nigerian', in which she wears mostly Nigerian brands for public appearances in an effort to promote the brands and boost the Nigerian economy. Of the designs, Adichie says: "I love the clothes, their cut, their whimsy, their colour, their flair, their ability to make me feel like myself."

Chidera Eggerue



Insta handle: @theslumflower
Age: 23
Occupation: Writer
Followers: 179k
Why you should follow: Author of the bestselling *What a Time to Be Alone*, Eggerue has become a sort of agony aunt for her generation, turning her own insecurity into the viral hashtag #SAGGYBOOBSMATTER. She has also spoken to Metro about feminism's need to prioritise issues that affect Black women: "For me, white feminism just prioritises whiteness and creates racist results."
Personal style: Eggerue's blog showcases stylish outfit shoots alongside advice on self-love and relationships, and was started due to the lack of diversity and affordable fashion she found in blogging. Most pieces featured are high-street or vintage buys with the odd staple designer piece, like her well-loved Commes des Garçons x Converse trainers.

A black and white close-up portrait of Edward Enninful. He is looking directly at the camera with a slight smile. His right hand is raised, resting against his temple, with a ring visible on his finger. He is wearing a dark, textured sweater. The lighting is soft, highlighting the texture of his skin and the fabric of his sweater.

Edward Enninful

The first person of colour to become Editor-in-Chief of a
Vogue publication.

Senga Nengudi Exhibition: The Henry Moore Institute

Arts Editor, Steph Bennett, reviews the recently opened Senga Nengudi exhibition at The Henry Moore Institute, speaking with both the curator and the artist herself.



It was the utmost pleasure to be invited to the opening exhibition of Senga Nengudi, one of the world's leading avant-garde artists, last week at the Leeds Henry Moore Institute. Open until February 2019, it's an exhibition that showcases some of the vital aspects of Nengudi's life through the years. Race, femininity, motherhood and culture all feature prominently within the exhibition and it is, quite simply, fantastic. Nengudi's artistry is inspirational; every piece has multiple layers of thought and is an expression of exceptional complexity from the simple and unassuming. According to Laurence Sellars, the curator of the exhibit, Nengudi "wanted to be able to take an exhibition out of her handbag."

From a mixture of photos documenting the influences and performative belief systems in 1978 to the rough-living urban struggle of homeless people in New York, Nengudi's commentary is a combination of

fragility and untested strength. Her work manages to create a third realm buoyed by a sense of liminality that allows a conversation to take place between the audience, the work and Senga herself. Nengudi's personal history is a clear contributor to the exhibition, evident from the sculpture made out of the window slats from the urban area she inhabited as a child to a room so full of newspaper clippings and shocks of memory that the room itself became a palimpsest. This, perhaps, was my favourite piece of the exhibition. Layer upon layer of newspaper, collected by Nengudi's mother and then herself, built a story of Senga's life. Slashes of print were artfully and sometimes brutally sprayed away by gold paint to reveal messages in the print that were subtle but impactful. Combined with the word 'bulimia' sprayed on the wall, also in gold paint, it became the personification of that third space the rest of her work

suggests. It was almost like walking into Senga's brain, examining the emotions and pieces of her history that have resulted in her work to date.

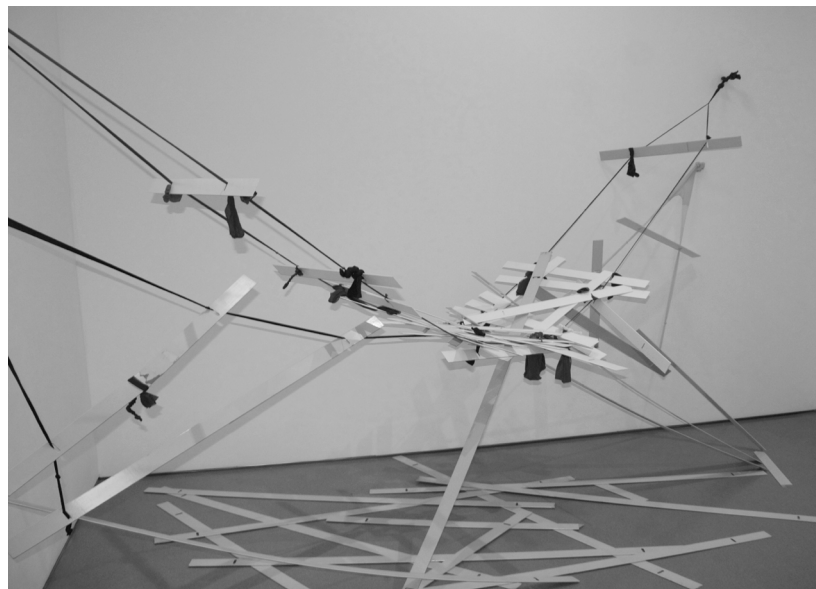
Speaking with Nengudi herself was inspirational, and discussing her influences for her work was an interesting insight into the complexities behind her artistry:

"Each one is like your baby. My influences come from my personal experience as a child with the general desire to see the commonalities of different cultures. Part of it comes from my history as a woman and the idea of sensuality but it also comes from how many cultures celebrate spirits and how they cope with difficult things. You have to find yourself, find your voice and go against the grain and keep experimenting."

Speaking with Laurence Sellars, the curator of the exhibition and the head of the Henry Moore Institute's programs,

revealed another critical layer into the exploration and understanding of the fundamentals of both curation and Nengudi's work. "A lot of what you see here hasn't been seen in thirty years and has been recreated from Senga's recipe. The entire thing is thought-provoking, it's all a metaphor for what the body can and can't do." I proceeded to ask Sellars about what advice he would give to those hoping to work within a gallery in the future.

"You have to be driven by passion. There are a lot of deadlines but it's extremely rewarding getting to experience the journey through the eyes of the visitors. There are many different routes and courses, you don't have to just go down the traditional route. It's important that you get to know different artists and to visit as many studios and galleries as you can."



Sellars continued to explain that "it's a lot of hard work and can sometimes be difficult to fund financially, but often the joy of the exhibitions, and indeed curating itself, is the joy of the relations. You never really know what the exhibition will be like until you've finished, how it functions even. What many visitors expect is a pristine polish, but it's actually a long work in progress." This sense of immaculate conception for Nengudi's work, or rather the absence of it, clearly resonated as I watched Nengudi at work. The sense of rawness about her work was undeniable, and it is perhaps this rawness and intensity that results in such a thought-provoking collection. Nengudi's work is meant to be seen, touched, connected with by its audience - and that requires something that has its own kind of power.

Every installation transfigured my initial perception of traditional objects, from sand to newspaper to tights. Transformative and progressive, every piece reframed modern thought and stereotype with an acuity that never wanes. Each installation was an interactive conversation with the visitors. Despite the inherent fragility of some of the pieces, it was interactive and tactile and this only added to the impression of sensuality. As Sellars quipped, Nengudi "does a lot with not a lot."

As his first major exhibition for the Henry Moore Institute, it is clear that Sellars, and indeed the entire team of staff working on the project, are both talented and dedicated to their craft. Their skill underpins the exhibition and helps Nengudi's work to shine all the brighter. The exhibition is truly her life's work and allows the conceptual pressures to bloom into a non-linear tour of her history. Senga explained that:

"I really believe something is deeply personal, a universal and human experience that can be felt and understood by all." Senga's philosophy, her experimental, avant-garde sculptures and insightful photography reveal the world as it is - fragile, but inherently and mentally enduring."

Stephanie Bennett

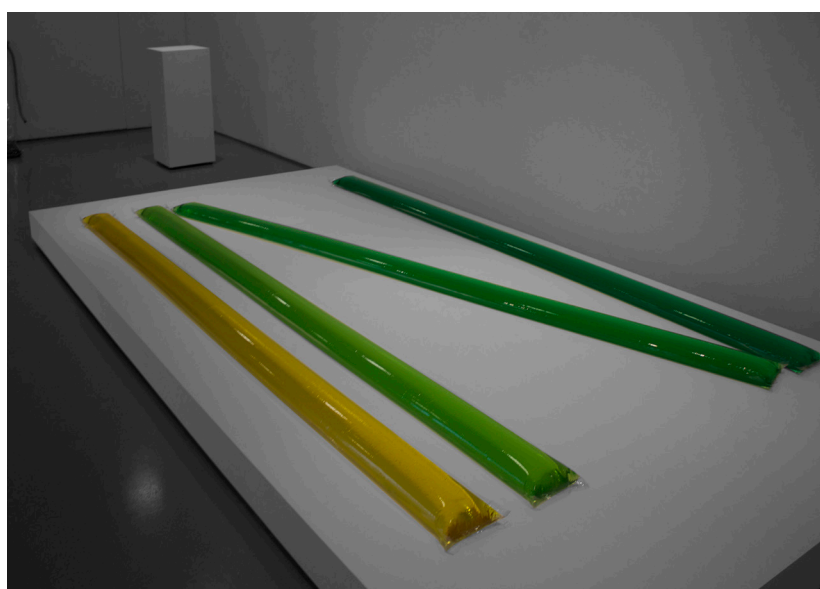




Image: Katherine Corcoran

Why is my Curriculum Still White?

Fiona Holland investigates whether Leeds' Faculty of Arts, Humanities and Cultures is doing all it can to integrate Black writers to the curriculum.

Coming to university, you are told that you will be moving away from the spoon-fed nature of a school curriculum to one that encourages critical thinking and expands your knowledge even further. However, broadening your academic horizons proves not to be so easy if you happen to study a course that only offers a Eurocentric view on history, art or literature. Following the launch of the 'Why is My Curriculum White?' campaign in 2015, which brought attention to a lack of diversity amongst its taught subjects, Leeds has certainly tried to move away from a Western focus in the Arts and Humanities.

One of the first things my tutors encouraged our class to reflect on in our first year of Art History was how, for centuries on end, the subject has highlighted the brilliance and teleological development of European works in contrast to the so-called 'primitive' style of art being made in non-Western parts of the world. We were brought face to face with the fact that history has been consistent in its attempt to project the West as superior to the undeveloped 'Other'. However, we were certainly allowed to challenge this notion ourselves by being given the chance to learn about the fascinating art that has been and is still being created outside of Europe.

My academic experience at Leeds has definitely enabled me to escape an education on all things Western, but

only to an extent. The Faculty Of Arts, Humanities and Cultures does offer a number of modules on famous European artistic eras such as the post-war Avant-Garde, the Abstract Expressionists of New York and the Italian Renaissance - also known as the beacon of most Art History survey textbooks - but there is also the opportunity to study a more diverse History of Art. In first and second year our core modules always included a number of references to Art History from outside of the Western bubble. In later years, you also have the opportunity to explore art historical and museological representation of Asian and African art from the early centuries to the present day, taught by professors that have an incredible knowledge of the field.

A diverse curriculum is also present within the faculty of English, which holds a number of modules in final year that focus on non-Western work. A core module on Postcolonial literature brings to light the important writing by contemporary authors from several post-colonial nations that reflect on the issues that infiltrate these countries following decolonisation. There is also the opportunity to study an extremely pertinent module on contemporary refugee writers and their experiences. It's a refreshing break from the classical white-dominated canon.

Now, while I seem to praise the university for their diverse curriculum, notice that I only mention a mere two programmes here amongst the wide array that exist within the Arts and Humanities faculties. It is true that there are many programmes of study at Leeds that allow students to question literary, historical, and sociological canons through the lens of post-colonialism and feminism. However, despite an increase in more diverse modules, there is still certainly an imbalance in the curriculums of many subjects, with modules about white male artists, white writers and white history, propped up by predominantly white reading lists, being more readily available to study than those on the works, histories and writings of people of colour. So, while Leeds has certainly diversified the curriculum of Arts and Humanities modules to an extent, there is still plenty more room for change.

Fiona Holland

More Than Just A Phenomenal Woman - Maya Angelou

Digital Associate Editor Bella Davis pays tribute to the multi-talented American artist.

I have always admired Maya Angelou. She was a phenomenal woman and more than just an icon. As Barack Obama stated - Maya was "one of the brightest lights of our time—a brilliant writer, a fierce friend, and a truly phenomenal woman."

Born Marguerite Annie Johnson, April 4 1928, Maya Angelou did not face an easy childhood. Her mother and father separated when she was small, and she and her brother were sent to live with their father's mother in Arkansas. Angelou experienced a wrath of racial prejudices and discrimination growing up in the deep South which added to her already complicated childhood - she was raped, aged seven, by her mother's boyfriend. The boyfriend was later murdered by her uncles seeking vengeance, leaving Angelou traumatised and practically mute for five years. It was during this time that Angelou's budding talent festered when she discovered the likes of Shakespeare and Charles Dickens. A plethora of poetry, screenwriting, acting and dancing soon blossomed, showing the world just how multi-talented she was.

As if the creative arts were not enough, Angelou was also an active supporter of the Civil rights movement and a journalist in Egypt and Ghana during the decolonisation of Africa. Angelou received numerous honorary awards and degrees praising her for her contribution to society. Her written work is by far what she is most famous for and her witty and rich voice is extremely distinctive using powerful, touching and bold words. Four years after her death, Maya's legacy



**Pretty women wonder where my secret lies.
I'm not cute or built to suit a fashion model's size
But when I start to tell them,
They think I'm telling lies.
I say,
It's in the reach of my arms,
The span of my hips,
The stride of my step,
The curl of my lips.
I'm a woman
Phenomenally.
Phenomenal woman,
That's me.**

Phenomenal Woman (1978)

continues to live on. At her memorial in 2014, Michelle Obama said: "She taught us that we are each wonderfully made, intricately wo-ven, and put on this Earth for a purpose far greater than we could ever imagine." Journalists continue to write about her, activists continue to quote her and earlier this year, Google celebrated her life with an animated doodle on its homepage, which featured celebrities reading 'Still I Rise'.

Maya Angelou was a woman who inspired millions of people, she celebrated Black beauty and has encouraged and championed Black women to love and embrace themselves. Maya did not just speak to the Black community and Black women. She spoke to everyone, encouraging us to be completely unapologetic and authentic, transcending race and gender. Arguably, one of Angelou's most famous poems was her 1995 poem 'Phenomenal Women', which universally celebrates the female form. This promotion of empowerment, inspiration, acceptance and equality has a raw and real feel to it, evoking the passion Angelou felt towards this subject.

It is incredibly hard to sum up such an inspirational and influential woman who overcame such hardship and shaped modern history, so instead I thought I would leave you with the words of Maya herself:

"If you're always trying to be normal you will never know how amazing you can be."

Bella Davis



Image: Steve Shapiro

James Baldwin

Arguably the most influential literary voice of the civil rights movements, essayist and novelist James Baldwin's works explored themes of race, class, sexuality and acceptance. Known for his poignant, concise and unflinching writing style, the majority of Baldwin's work focused on the Black experience, articulating a lot of the anger and disenfranchisement felt by Black Americans at the time. An openly gay man, a number of Baldwin's novels centred on homosexual and bisexual characters, which was somewhat controversial at the time. Several of Baldwin's essays tackled homophobia in a direct manner, and, although he was writing a lot of this before the gay liberation movement, Baldwin's stance on these matters made him a prominent figure in the movement when it did come about. He spent a large portion, and the final years, of his life living in France and came under criticism from Black activists, who stated that he no longer had the authority to write on matters of Black Americans if he was not himself living in America, being too far removed from his readers and the Black American experience itself. He was a close friend of revolutionary leaders Malcolm X, Medgar Evers and Martin Luther King Jr., and he was exploring these relationships in the manuscript for his book *Remember This House*. Baldwin died from stomach cancer in 1987 before he could finish the book, but the manuscript was taken and from it was born the stunning 2016 documentary *I Am Not Your Negro*, which features many interviews and speeches given by Baldwin.

Activists, Educators, Revolutionaries

Lifestyle and Culture are kicking off our contribution to Black History Month with a selection of profiles of some of the most influential people of colour, past and present, who have had a substantial effect on the world and the way in which we view it.



Image: hemispheria.cat

Angela Davis

Davis was one of, if not the most, prominent and influential female voices of the Black liberation movement. A revolutionary and a communist, she was also involved with the Black Party for a time during the movement. A philosophy major in college, Davis was one of three black students in her class. Her activism brought her to the forefront of the movement, also attracting investigation by the FBI, and an effort by Ronald Reagan to permanently ban her from teaching. All of this was in vain, however, as Davis is still teaching to this day at UC Santa Cruz. With a focus on a multitude of subjects from Marxism

to African-American studies, Davis still publishes work, with her recent work covering the modern struggles of the Ferguson Movement and the Palestinian struggle. She has stated that her socialist stance has furthered her understanding of race relations. Davis is an abolitionist, staunchly opposed to the United States prison complex, believing that the modern US prison system is akin to slavery. She speaks on the matter in Ava DuVernay's ground-breaking 2013 documentary, '13th'.

Charlie Green and Yasmin Hewitt



Image: NY Historical Society

Huey P Newton

One cannot mention the Black struggle without mentioning The Black Panther Party and, in turn, its co-founder Huey P. Newton in the same breath. In 1966, Newton founded the party with Bobby Seale. Based in Marxist-Leninist thought, the party set out 10 commandments and aims for Black liberation, mainly freedom, reparations, and the power to determine the destiny of the Black community. The party was at the forefront of the Black liberation movement, setting up numerous social schemes and providing many with financial and legal aid. Unable to read

until he taught himself in his late teens, Newton became well-versed in the works of many poets, philosophers and revolutionaries that his older brother told him about by memorising a lot of their works from hearing about them. His autobiography, Revolutionary Suicide, paints a picture of the Black experience under segregation. The section on Newton's trial speaks volumes of the tribulations faced by Black people of the day at the hands of the American legal system, but the similarities that are seen between the legal system of 1967 and 2018 are unavoidable.



Image: Oudjad

Shan Boodram

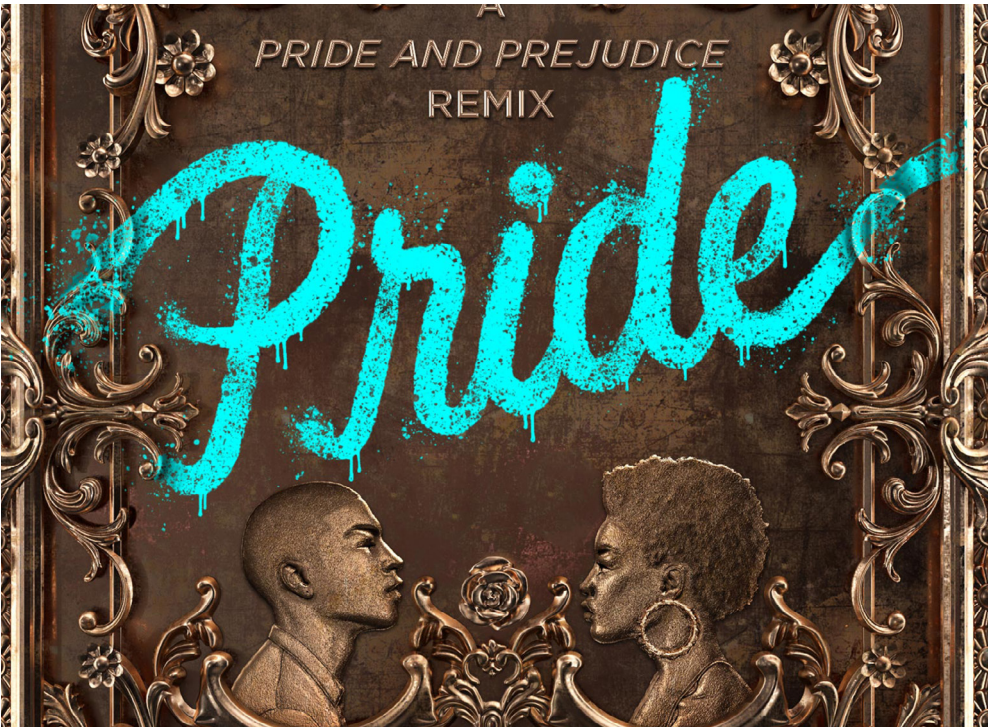
Shan Boodram is a multiplatform activist and sex educator with over 25 million YouTube views on topics including hookups, bad sex, anatomy, homosexuality, virginity, orgasms and relationships to name but a few. She talks about all the things 'you shouldn't talk about', giving young people accurate and informative information in a comfortable relaxed environment, removing the taboo and controversy over talking about all things sex. Boody gained her undergraduate degree in print journalism and as a Canadian best-selling author with her book, LAID: Young People's Experiences with Sex in an Easy-Access Culture, she undeniably deserves more recognition for her efforts to encourage discussion, removing the stigmas of sexuality today. As an ambassador for AIDS Healthcare Foundation, American Sexual Health Association and Womens Health.gov, she is smashing

every metaphorical barrier facing young people of all walks of life. However, her online chat chats are not solely exclusive to sex; they include topics from colourism within Black Panther to taming relentless afro hair and embracing cultural differences. Boody really has changed the lives of her 400,000 subscriber base demonstrated by the regular feedback on her work including "I always feel like superwoman after watching your videos!" and "Thank you! I have become so much more confident and sensual... I am loving it! Keep doing what you're doing!" (anonymous). Comments like these highlight her very real influence and impact on the lives of thousands - to create a more open, communicative and confident society. She's definitely someone you should check out!

Instagram: shanboody
Youtube: shannontboodram

Ibi Zoboi Criticises WSJ On Racist Review of Pride

After reading a review of her novel 'Pride' in the Washington Street Journal, Ibi Zoboi took to twitter to call the reviewer out on their racist and classist remarks.



Many of you have probably heard of the Young Adult novel called *Pride* that was published last year. It is a diverse remix of the Jane Austen's classic, *Pride and Prejudice*, with characters of colour who live in Brooklyn. Among the positive reviews it received, Meghan Cox Gurdon's review published in the Wall Street Journal criticises Zoboi's "heavy use of slang" which "limit the book's appeal." Zoboi took this issue to Twitter and called out the racism in Gurdon's review of her book through a thread of Tweets.


One of the issues that Zoboi points out is Gurdon's perception of African American Vernacular English (AAVE), having picked out a few lines of AAVE from *Pride* to "falsely highlight the novel's presumed intellectual inferiority." AAVE is commonly perceived by the public as slang, improper and "wrong" English, especially in literature, and Gurdon's review only proves that this perception does indeed exist in our society today. Putting down that it isn't of "literary formality" and lacks "classical narrative tact", Gurdon has summed up why AAVE is not so prominent in literature. While it is acceptable to hear AAVE in music, conversations and TV shows, many still see AAVE as a dialect that isn't sophisticated enough for literature.

Using AAVE in literature is not dissimilar to the use of Scottish dialect in *Trainspotting*

or even the use of the fictional language Nadsat in *A Clockwork Orange*. Though in the case of AAVE, it is a legitimate way of speaking adopted by the Black community and is often used as a point of mockery by others for sounding uneducated or lazy. As a result of this common misconception amongst the majority of the public, Black culture, Black people, and Black vernacular are often under-represented in literature.

Fortunately, there are people who support Zoboi's remarks on Twitter and are further criticising Gurdon's racist and narrow-minded review of *Pride*. Her review also brings to light that there is certainly a need for publications, especially major ones, to have reviewers that are from diverse backgrounds and are widely read so that they are not so ignorant of other cultures, races, and gender identities. When there exists a range of opinions even among a group of people with similar backgrounds, there would no doubt be an even wider range of opinions among those with more diverse backgrounds. Reviews will never be entirely objective, but if publications have more diversity in reviewers, we can end gatekeeping in the literary community and give authors from a whole range of backgrounds the chance to reach wider audiences.

Mary Yeh




Ibi Zoboi

@ibizoboi

Follow

This is an insulting review from a major publication (@WSJ) by a very problematic reviewer, Meghan Cox Gurdon. So I'd like to review her review as an example of the "classical narrative tact" she was looking for in my book.

also embodies prejudice, which she reveals in her instant dislike of the wealthy, newly arrived Darcy family—particularly handsome, haughty Darius—and in her animus toward the white newcomers who are altering her neighborhood's racial complexion. As with Austen's heroine, the girl will find that her first impressions of Darius, his brother Ainsley and their charming friend Warren are not a reliable



Ibi Zoboi


@ibizoboi · Sep 22

She fails to elaborate on her definition of "literary formality" nor does she indicate exactly who has described a novel as ever having "classical narrative tact". She may have been expecting the archaic language in Regency-era novels, or the Queen's English itself.

10

75

1.6K



Ibi Zoboi


@ibizoboi · Sep 22

Her heavy use of delusional intellectual superiority will undoubtedly amuse & validate those readers ages colonial to white supremacist who use it themselves, but it may otherwise limit the review's appeal.

26

183

3.2K



Ibi Zoboi


@ibizoboi · Sep 22

The reviewer quotes a few lines of AAVE to falsely highlight the novel's presumed intellectual inferiority. Clearly, she has a limited understanding of metaphor, wordplay, & the overall verbal ingenuity that Black children bring to the English language.

8

150

2.5K



Ibi Zoboi

@ibizoboi · Sep 22

No, I absolutely will not be commenting on all reviews. But when you bring "those readers" into a review, you're talking about our children, many of whom are forced to bend & minimize their inherit genius to fit your idea of intelligence.

72

197

3.4K

20

Reading Race

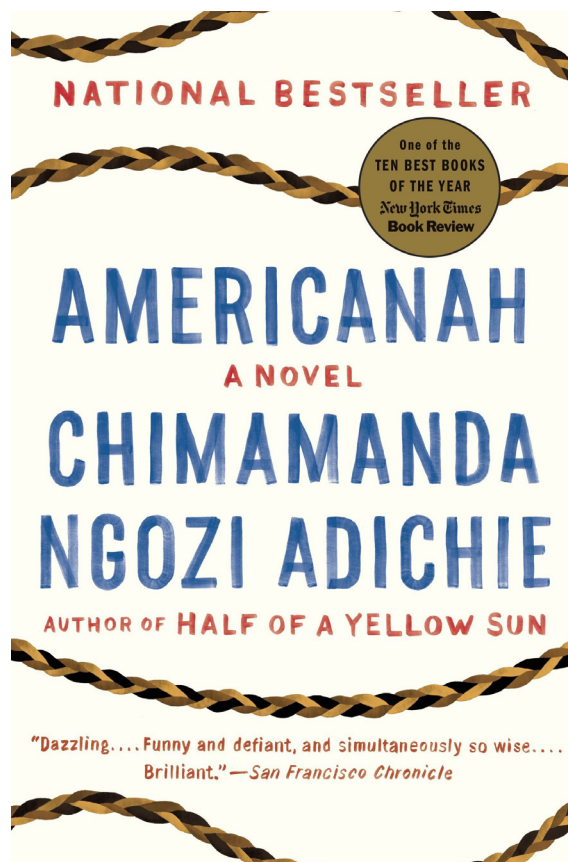
The Lifestyle & Culture editors give their recommendations for influential and impactful contemporary literature by Black authors.

Americanah by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie

Why I'm No Longer Talking To White People

Dear Martin by Nic Stone

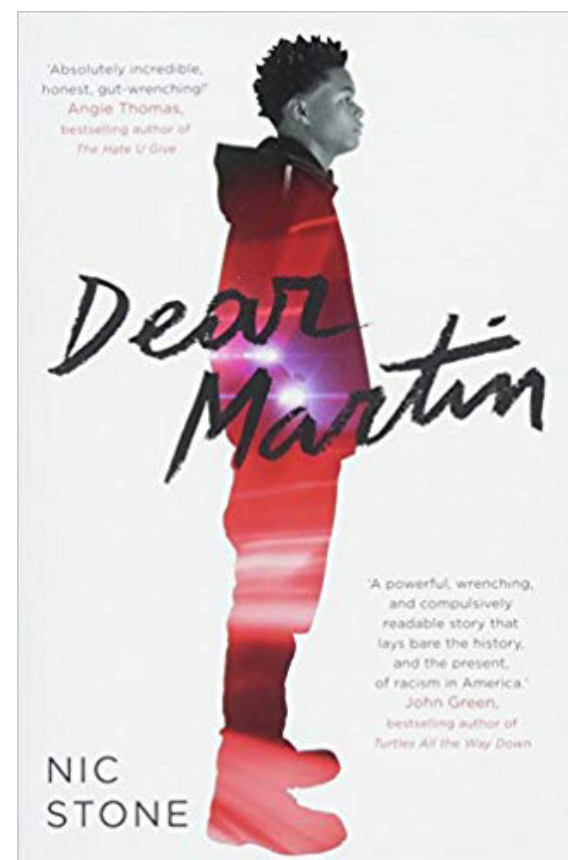
About Race by Reni Eddo-Lodge



'Essential' Marlon James, Winner of the Man Booker Prize 2015

Reni Eddo-Lodge
**WHY I'M
 NO LONGER
 TALKING
 TO WHITE
 PEOPLE
 ABOUT
 RACE**

BLOOMSBURY CIRCUS



Americanah follows Ifemelu, a young Nigerian woman who immigrates to the United States to attend university.

Throughout the novel, we witness Ifemelu struggle with understanding her identity in the U.S. as an immigrant and a Black woman. She experiences being Black in the U.S. as an outsider, but learns quickly about the ingrained and idiosyncratic nature of racism in America. She starts a blog to document her experiences. She comments about the expectations placed on Black women's hair, what it's like to date a man who fetishizes her appearance, whilst viewing himself as a white saviour, and the pressures faced by young Black men as she views her own nephew's upbringing in the states.

The novel also takes us back to Ifemelu's childhood in Nigeria and later, her return home. We see a side of Nigeria that is not often represented in the Western cultural depiction of Africa - one that shows a modern and thriving country.

Adichie's observations about race and identity in the modern world are both poignant and eye-opening.

Jade Verbick

Why I'm No Longer Talking To White People About Race comprises of a collection of essays examining structural racism, surfacing out of the author's frustration with the way that discussions of race and racism in Britain continue to be led by those who aren't affected by it.

The novel started as a blog post of the same name in 2014, in which Eddo-Lodge wrote "I can no longer engage with the gulf of an emotional disconnect that white people display when a person of colour articulates our experiences." The blog post went viral, resonating with others who were desperate to join in the conversation.

The essays cover the inextricable links between gender, class, race and privilege, through the lens of British culture and history. For anyone wanting to understand race relations in Britain today, this book is an essential.

Caitlin Tilley

Dear Martin, Nic Stone's debut work, is a YA novel that tells the story of Justyce McAllister, a Black boy with exceptional grades and a promising future at an Ivy League school, who becomes a victim of racial profiling. At the very start of the book, Justyce gets arrested based on a false assumption. After this incident, his world views begin to change and he starts noticing the small things such as racist remarks that would normally pass off as jokes by his classmates and other microaggressions geared towards him. As he attends a prep school with a majority white student body, he starts a journal to Dr. Martin Luther King Jr, penning down what he thought was similar between present day and the days of Martin Luther King Jr.

It's an incredibly eye-opening read because, whilst *Dear Martin* is labelled as fiction, the situations that the characters face are very real and often occur in the society that we live in today. Nic Stone quite successfully addresses the relations between races in America in this insightful book.

Mary Yeh

Dread, Beat and Dub: The Art of Linton Kwesi Johnson

Jodie Yates could write a book about Linton Kwesi Johnson, the Black British poet renowned for his pioneering form of dub-poetry. But you can check out the abridged version of his life in this week's blog.



For me, Black History Month brings with it many names, faces and stories that have inspired the mobilisation of Black people around the globe. But of all the available faces, this particular month, I'm dedicating my spare time to spreading the wisdom of Linton Kwesi Johnson. Poet, activist, musician, educator, Jamaican, Black British - Linton Kwesi Johnson's biography is vast and unlimited. Known as the British forefather of dub-poetry, LKJ is a figure that has revolutionised every form he takes on.

Born in Chapeltown, Jamaica in 1952, Johnson moved to a hostile and unwelcoming London aged 11. From that point onwards, the myth of London that was sold to then-colonies was one that Johnson's work aimed to dismantle. Attacking the institutions and figures that enforced systematic racism upon Britain's ethnic minorities, in a time of rife violence, Johnson's only weapon was cultural: poetry. From protest, to 12", to seminar rooms, LKJ's poetry has been instrumental in mobilising the struggle for equality for Black Britons, as it transcends form and audience.

Hyperconscious of his time and environment, Johnson's poetry is a dedication to the presence of the ethnic minority communities in Britain and around the world. 'Reggae fi May Ayim', 'Reggae fi Radni' and 'Reggae fi Peach' are eulogies to revolutionaries and activists, whilst 'Di Great Insohreckshan' and 'New Crass Massakah' illuminate events that were pivotal for the Black community in Britain - the Brixton Riots and the New

Cross fire of 1981. These events and characters were painted by a racist media as criminal. But the jovial reggae beats and lyricism of Johnson's dub poetry rewrote these narratives, honoring activists and celebrating revolution.

The gravity of the subject matter of Johnson's poetry - racism, murder, police brutality - is contrasted against the style of the accompanying music, a reminder that music is a form of empowerment against the oppression that permeates life for people of colour. This sonic page to sound contradiction is embodied by the relationship between Johnson and his longstanding collaborator, reggae pioneer Dennis Bovell. Bovell's stage presence is exuberant and boisterous, an image of liberation, yet Johnson's seemingly stern persona is the lyrical anchor that reminds his audience of an ongoing struggle.

British society is in a state of regression, heading towards the oppressive and stifling racism Johnson

has been fighting against for the past forty years. Politicians hark back to the need for stop and search laws, but in doing so reveal the same racist rhetoric that Black people are suspect and criminals - after all, Black people are eight times more likely to be stopped by British police.

Linton Kwesi Johnson's poetry is an insight into the lives of those who are oppressed and a reminder that we still occupy a system which operates on the legacies of colonialism. Brexit and the Windrush scandal are a pressing reminder of this. This Black History Month, looking back on the historic oppression of Black people should illuminate its resonance in contemporary society. When Black people are being unfairly deported, imprisoned and murdered, now is the perfect time to ask if we are doing enough.

Johnson's revolutionary dub poetry is ever-relevant, a call to mobilise the Black community, and celebrate the power of their presence in a world which is systematically anti-Black.

Jodie Yates

Polls, Pigment and Pitas



Black History Month belongs to every Other. The open dialogue shared alongside discussions of the struggles of Black peoples allows for the recognition of both past and present problems that we of the Black/ Mixed/ Other/not-a-white-person identities have faced and continue to face. However, as a member of the incredibly

vague 'Other' category, I can't help but feel like I am but a passing mention in brackets in this month's narrative.

Of course, the melanin intolerant would say we all belong under this label of Black in an uncharacteristic attempt at establishing equality, but I fear it's deeper than that, fam. For someone that has to fill in their own ethnicity when faced with a poll, job application or a buzzfeed potato quiz, I find it more and more difficult to pinpoint exactly where I lie in the conversation, which has led me to many a crisis of identity growing up brown.

Now, growing up is difficult in general; we're all trying to figure out who we are in our formative years. But for a craft brownie that sees no other faces like theirs around them, it can be even more daunting. Questions like "why don't I look like the other kids in my class?" and "why is even the bread of

my packed lunch sandwich different?" (cheers, mum, those pita sarnies were peng) plagued those first school years of mine in a white working-class village. I found myself applying disgusting amounts of hair gel to my hair in an effort to mute my curls, just so that my hair slightly resembled Billy's, and asking mumzy to hit me up with a jam sandwich just to avoid those awkward, unanswerable questions about the intricacies of a flatbread.

I lost who I was before I even figured out who I am, because I was trying so hard to be white.

As a kid, you're too busy worrying about fitting in instead of taking pride in standing out because there's always a bully, and you're always the odd one out - again, because Billy Bellend doesn't see any Ahmad's or Amare's doing cool shit on the TV. That's where I think the problem stems from. But I don't have

any strings to pull in the industry to get our beautiful, ambiguous mugs on the screen, so I just laugh Billy off for now, - one day he'll learn how to google.

As we seem to be seeing more and more fellow Others in the spotlight that we so foolishly fixate on, idolising and emulating them, to me, would be a waste of time. Just take comfort in the fact that they look like you and that they're killing it, and that you can kill it too.

Become your own icon. Own you. Wear those curls like a crown, king. And for the queens out there, you're hair will always be better than Becky's.

Ahmad Beitelmal

'Reggae fi May Ayim'

Wi give tanks
Fi di life
Yu share wid wi
Wi give tanks
Fi di lite
Yu shine pon wi
Wi give tanks
Fi di love
Yu showah pon wi
Wi give tanks
Fi yu memahri

Linton Kwesi-Johnson

Image: Speaking Volumes

In the Middle



“

“Each and every one of us has the capacity to be an oppressor. I want to encourage each and everyone of us to interrogate how we might be an oppressor and how we might be able to become liberators for ourselves and for each other.”

- Lavern Cox

”

False Representation of BME Women

Adina Rees

The importance of representation is undeniable. Millions of young Black children grow up without Black idols to look up to in the media, which is heavily dominated by white celebrities. In the last year, there has been an increase in the number of Black people, and especially Black women, shown in mainstream magazines. Often stereotyped as argumentative and categorised into attractiveness based on how 'dark' they are, Black women frequently receive endless amounts of racial discrimination while growing up.

“Until a real change is made to how Black women are perceived by society, inclusion is likely to remain just that – false”

With a significant number of Black women such as Zendaya, Lupita N'Yongo and Nicki Minaj appearing on the front pages of fashion magazines, the motives of the brands pushing for more inclusion are questionable. It could be argued that magazine companies are recognising the need for diverse casting since an important discourse surrounding race issues has emerged following the rise of ground-breaking

movies like *Black Panther* and *Get Out*. However, it seems far more likely that the inclusion of Black women is purely a marketing technique exploiting the fact that breaking casting stereotypes is now relevant.

There is a fine line between being educated about political issues and subscribing to the current ideals of political correctness for monetary gain. Brands like H&M and Dove continue to make ignorant mistakes in terms of appropriate branding whilst companies like Urban Outfitters repeatedly steal product designs from people of colour. Our society is perhaps not as progressive as it may seem.

The difficulty with trying to educate others on how best to represent people of colour in the media is that representation can very easily turn into fetishization or plain disrespect of other cultures. Blackface is still used by white people as part of Halloween costumes despite it being an obviously disrespectful of Black culture. People face no long-term repercussions when they mock Black culture but when they show support, they are hailed as progressive. Now, more than ever, offering representation is profitable.

Popular magazines are featuring Black women now that they realise the drive for diverse casting will result in a rise in sales rather than genuinely wanting to celebrate Black culture. This can be likened to companies that conveniently become LGBT-friendly

in time for Pride. What is happening with Black women is no different. The second that having diverse casting is no longer a unique selling point is the second that Black faces will disappear from the forefront of the media. Until a real change is made to how Black women are perceived by society, the false inclusion is likely to remain just that – false.



Image: Ms. Magazine

Bleaching for Beauty, a Modern Epidemic

Georgie Wardall

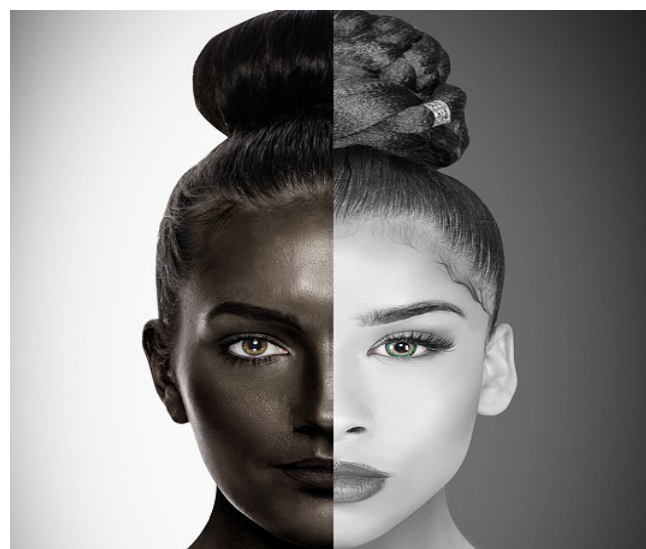
For as long as there have been beauty standards, there have been products that cater to them. The pursuit of perfection is never-ending, with the global cosmetic products market being worth a reported \$532.43 billion in 2017. However, the opportunity for exploitation will always closely follow the opportunity for profit. Among people of colour, the popularity of skin-lightening creams has soared, with the World Health Organization finding that 77% of Nigerian women, 61% of Indian women, and 40% of Chinese women regularly use skin lightening creams. Such staggering figures beg the question: why are skin lightening products so popular, and what does this tell us about attitudes towards darker skin tones?

The motive behind using skin lightening products is to reach a perceived standard of beauty which is withheld from people of colour: having fair skin. Companies, relentless in their bids to extract profit from their clientele, have clearly forged a captive audience. The global skin lightening industry amassed a total worth of £3.4 billion in 2017.

To what do the companies owe their success? The stark lack of representation of people of colour in culture is the first clue: In the Miss Universe beauty pageants, there have only ever been five Black winners out of 66; in 90 years of the Oscars awards, only one Black actress has won Best Actress; in 2018's London Fashion Week, 65.4% of shows did not represent people of colour. Popular culture is dominated by a homogeneous representation of what is deemed to be beautiful and successful, and it excludes people of colour.

It is, however, impossible to deny the legacy of colonialism throbbing at the heart of the skin

lightening issue. In the colonial era, white skin represented affluence, superior civility, and the ultimate ideal. Such an ideology was ingrained in the colonies by white imperialists. The reclamation of the colonies by those to whom they belong may have come and gone, but it seems the attitudes of the coloniser remain as current and thriving as they were in the colonial era.



The foundations of the skin lightening industry makes the fact that many women put themselves in danger to lighten their skin even more horrifying. Use of products containing hydroquinone, a skin bleaching chemical, is illegal in the UK unless prescribed by a doctor. Under careful supervision, such lightening creams can be a harmless treatment for hyperpigmentation.

The clandestine nature of buying skin lightening creams does not, unfortunately, make their use any less widespread. Illegal skin lightening creams containing

harmful levels of hydroquinone, steroids, and mercury are readily available on the high street, with many women using them because they are unaware of the health risks that come with the product. The misuse of products containing hydroquinone and mercury can lead to liver, nerve, and foetal damage, while their prolonged use dramatically increases the risk of skin cancer due to their effect on the production of melanin, the pigment that protects the skin from UV rays. Ultimately, the use of illegal skin lightening products can lead to hospitalisation for extreme scarring and chemical burns, which, if left untreated, could be life threatening.

Why are skin lightening products so easily available, then, despite their illegality? Trading Standards seize illegal skin lightening creams and prosecute those selling them. The fines which are the result of the court proceedings are, however, a cry into the void, with most sellers continuing to distribute the contraband skin lightening creams even after being prosecuted for it. Lack of data on the true breadth of the black market's supply and lack of resources from Trading Standards make the wildfire of skin lightening products hard to extinguish. Without enough resources or information, tackling the problem is going to be an uphill struggle for Trading Standards; the skin lightening cream epidemic needs to be a higher priority, receiving more funding and research.

However, the real crux of the matter, is the attitudes of the people buying the products. The exclusivity of beauty needs to be combatted with a better education for those likely to fall victim to its demands. All complexions must be included in the definition of beauty, because the best way to defeat an industry is to cut off its demand.



Generation Sex: Are We Too Promiscuous?

Serena Smith

Figures have shown that generations which grew up in 'the age of the internet' have staggeringly higher rates of STIs and STDs than older generations: between 2013 and 2017, there were 209,808 diagnoses among 15-24 year-olds, whilst there were 133,357 among 25-34 year-olds. With the birth of the Worldwide Web in 1991, it is clear that those who experienced the full impact of its creation on their childhoods and/or adolescence fall into the latter bracket where STI and STD rates are significantly higher.

It's easy to assume that the rise of the internet – and with it, the rise of dating apps and porn sites – is directly proportional to the rise in STIs and STDs in a generation that is simply too promiscuous, too complacent, too sexualised, too ready to bed strangers no matter what their sexual history may be. But the reality is far more complex. To assume our generation, above all others, is now suddenly obsessed with sex to an unprecedented degree, would be wrong.

Undoubtedly, the internet has changed and shaped the way we go about dating and sex. It's a lot easier now if you fancy a hook-up to head to Tinder and find a compatible match within minutes. But just because it's easier now, doesn't mean the sentiment hasn't always been there. People have wanted to have sex all the time for, well, all of time. It's quite literally instinctive.

Every generation likes to think that they're the most sexually liberated, but the truth is, it's anachronistic to assume every generation before us was closeted and repressed. A better way of viewing the internet is to say that it has facilitated our promiscuity, not caused it. If he could have, Charles Dickens would have watched porn too.

As far as sexual liberation is concerned, the advent of the internet isn't even the most ground-breaking

"People have wanted to have sex all the time for, well, all of time. It's quite literally instinctive"

moment. If we want to pin down the most seminal moment in sexual progression in recent times, it's got to be the advent of the pill. Symbolically, the pill represented an open admission that sex can be purely for pleasure and not just for procreation, and that it could be enjoyed and controlled by women too.

Of course – though the internet hasn't directly caused an increased promiscuity, it has granted us the option to find sexual partners with relative ease. That much is indisputable. But whilst we may be taking advantage of the 21st century ability to booty call whoever we want, we're also taking the necessary steps to take responsibility for the consequences of being promiscuous. This means we're no longer afraid

to get STI or STD checks.

With the internet, you can look up symptoms of gonorrhoea; order a chlamydia test kit online for free; check if the discharge you're experiencing is normal. You can check if HPV is contagious and read a Wikipedia page all about it instantly. You can search 'sexual health clinics near me' and a list of every clinic within 30 miles with details on how to get there will appear.

In 2017, men and women under 29 visited sexual health clinics more often than those above 29. Is it not possible that our generation are more willing to get checked out, and that those shocking diagnosis figures reflect that? Is it the case that the advent of the internet has meant we are more aware of STIs and STDs? Are figures for 25-34 year-olds lower because they don't get checked?

As a generation, we hold our hands up. Maybe we are promiscuous. But we're also the most responsible when it comes to dealing with the potential consequences of our choices. So long as we're getting regular checks and using protection when possible, who's to say we shouldn't enjoy the occasional hook-up?

Ariana Grande is Not to Blame for Mac Miller's Death

Charly Loughlin

On the 7th September 2018, Malcolm McCormick, known to fans as 'Mac Miller', was found dead due to a suspected drug overdose. Promptly after his death, millions of online tributes started flooding in from friends, family and fans alike who were mourning the rapper's untimely death.

Many of the tributes, however, began to place the blame for Miller's death on his ex-girlfriend, Ariana Grande. Despite Miller being explicitly candid about his difficult relationship with drugs, even admitting that his entire 2014 album, *Faces*, was about cocaine, somehow internet trolls have pointed their finger at Ariana, marking her as the root cause behind his death.

Ariana received so much online abuse that she was forced to close her Instagram comments in order to minimise the unjust hate she was receiving. This was not the first time Ariana had been publicly criticised for the severe consequences of Mac's drug addiction. Earlier this year, Mac was arrested for driving under the influence following a hit and run. People then took

to social media to bombard Ariana with messages stating that her new, and very public, relationship with Pete Davidson led to Miller's accident and that she was consequently to blame. Ariana was forced to respond to the backlash, stating that she is "not a babysitter or a mother" and that women should not feel pressured to stay in "toxic" relationships.

It is common for the partner of someone with a substance abuse to feel pressured to stay in the relationship, even if they are no longer happy, out of fear that the pain of a break up will cause a downward spiral and worsen the situation. Placing the blame on Ariana is therefore not only absurd but also somewhat dangerous. It perpetuates the incredibly outdated notion that women are maternal protectors who are at fault for the actions of their male counterparts.

The situation with Ariana and Mac is, unfortunately, an all too familiar scenario and highlights how we, as a society, seem to be stuck in a continuous loop of placing the blame of a man's actions onto a woman. For example, Yoko Ono was continuously accused of profiting on the back of John Lennon's murder in 1980; Michelle Williams was harassed by paparazzi

after Heath Ledger's overdose to the extent that she was forced to take their 2-year-old child and flee to another town; to this day, Courtney Love is still hounded by conspirators who claim that she killed Kurt Cobain after his suicide in 1994.

Rather than trying to flip the blame onto someone who is in no way at fault, we need to focus on the real issue here: addiction. Addiction is a disease that millions of people have been impacted by, whether they suffer with addiction issues themselves or know someone who has. We need to focus on tackling addiction by providing the appropriate mediums that will allow those affected by the disease to seek the help that they require in order to overcome it. Let's use Malcolm McCormick's tragic, untimely death as a way to get the conversation about the horrors of addiction started, and to try and make a difference.

If you or anyone you know is suffering with substance abuse, please call FRANK on 0300 123 6600 or visit the FRANK website: <https://www.talktofrank.com>.

The 'UKIP-isation' of Labour's New Immigration Policy

Charley Weldrick

The aims of the Labour Party's new immigration policy, to create a level playing field for EU and non EU migrants whilst allowing workers with specific skill sets into the country, is both laudable and economically prudent. The problem, though, is that in their desperation to enact a fairer immigration policy without alienating any voters, the Labour Party seems to be falling prey to what David Lammy calls the "UKIP-isation of our politics".

The most promising of Diane Abbott's announcements on immigration is the pledge to end "bogus" immigration targets. This is hardly controversial. In fact, as recently as August, the Confederation of British Industry called for the UK government to do exactly that. Alongside the CBI, a number of Conservative politicians like Liam Fox and Sajid Javid have recognised the impossibility of the targets and registered this disapproval, either explicitly or implicitly.

Clearly, the direction of Labour's new policies is sensible and popular. So, why are MPs like Lammy rushing to the airwaves to argue "we need these people to work in our care homes, to pick our fruit, to be our cleaners"? The Labour Party can, and must, make a case for immigration without reducing migrants to nothing more than members of some kind of perpetual proletariat, here only to do those jobs that British workers deem beneath them.

The kind of argument made by Lammy for the new immigration policy ignores some of its key elements too. The point is to ease the visa process for a "range of professions", be it "doctors, scientists or care workers." Not only is Lammy misrepresenting the change in policy and perpetuating the idea that immigration is predominately low skilled work, he's doing it unnecessarily. The most recent British Attitudes Survey shows that only 17% of Brits think that immigration has

a negative impact on the economy.

This is an example of a sin that many politicians with limited experience of the current working class commit. They wrap up a sensible policy in a thin veneer of the lowest common denominator – populism – because they fall into the trap of thinking such an approach is the only way for the general population to accept it. It's the same affliction that drives journalists to proudly announce that Tommy Robinson is the voice of the working class, because they too have succumbed to the stereotypes and signed up to the groupthink that the working class are racist.

"If our elected representatives, particularly those styling themselves as champions of diversity and dignity in British society, fail to stand up to this degradation of discourse, who will?"

Lammy talks passionately and powerfully about the 'ukipisation' of our politics, with good reason. The rise of UKIP has effectively dragged the window of acceptable political discussion to the right, particularly amongst Conservatives and the remnants of New Labour. The electoral collapse of UKIP in 2017 has given both major parties the idea that there are votes to collect, making things worse.

The way that we discuss immigration must never be a capitulation to dehumanising right wing attitudes. If our elected representatives, particularly those styling themselves as champions of diversity and dignity in British society, fail to stand up to this degradation of discourse, who will? As Lammy famously, and magnificently, declared in the Houses of Commons: "If you lay down with dogs, you will get fleas." With this latest development, he seems to have done just that.



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Where Did the Emerging Market Crisis Come From?

Daniel Farrington

Concerns of an impending emerging markets crisis have been a major worry for investors this summer. Crumbling confidence has seen foreign investment withdrawn from the likes of Turkey, Argentina, South Africa and India, all of which rely on money from foreign investors. The countries involved have suffered huge currency devaluations against the dollar, increasing the cost of their imports as well as their debt, as borrowed dollars become more expensive to pay back.

Furthermore, unemployment and inflation have remained high, while political instability has compounded the situation, particularly in Argentina and Turkey as citizens see their savings evaporate.

Although emerging market investments offer the prospect of greater returns, they are perceived as being risky. These risks arise from poorer accounting standards and corporate regulation as well as weaker economic factors such as unemployment and inflation. In some cases, there may be political concerns such as corruption to add to investor worries. However, attitudes towards these risks have changed during the past year, as the United States Central Bank (the Fed) has been gradually increasing US interest rates to prevent their strengthening American economy

from overheating. Higher interest rates make safe investments, such as treasury bonds, much more attractive. This lowers people's appetite for risk and encourages the withdrawal of money invested in riskier emerging markets in favour of safer American investments.

Because of increased demand for US investments, there is now an increase in demand for the US dollar, while demand for other currencies continues to suffer. This has resulted in many emerging markets seeing the value of their currencies plunge. The Turkish lira and the Argentine peso have been particularly affected, each frequently swapping places as the worst performing currency of the year.

Why do devalued currencies matter? Essentially, poorly performing currencies add more complications as volatile currencies only add to investor worries and prompt them to sell. Foreign investors in these emerging markets (who convert the returns they get from their investments back into their own currency) see their yields fall in value. Currency devaluations are bad news for governments and firms within emerging markets too, as borrowed dollars on overseas debt markets will be much harder to pay. According to Deutsche Bank, total foreign-currency denominated debt amounts to over 50% of GDP in Argentina, Turkey and Hungary, resulting in concerns from investors that emerging market firms

and governments may be forced to default on their debts.

However, confidence in emerging markets could be restored if governments can propose and implement credible plans to recover from the downturn and repay debts. But, should money continue to flow out of emerging markets and governments and central banks are unable to devise an effective economic strategy, these countries may fall into an economic slump, leading to the deterioration of economic activity, similar to that seen a decade ago during the financial crisis.



Image: Londonis

Ten Years on From the Financial Crisis

Sagar Kar

It has been a decade since the 2008 financial crisis. But, what was caused the biggest financial crisis since the Great Depression?

While there are numerous factors, most economists agree that the crisis began as a result of the mortgage bubble bursting. Before the crash, banks like Lehman Brothers were earning a large profit by lending to borrowers with poor credit, who proved unable to repay the money that they had borrowed.

Despite this, former Lehman Chief Financial Officer, Brad Hintz, is reported to have said that "no one anticipated a crash". The banks were offering 'subprime' home mortgages, mortgages were being offered to high-risk families, who most likely would not be able to repay them because of their low income. It sounds like basic common sense to only offer loans to people who would be able to repay them, so why were the banks offering loans knowing that they may not be repaid?

The Community Reinvestment Act is the answer: a federal regulation which made it easier for low-income families to get home loans. This law ensured that subprime borrowers would still be granted loans even if they may not be able to repay them. Because of this law, the banks went ahead with increasingly risky lending.

In his book *Big Debt Crisis*, Ray Dalio states that "the general belief amongst the banking giants was,

'who doesn't repay their mortgage?'".

Despite the fact that most people who were offered loans were working class citizens living in the suburbs of America, this financial crisis spread to the centre of finance in New York because of the fragile nature of the banking industry.

Adam Tooze, professor at Columbia University, has since explained that "classically we think of them [banks] as funded by deposits, but banks like Lehman don't have deposits, what they do is borrow deposits from other banks." At the time of the financial crisis, investors invested in bonds supported by subprime mortgages and immediately began to withdraw their investments as defaults on repayments began. According to Adam Tooze, this forced banks to stop lending and "credit simply freezes, [as] a modern economy can't function without credit for even more than a couple of hours."

10 years on, have we learnt our lessons? On the one hand, many people in banking who promoted subprime lending aren't continuing their jobs anymore. But despite this, a significant number of them now work at the US Treasury Department instead. Furthermore, at the beginning of the recession in 2008, more than 1.5 million students graduated in the US and stepped right into the recession, directly competing with people that were made redundant and who possessed a degree as well as 10 years of practical experience. Many students decided that going back to university was the only option. But how did they pay for the

degree? Students loan and more debt.

As a result, the National Student Debt in the US has grown to \$1.5 trillion. If someone were to ask whether this figure was too dangerous, the most likely answer you would receive would be, 'well, who doesn't repay their student loan'.



Image: Haymarket Media Group Ltd

The Fenty Effect: Why Shade Diversity Equals Big Business Potential

Inclusivity, equality and diversity are being emphasised and preached in work places all over the world, but is it being transferred through to product development? Here, we look at how beauty brands are increasing their business potential by promoting inclusivity.

Hollie Tansey

The global beauty market is reportedly worth over 450 billion US dollars and thanks to social media, it's growing by the day. Beauty bloggers and influencers are among the most popular social media stars, using Instagram and YouTube to give makeup tutorials and product reviews to thousands – sometimes millions – of followers. They can use their huge platforms to endorse brands and products, or even criticise them for any number of issues, including poor ethics and below average product quality.

One issue currently being discussed in the 'beautysphere' is inclusivity. Whilst the majority of makeup brands have a selection of foundation and concealer shades ranging from light to dark, most have a larger selection of lighter shades than darker. This means customers with darker skin tones still struggle to find the perfect foundation shade from many brands. Many beauty bloggers have voiced their opinions and documented their struggles finding darker foundations.

In an interview with Nerisha Penrose for Elle last month, New York influencer Armanda Tounghui (aka Glow Princess) said she feels like the "only reason companies have tried to put out deeper shades is because us black women have been vocal".

Another influencer whose honest and often ruthless reviews of beauty and fashion products have gained her over 2.5 million YouTube subscribers is Patricia Bright. In an interview with Siraad Dirshe for Essence, Bright discusses how beauty brands often disregard undertones for black skin when developing foundation ranges.

Whilst shades for lighter skin tones often have 'warm' or 'cool' undertones, she says a mistake made by brands when developing shades for black skin is the assumption that "every brown is the same shade of brown" and it's "important to work out if you're red, yellow, or neutral".

This is why the launch of Rihanna's beauty brand Fenty Beauty was hailed as ground-breaking for the beauty industry. Fenty Pro Filt'r foundation launched with 40 shades, with an equal proportion of shades for lighter and darker skin tones.

Since its launch, Fenty Beauty seems to have kick-started a revolution in the 'beautysphere'. With more and more influencers singing their praise of the brand – including Patricia Bright – it seems other brands have realised they need to up their game regarding shade diversity. During Fenty Beauty's first year of business, brands including Dior, Revlon, Covergirl and Tarte have increased their range of foundation shades in order to compete with the brand's success.

It seems unbelievable that brands required a new competitor to recognise their own need for inclusivity, when the demand was there all along. If the demand for darker foundation shades has been present, why has the beauty industry ignored it for so long? Hopefully, the Fenty Effect has helped beauty businesses to recognise that customer demands are key to profitability, and that all brands should aspire to be as inclusive and forward thinking as Fenty Beauty.

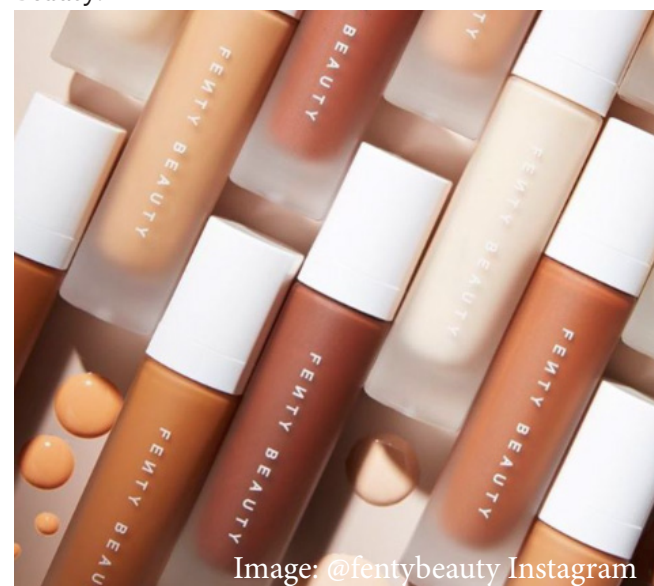


Image: @fentybeauty Instagram

Will the UK Go Out of Fashion Post-Brexit?

Chloe Rebecca Pryce

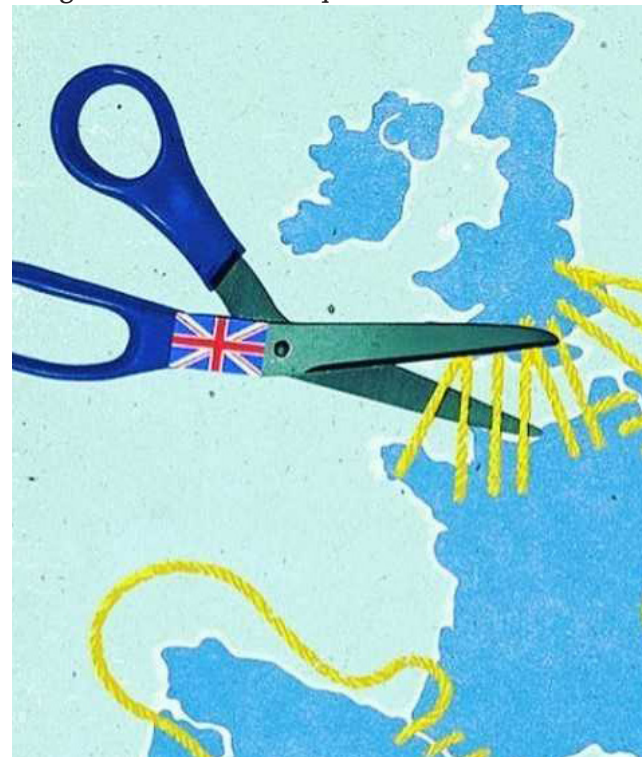
Type in 'Brexit' to Google News and you get 78,000,000 results. That's over 5 times more than news coverage on the NHS and around 78 times more results than the gender pay gap. Perhaps for this reason, Brexit articles became something I'd skip over. I was fed up of reading the extended date at which Theresa May planned to make a deal, the possibilities of a no-deal and how it would affect the financial sector; whilst all very important, it felt vague. I soon realised, however, that Brexit will affect almost everything and anything, from the price of cheese to being able to work and study abroad, everyone can find interest somewhere in Brexit. For me, with London Fashion Week in full swing, my interest was in the effects of Brexit on the British Fashion Industry, especially considering that 90% of British Fashion Designers planned to vote Remain.

The UK fashion industry contributes almost £30 billion to the UK economy. But as a result of Brexit, the future success of this industry is now in question. The main concerns surrounding the effect of Brexit on the UK fashion industry are trade, investment, recruiting skilled talent and the potential loss of EU funding. To begin with trade and investment, around £10m worth of clothing is imported from Europe each year, making it the second largest supplier of clothing to the UK.

These goods may now face a tariff of 12% leading to

higher clothes prices for UK consumers. Even clothes manufactured in Britain may cost more as imported materials will face a similar tariff.

Furthermore, the talent and skills in the UK fashion industry may be hit hard. There are 10,000 European staff currently working in the British fashion industry. These staff, including journalists, photographers, designers and models require free movement. From



journalists jetting to Milan to shoot the latest show to models travelling the globe for shoots, fashion is an international industry. The increased time and cost of moving these people across borders may make the UK a less desirable fashion hub.

Lastly, funding for the UK fashion industry may be affected as access to hundreds of millions of euros of EU money could be lost, affecting the British Fashion Council, the Centre for Fashion Enterprise, London College of Fashion and University of Arts London. Loss of funding to the London College of Fashion could starve students to the global graduate opportunities. The British Fashion Council may even struggle to finance key events such as London Fashion Week as their cash is pulled. The loss of funding could therefore lead to a reduction not only in talent, but equally in home-grown products and collections. However, the British Fashion Council has voiced its desires to continue working towards attracting international talent.

Brexit has positively impacted the UK Fashion Industry in some ways. For example, Burberry reported a 30 percent rise in its UK sales as tourists took advantage of the weak pound. But on balance, currently the pros of Brexit do not appear to outweigh the cons. Like most things Brexit-related, the future success of the UK fashion industry is highly dependent on whether we end up on the path of a soft-Brexit or a hard-Brexit and therefore the future of the British fashion industry remains uncertain.



In Conversation with Dr Katie Field



Image: leeds.ac.uk

The Gryphon speaks to the winner of the prestigious Leverhume Prize and one of 15 recognised this year by the university as Women of Achievement.

Olivia Maskill
Science Writer

As one of the 15 women recognised in this year's Women of Achievement, Dr. Katie Field (Associate Professor in Plant-Soil Processes) stands out as a contemporary in plant science. She is one of the recipients of the coveted David Phillips fellowship by the BBSRC, among other impressive grants, for her research into plant-fungal relationships. We sat with her to discuss the impact of her research and the current climate for women in science.

Hello, Katie. So to start off, do you remember why you decided to pursue a career in science?

I've always been interested in science, particularly plant science really got me. I've always been interested in the natural world and how things work. I guess, Biology gives you the ideal combination of those things. The natural progression for me was plant science. I had a very good lecturer at university, who inspired me to go down the plant science route above all else.

It's funny, because I was the same. I absolutely hated plants until I came to university.

Because at school they teach you plant science in a really dreadful way. They only teach you photosynthesis, and there's so much more to it.

How did it feel to be recognised by the university for all your achievements?

It was a big surprise, and a great honour to be recognised. I think it's a really important thing that they do, showing the work of women across the university in all different disciplines, because it's one of the things that is really lacking. It's a way to give female students strong female role models, and I think it's great that the university is highlighting these women and what they've achieved.

It was an impressive list, looking at women like Professor Jane Nixon who received an MBE last year for her research in Medicine.

"It makes me feel like I've underachieved!"

Could you give us a quick overview of your research?

My research is focused on plant-soil interactions, how fungi trade nutrients for sugar with plant roots. I look at this in an evolutionary context, how did these fungi help the Earth get green 500 million years ago before plants even had roots? Following through to future climate change, and how we can harness the power of fungi to help feed our growing population.

"There is real potential that we can manipulate fungi to be our helpful partners"

So, how can understanding these complex relationships between plants and fungi better prepare us as a species for the future?

There's a huge problem on earth at the present. Climate change, political instability, and finite resources means that agriculture today is pretty unsustainable, if we continue in the intensive way that we have been. A lot of the advances in crop yields of recent times have largely been in response to inorganic fertilisers and pesticides, so basically throwing chemicals on the land. Obviously we can't do that forever, not least because the resources to make these fertilisers are finite. There is only enough rock phosphorus on earth to last another 50 years, and then there is none left! It is really important that we find other ways of accessing nutrients in the soil. One way of doing this is to use these naturally occurring fungal partners of plants,

which are able to exploit different nutrients sources and reach areas of the soil where roots are unable. There is real potential that we can manipulate fungi to be our own helpful partners

Okay, last question. Do you think there are still any challenges for women in STEM subjects today, and do you have any advice for women pursuing careers in these fields?

I think there are still barriers for women in STEM today. Certainly there aren't enough women in senior positions. Not just at the University of Leeds, but across the entire sector. It's heavily male-dominated in the top positions. But I think it is changing, we are seeing a shift in the landscape. Women are progressing through the ranks more rapidly than they were. But, I think it's down to all of us to try and break the stereotypes, break through the glass ceiling, and keep pushing for change. Challenging whenever we see things that don't match up to our expectations. If we feel there are any discrepancies between the way we are treated and a male colleague, whether that's down to pay, progression, or even just the way we are spoken to. It's up to us, we need to speak up.

I always found it bizarre, because Biology is seen as one of those subjects that is stereotypically seen as a feminine science. But, when I arrived in first year, all of my lecturers were men. I always took notice when I had a female lecturer.

I think it is to a point, isn't it? When I was at university, I remember I had one female lecturer and she did a chemistry module during our first year. That was it, throughout my whole degree. I know the recent appointments that they've taken on in Biology are almost all women, so that's quite encouraging. I think it's just a matter of time, and we've just got to filter through the system, and make it to the top. It's just bloody hard work! But, we'll get there.



Fly me to the Moon?

Celebrating Space Week with the brain that powered America's journey into space.

Laura Kursin
Science Writer

Travel into outer space is becoming less and less extraordinary - you may have heard Elon Musk recently state that a manned mission to Mars could be possible by 2024, a mere 6 years in the future yet a tremendous 54.6 million kilometres away. It is easy to forget the first satellite didn't enter orbit until 1957, humans didn't venture into space until 1961 (not for lack of trying), and no one had set foot on the moon until 1969.

"A manned mission to Mars could be possible by 2024, a mere 6 years in the future but a tremendous 54.6 million miles away"

The successful orbit of Sputnik in 1957 signalled America's lagging behind Russia in the 'space race'. A few remarkable women of colour were pivotal in the reversal of fortunes that resulted in the first American in space and the first man to walk on the moon. One of these women was Katherine Johnson.

Katherine Johnson graduated from college with a degree in Mathematics and French at 18 (at least three years earlier than most of us mere mortals)! Despite this, it wasn't until she was 35 that she began work at what was then NACA, now NASA. Her work there began in a pool of coloured women referred to as 'human computers', the data processors of the day due to a lack of computing power we're so used to. In the early days of Johnson's work at

NACA, segregation was still common practice, with separate bathrooms, dining rooms, and offices for people of colour. Reflecting on the experience, Johnson stated she "knew segregation was there but [she] didn't feel it" due to everyone's intense focus on research.

It wasn't until NACA became NASA in 1958 that segregation was banned from the company. Despite this, there was still a lack of opportunities for women of colour, especially in Southern states. Due to Johnson's exceptional abilities as a mathematician, however, she was temporarily assigned to help the flight team, a previously all-male department. She became a permanent member of the team following her work on analytical geometry, an area which before her admission had had little success. Her efforts resulted in the success of many space missions, the first of which being Alan Shepherd's orbit in Freedom 7 (Mercury-Redstone 3, by its less catchy name), just three weeks after the Russians sent Yuri Gagarin into space. America was catching up.

"In his 1962 orbit around the earth, John Glenn famously refused to get in the capsule unless the calculations had been personally checked by Johnson"

Not only did Johnson calculate the window required to safely launch Freedom 7, she also calculated the trajectory so the capsule could be found after landing, and she plotted navigational charts for the astronaut in case the automatic flight system

failed. Her faultless mathematics became renowned and, despite the introduction of computers for orbit predictions, astronauts and officials alike still asked Johnson to check the numbers. In his 1962 orbit around the earth, John Glenn famously refused to get in the capsule unless the calculations had been checked personally by Johnson.

Johnson later went on to play a large role in the Apollo 11 and 13 missions. Her work on trajectories allowed for the first ever man to walk on the moon in 1969 (if you ignore the conspiracy theories), ensuring America's definitive winning of the 'space race'. Furthermore, her navigational charts ensured that the crew of Apollo 13 safely returned to Earth even after a liquid oxygen tank explosion caused a catastrophic loss of power.

While this is just a brief snippet of the work Johnson completed throughout her life, I think we can agree it's incredibly impressive. I'm a Zoologist, not a Mathematician, nor a space expert. And yet, even as an outsider to this field, I can appreciate the remarkable work that Katherine Johnson has done, and how it has shaped the 20th century. Without women like her who are not afraid to create opportunities where there are none, so many things in life may not have been achieved. Just think, without her calculations man may not have stepped foot on the moon, and talk of commercial flights to space might just be a joke. She demonstrated that, with determination and brilliance, the glass ceiling can be broken, and that anything is possible. So here is to Katherine Johnson, the woman who won America the space race.



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Rhinos Finish Dismal Season with a Whimper

A disappointing end to the season as Leeds Rhinos lose 16-17 to Toronto Wolfpack.



Stephen Gaunt/Toutchlinepics

Jonathan Burnett
Rugby League

On a dreary Friday evening, Leeds Rhinos brought the curtain down on a disappointing season with a one-point defeat to Canadian outfit Toronto Wolfpack. Gareth O'Brien's 76th minute drop goal condemned the Rhinos to their 15th defeat of the season, their second in the Qualifiers stage, to move the Wolfpack level on points with Leeds in the race for a 2019 Super League place.

O'Brien was heavily involved in opening the scoring, scything through Leeds' defence on the right before passing back inside to Cory

Paterson, who dotted down in the thirteenth minute, with O'Brien then successfully converting.

Leeds were sloppy throughout, but soon replied on nineteen minutes, with winger Tom Briscoe latching onto a Liam Sutcliffe grubber that followed from numerous offloads near Toronto's line.

Sutcliffe redeemed his missed conversion by scoring the Rhinos' second try, pinching the ball from Paterson's hands to touch down under the posts following a high kick from Richie Myler. His simple conversion gave the Rhinos a 10-6 lead.

However, Toronto finished the half stronger, and a lengthy sequence of passes eventually found Nick Rawsthorne, who scored in the corner right on the

half-time siren.

Toronto could not protect their 12-10 half-time lead, with Leeds centre Jimmy Keinhorst showing great strength to score after being set up by Brad Dwyer.

Trailing 16-12, Toronto weren't finished yet, equalising through Matty Russell, who was first to a smart Bob Beswick grubber and scored in the left-side corner.

O'Brien's missed conversion left the scores level at 16 apiece, with a tense ending to the game seeing Leeds prop Dom Crosby sent to the sin-bin and both sides missing field-goal attempts.

However, with five minutes left, O'Brien stepped up again, notching a drop-goal from 45 metres out, dumping the Rhinos to a final defeat of a frankly harrowing season, and helping the Wolfpack edge ever-closer to a place in next season's top flight.

This defeat ended not only Leeds' season, but also Kevin Sinfield's spell in charge as head coach. Incoming ex-player, Australian David Furner, clearly has his work cut out to turn the Rhinos back into Super League contenders. Sinfield's short-term replacement of Brian McDermott has not had the desired effect, with Leeds continuing their poor form under their former captain that has seen them offer a feeble defence of their Super League crown. With a team of promising youth and ageing forwards, and Wests Tigers back Tuimoala Lolohea the only incoming player at present, Furner will have his work cut out trying to take Leeds back to the top.

Europe Win Ryder Cup in Style

Europe beat a star studded US team to reclaim the Ryder Cup in Paris 17½ - 10½.

James Felton
Golf

This weekend witnessed Europe beat team USA 17½ - 10½ at a thrilling, but one sided, contest in Paris. The hosts thus regained the coveted trophy after their 17-11 drubbing in Minnesota last time out. Team Europe, with its formidable mix of experience, teamwork and form, have a great record in recent memory, having won eight out of the previous eleven editions of golf's greatest tournament. Whilst the USA may have star players, such as Jordan Spieth, the in-form Tiger Woods and the legendary Phil Mickelson, Europe always have a better team spirit. That was on display yet again this weekend and was crucial to the final result.

Going into the weekend's golf, the hosts were indeed favourites. But, as this special tournament has shown down the years, anything, absolutely anything, can happen. The blue team, captained by Thomas Bjørn, were initially 3-1 down after the traditional Friday morning fourballs format, although Francesco Molinari and Tommy Fleetwood managed to beat Tiger Woods and Patrick Reed. It is these solitary points that make huge differences. Indeed, in the afternoon, a rejuvenated European side managed to win all four foursomes pairings, leaving the opening day's scorecard showing 5-3 rather than the 4-4 it would have had it not been for that aforementioned

crucial point from Messrs Molinari and Fleetwood. The momentum was with Bjørn's men going into the Saturday, the day which always sets the tone for the final day. Europe won the first session of fourballs 3-1, before the afternoon's fourballs finished 2-2, leaving the Europeans with a lead of 10-6 going into the final day's singles matches.

10-6, is, by no means, an impossible lead to come back on. Just 6 years ago, at the Miracle of Medinah, team Europe were losing by the exact same scoreline but still ended up victorious. This time around, the visitors won three out of the first four singles matches, drawing the other one, leaving Jim Furyk's side only 10½ - 9½ down meaning just one point was now in it. Despite the nervousness, the hosts held their own, winning the next five individual matches, thanks to great golf from Ryder Cup veterans Ian Poulter, Sergio Garcia, Francesco Molinari and Henrik Stenson. Just as it had been at the Miracle of Medinah, Molinari would be the one who reached the famous 14½ points needed to win.

In the end Europe would win by a stunning seven point difference, 17½ - 10½, with Furyk conceding that the hosts played as a team, whereas team USA did not. Molinari also became the first European player to win the maximum amount of points that an individual can win (five), whilst Sergio Garcia became the highest points scorer in Ryder Cup history, overtaking Sir Nick Faldo's record. All in all, it was another example

of Europe's teamwork and experience beating USA's individual egos, demonstrating why Europe have been dominant of late in this famous tournament.



Mike Ehrmann/Getty Images

Prejudices Resurface in Williams Controversy

More controversy over cartoon depicting Williams' dispute with the Umpire in the US Open Final.

Millie Frain
Tennis



Chris Trotman/Getty Images North

Black History Month is a time of celebration and recognition for important black figures. Yet, even in the 21st Century, people of colour are still being depicted differently to white people in the media. Even elite athletes such as Serena Williams, who has 23 grand slam titles to her name, are still being depicted as barbaric, particularly after her loss in the US Open Final to Japan's Naomi Osaka.

Fair enough, Williams did behave aggressively. Her \$17,000 fine for violating the tournament's code of conduct, which included shouting at umpire Carlos Ramos, accusing him of being a 'liar' and a 'thief', was perfectly justified. Yet the aftermath of this incident has been outrageous.

Most significant has been the appalling cartoon depiction of Serena in the Australian publication, the 'Herald Sun'. It depicts the star as a monstrous figure, seething with anger. Her opponent Osaka is portrayed as white with long blonde hair, despite actually being of mixed Japanese/Haitian heritage. This depiction suggests that there is a binary contrast the civilised, ladylike white women and the bestial black women.

After coming under heavy scrutiny, the Australian paper was forced to remove the illustration. Yet, inevitably, the cartoon is circulating around social media sites.

Unsurprisingly, this may have a damaging effect upon the star herself, who has previously admitted that she has faced a large amount of racial abuse throughout her career.

It has even been suggested that Williams may not

play for the rest of the season, which comes as a huge blow to the star who wanted to equal Margaret Court's record of 24 Grand Slam singles titles.

Why are depictions of black people still conforming to racist stereotypes? Serena Williams may have acted unsportingly, but shouldn't a sportsperson be driven and competitive like Williams? It's seen as acceptable for white men such as Novak Djokovic and Andy Murray to show frustration and anger on the tennis court, yet when a black woman shows signs of anger, she is immediately labelled as vicious and monstrous, evoking stereotypes that should have been put to bed many decades ago.

So how can we progress from this? Black History Month should be about celebrating sports stars such as Serena for being one of the most successful tennis players ever seen; celebrating her race and all that she has done for black women in sport. The media should avoid such insulting depictions and refrain from portraying black people as aggressive in comparison to white people, especially in a multi-cultured environment where the next generation are aspiring to follow the success of Williams, LeBron James and the many other role models within sport.

With some people still believing in such outdated values, we could be heading towards a dangerous future in sport, with black individuals no longer being remembered for success on the pitch, but for off-field controversy stoked by nineteenth century attitudes towards black athletes.

Leeds Futsal's Historic Victory

University of Leeds beat Leeds Beckett 8-5 to record their first Varsity win.



Image: Leeds University

Cian Fox
Futsal

The University of Leeds Futsal team got off to a winning start on Sunday, with a Varsity victory over Leeds Beckett.

Leeds defeated a well-drilled Beckett outfit 8-5, with goals from James Storey, Miguel Vilches and Ritwick Dutta. The result marks the club's first ever

Varsity win, with Leeds Beckett enjoying consecutive victories in previous years.

The result is all the more remarkable as it was the first time many of these players have played together competitively, as the team has a mix of new and experienced Futsal players.

Last year, the team lost 7-3, but it was clear from the opening exchanges that this year it would be a more tightly contested affair. The score was 3-3 at half

time, with Leeds reasserting control after falling behind towards the end of the half, pressing high and enjoying more chances than Beckett.

As the game went on, Leeds began to pull away, scoring quickly in the second half through Miguel after a lovely turn by Finlay Slater in a wide position. By this stage, Leeds had found their rhythm and were cutting through Beckett's defence with quick passing to counter Beckett's man for man press.

A flurry of goals put Leeds 8-4 ahead, with a fine finish from Ritwick on his weaker foot and a stand out goal from James Storey, turning with his back to goal and finishing with ease. Beckett pulled back a consolation goal with an inventive flick towards the end of the game, but the final result was a comfortable 8-5 victory for the University of Leeds.

Club President James Storey praised his team's performance after the match, "I thought we deserved to win and created some superb individual and collective moves". He went on to outline his excitement for the season ahead. "Our coach Aidan, the committee and I will continue working hard to progress the society, drawing on the hard work and ongoing support of our previous committee members, Syd Rai, Oron Sheldon and Liam Hine".

If you would like to learn more about the sport and keep up to date with the team, follow them on Twitter: @LeedsUni Futsal and Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/University-of-Leeds-Mens-Futsal>.

Leeds Beckett 51-5 University of Leeds



Image: Robbie Cairns

Ryan Wan Varsity

Despite many knowing before kick-off that the University of Leeds had secured their first ever Varsity win, the atmosphere was no less electric than in years past. With the rugby union finale almost being its own event, a combined crowd of over 10,000 packed the Headingley stadium.

Not only did thousands of local fans turn up to cheer on the men in green, but many rugby superstars also sent their own messages of support including World Cup winner Will Greenwood, England players Maro Itoje and Ben Youngs, and Australian International James O'Connor. The funniest message came from our very own University of Leeds alumnus, England and Saracens player Alex Lozowski, before cameos from team mates Billy Vunipola and Alex Goode. Even Alan Shearer had something to say about the big Varsity match.

Beckett kicked off but gave away an early penalty with a high tackle on Leeds centre Tommy Ferguson, a stand out player from last year's encounter. He looked to continue that form by breaking through some early tackles, but as the game went on it became apparent that Beckett were determined to stop any impact he could make.

Both teams looked uneasy in the opening ten minutes with many errors leading to frequent changes of possession. However, Beckett overcame their nerves first, capping off a good passage of play with a try from second row John Okafor and a successful conversion from captain Connor Lloyd.

More errors from Leeds gifted Beckett easy possession which eventually resulted in Charlie Venables crossing over in the corner, which Lloyd failed to convert, making the score 12-0 after 16 minutes.

A good period for Leeds' defence followed for the next 15 minutes, only allowing three points via a penalty kick. However, errors still plagued the Gryphons in attack, particularly when it came to lineouts, often gifting the ball back to the opposition. This would come back to haunt Uni as a misfiring lineout in the Beckett 22 led to Toby Francis scoring and captain Lloyd converting again to make it 22-0.

Leeds broke the drought by capitalising on a mistake by the Beckett scrum in their own 22, with Andy Brown finishing in the corner, but failing to convert.

The first half ended 22-5 to Beckett, but with the Gryphons having scored and Beckett having a try disallowed at the end of the half, the momentum looked to be in our favour.

Unfortunately, Beckett did not allow us to regain any foothold in the match with a well worked try out wide; stretching the Leeds defence and finished by fullback Venables for his second of the night, pulling ahead 27-5.

Beckett did not let up after this with replacements coming on for both sides. The Gryphons tried getting more creative with chip kicks and grubbers, but unfortunately with no end result. However, the opposition substitutes made a bigger impact with another three Beckett tries, one from flyhalf Steffan James and the other two from substitutes Kieran Davies and Johnny Keh.

The last score of the game was a penalty try awarded to Beckett alongside a Leeds player being sent to the sin bin, which was the result of culminative scrum penalties from a tired Leeds pack.

The game ended with 51-5 to Beckett, undeniably deserving victors of this year's finale. Hopefully the Gryphons can bounce back with a strong start to their upcoming BUCS campaign.



BUCS Fixtures 10th October

Full Fixtures and Results at
bucs.org.uk

Badminton Mens 2nd vs York 1st
2pm, The Edge

Basketball Womens 1st vs Manchester Met
1st
5.15pm, The Edge

Basketball Mens 1st vs Sheffield Hallam
2nd
7pm, The Edge

Fencing Mens 1st vs Durham 4th
2pm, The Edge

Football Womens 2nd vs Teeside 2nd
2.30pm, Sports Park Weetwood

Football Mens 2nd vs Sheffield 2nd
2pm, Sports Park Weetwood

Golf Mixed 1st vs Sunderland 1st
11am, Leeds Golf Centre

Hockey Womens 1st vs Manchester 1st
4pm, Sports Park Weetwood

Hockey Mens 1st vs Warwick 1st
5.30pm, Sports Park Weetwood

Lacrosse Mens 1st vs Bradford 1st
1.30pm, Bodington Playing Fields

Netball Womens 2nd vs Newcastle 2nd
1pm, Gryphon Sports Centre

Rugby Union Mens 5th vs York St John
2nd
1.30pm, Bodington Playing Fields

Squash Womens 2nd vs Newcastle 2nd
2.30pm, Gryphon Sports Centre

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

Table Tennis Mens 1st vs Sunderland 1st
2pm, Cromer Terrace

Tennis Womens 1st vs Newcastle 2nd
12pm, David Lloyd Leeds

Tennis Mens 1st vs Sheffield 1st
12pm, David Lloyd Leeds

Waterpolo Womens 1st vs Durham 3rd
2.15pm, The Edge

University of Leeds 30-29 Leeds Beckett



Image: Robbie Cairns

University of Leeds Break Varsity Duck with Maiden Victory

Uni Find the Magic Combination to End Thirteen Years of Hurt against Beckett

James Felton
Varsity

After 14 years in the wilderness, and thirteen straight Beckett victories, Leeds University were finally pronounced annual Varsity champions, winning by a single point. Despite defeat in the rugby finale, the Gryphons managed to get one over their inter-city rivals, thanks to strong performances across a number of different sports.

Varsity actually began in January, with the cross country where Leeds and Beckett won a point each. It would be a long nine month wait before Varsity would culminate in Wednesday's Rugby Finale. Despite the 51-5 loss, the University, going into the annual match at Headingley, knew they had already sealed the points for an unprecedented victory.

Varsity covers a plethora of sporting competitions, ranging from the more traditional such as football, cricket, tennis and netball to more unorthodox sports such as korfbal, lacrosse and American football. Each sports team was playing for a precious point, which in this case was critical, as Uni of would end up winning

the tournament by 30 points to 29. Special mention must go to the Badminton, Volleyball and Waterpolo sides, who managed to win all their matches, giving the Gryphons seven points to Beckett's zero in those events. However, Varsity is not about winning all of the matches in every sport, it is about picking up points across each and every competition.

Futsal won their match 8-5, Basketball won two out of their three matches, with the Men's 2nd winning 54-39 and the Women's 1st 54-50. Leeds Handball won their only match 33-30, as did both the Men's Cricket and the Indoor Cricket. The Inter Mural Varsity as well as Korfbal teams also gained a point each for the University. Elsewhere, the Men's Swimming won 70-60, whilst the Women were beaten by just three measly points, losing 129-132.

Two points were also accumulated from the Men's and Women's 1sts in the football, with two thrilling contests at Weetwood playing fields and at Leeds Beckett University. The men won a nerve shredding penalty shootout whilst the Women's 1st won 3-2. Two crucial points in the race for the Varsity Title 2018.

There were also three wins for the Hockey sides, with two of the other sides losing by only a single goal, and the other losing by only two. Such are the close margins in Varsity that every single point matters, and whilst Leeds had never won before, we've usually been within a few points of our local rivals.

The other feature of this Varsity installment were the two draws. One was because the Rowing result ended up as a controversial score draw. The other, however, was due to the fact that the women's Rugby Union match was abandoned because one of the Leeds Beckett players injured their neck in the first half of the match.

The end of Varsity does not mean the end of Leeds' sporting fixtures but merely the beginning. The BUCS fixtures are now on the agenda, which sees Leeds face other Universities in their respective league divisions with the first lot of fixtures taking place this Wednesday, the 10th of October. On page 23 is a list of some of the home matches. We will be covering our sporting teams throughout the year, so make sure to pick up a copy of the Gryphon for the latest results, fixtures, match reports and interviews.