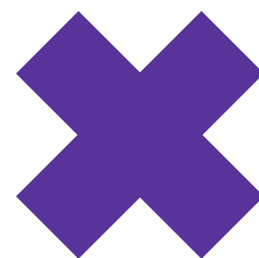


# LEAD LUU VOTING WEEK



CHANGE IS COMING.  
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MONDAY 25 FEB 9AM -  
THURSDAY 28 FEB 5PM







# GRYPHON AIR

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# THE GRYPHON

The official newspaper of Leeds University

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Issue 8

15/02/19



Image: The Independent

## Students Set to Strike

*Students across Britain are expected to abandon their classes today to demonstrate against ineffective environmental policies.*

Don Pickworth

Students of all ages are set to gather outside Leeds Town Hall at 11am today, in protest of inadequate climate control regulations and the British government's perceived inability to effectively address the growing climate crisis.

The protest is part of a wider, co-ordinated day of action, in which university, college and school students alike are expected to protest in their thousands across the country. The nationwide protests have been organized and promoted by the recently formed people's movement, YouthStrike4Climate.

The movement, and its call for nationwide outcry amongst Britain's youth, was inspired by the FridaysForFuture protests which began when 16-year old Greta Thunberg sat in front of the Swedish parliament

every school-day for three weeks, in order to highlight her government's underwhelming attitude towards climate change. Students in Australia followed suit, as did they in France, Switzerland and Belgium, where, in December alone, 65,000 students took to the streets to strike.

Holly Andrews, the regional representative of YouthStrike4Climate, emphasised the importance of the event and the haste with which governments must put policies in place to protect their planet.

"We urgently need governments and organisations across the world to act now if we're to avoid the catastrophic effects that climate change will bring within our lifetime. We have to show to the Government that change is long overdue and we are no longer being complacent to acts of climate injustice."

The protests are timely, as the effects of climate change are becoming ever

clearer; from more frequent and intense extreme weather events like hurricanes and flooding, to rapidly melting sea-ice, glaciers and ice sheets in polar and alpine regions across the globe. According to an IPCC report published last year, communities across the globe only have twelve years left to make significant changes before the effects of climate change become absolutely catastrophic.

On March 15th, FridaysForFuture are organising a similar, global, 'deep' protest in which they hope to see a synchronising of protests happening in tandem in as many countries as possible.

Representatives from Extinction Rebellion Leeds are also expected to be in attendance. However, the YouthStrike4Climate Facebook event for the protest has stated that "any acts of civil disobedience that could result in arrest should be conducted under the name of XR, not Youth Strike 4 Climate."

### Housing in Crisis

One million more young adults are living with their parents compared to twenty years ago.

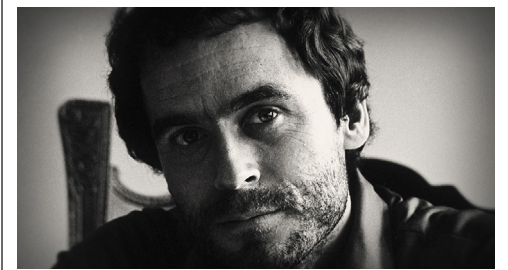
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### Glamourising Violence

How the sensationalist media coverage of serial killers has cemented their place in popular culture, at the expense of their victims.

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### Morrisons Pioneering Paper

The supermarket is set to trial paper instead of plastic bags, increasing costs but decreasing environmental harm.

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### England's May-Day

Taking a closer look at England's blistering start to the Six Nations Championship.

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Editor of the Week  
**Rose Crees**

Rose single-handedly packed out Old Bar for The Gryphon's Pub Quiz on Monday. Her questions on Christopher Chope and Gryphon headlines were almost as impressive as the Valentines inspired hamper of phallic-shaped vegetables on offer in the raffle.

Quote of the Week

*“That save from Pelé’s header was the best I ever made. I didn’t have any idea how famous it would become – to start with, I didn’t even realise I’d made it at all.”*

Gordon Banks, England’s World Cup winning goalkeeper and one of the greatest goalkeepers of all time.

Dec. 1937 – Feb. 2019

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Digital Associate ~  
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Giulia Bardelli

# Editor’s Letter:



‘Education’. ‘Community’. ‘Union Affairs’. ‘Equality and Diversity’. ‘Activities’. ‘Welfare’. Six words and phrases which, on their own, mean relatively little, but when combined, can mean only one thing: LeadLUU – the campus wide elections which decide who will be taking the place of next year’s Student Exec. Add to that the vote for next year’s Editor-in-Chief of the Gryphon as well and you’ve got yourself a right stonking soufflé of student politics and grass-roots campaigning.

Now, before you turn your nose up at the thought of another student election and the inevitable flurry of campaign videos with more cringe value than the *Team America* puppet sex-scene (90s kids and *Thunderbird* enthusiasts, you know the score), take a moment to consider just how important these elections are. Yes, LeadLUU may well mean that you’re going to struggle to get a seat in Common Ground for the next two weeks without somebody you kind of recognise from your post-colonial lecture asking you if you’ve voted in the leadership race yet. And yes, LeadLUU may mean you can’t get through campus without being slapped in the face by a rogue banner. But LeadLUU is about so much more than that too.

This is because the Student Exec genuinely care about the experiences of all Leeds’ students, and make changes to their Union and city in order to reflect that. Cheaper buses between campus and Headingley; VKs at Fruity; ‘Why is my Curriculum White?’; free sanitary products in the Union toilets; copies of the Gryphon delivered to first year halls – all of these things which students take for granted have been the campaign promises of previous members of the Student Exec. And the fact that you’re definitely not reading this brand spanking new issue of the Gryphon from the cesspit that is Lupton or the gilded halls of Charles Morris shows that these promises (almost) always come true.

Although the Wrap Around advert for this week’s issue of the Gryphon may look like some satanic version of ‘Guess Who?’, the LeadLUU decision is much harder than simply “do they have red hair?”, “do they wear glasses?”, “do they look like the kind of person who’d tell you that Dumbledore dies before you’ve even had the chance to get out of Borgin and Burkes?”. LeadLUU represents a campus-wide election which will shape the future of Leeds University for the next year to come. To deny the next generation of Freshers and returning students a Student Exec which doesn’t appropriately represent their needs or beliefs is a huge mistake.

It’s very easy to think that the Student Exec may have little to

no impact on your university experience. In fairness, some of us may be lucky enough and privileged enough and downright happy enough for that statement to be true. But there are countless students at Leeds who depend on the Student Exec to ensure that their voices are heard; to give them a platform where others do not. Even if you think that the Exec will have no possible effect on your life, you cannot deny that they may have an important impact on the student sitting next to you in Balcony, the post-grad who always farts in the Eddie B silent study, the old housemate who you haven’t seen since first year. To not vote is to therefore shirk a huge responsibility to the potential wellbeing of your fellow students.

I think some students genuinely think that the LeadLUU candidates only campaign in order to fulfil a short ego boost. Well, contrary to popular opinion, not all of us enjoy running around making a dick of ourselves for a whole two weeks... apart from, of course, my predecessor Reece Parker, who shaved his hair and died it blonde in order to look more like a ‘man of the people’ – think of a young Jeremy Corbyn, only he doesn’t even know how to pronounce ‘tweed’, let alone wear it.

No matter how annoying you might find it to have your 9am lecture interrupted by somebody informing you that a vote for them will get you 24 hour libraries, the leadership race is an intensely draining few weeks for its candidates. So, if you see anyone handing out flyers or putting up posters, don’t tell them to fuck off, give them a smile, and maybe even give them a vote when the time comes. They may not necessarily have the energy to show it, but I guarantee you that this one small act of kindness will make their day.

I’d like to offer a sincere best of luck to any students who have taken the challenge of running to be a member of the next Student Exec. Some top tips:

- 1. Find yourself an album to get you through the campaign and stick to it; mine was Rejjie Snow’s *Dear Annie* and I honestly don’t think I would have got through the two weeks alive without constantly humming the phrase “breakdance and boogie my love / this is 1971” in the back of my mind every time I saw that another one of my posters had been ripped down.
  - 2. Don’t play the ukulele in the Roger Stevens Fountain; February is a cold month.
  - 3. Enjoy it, regardless of how out of sync your campaign video ends up or how quickly you forget everybody’s names. The experience is one which will last with you for a lifetime, and one which will leave you a much more confident and skilled individual.
- Other than that, just be yourself and keep smiling. If you do that, then you can’t go wrong.

Stay classy,

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

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Business  
Science  
Sport



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The next couple of weeks at LUU are bound to be busy as the campaigning and voting for LeadLUU starts! With 41 candidates, I am excited to see what innovative ideas are on manifestos and how people want to change LUU and the University. If you want a chance to speak to the candidates about what they want to do, you can meet them at candidate "speed dating", in Common Ground on Wednesday afternoon. If not, you can catch the live debate,

Hi friends! The last two weeks have been a whirlwind! The Decolonising Geographies event was a huge success; a massive well done to Bothaina Tashani, Monisha Jackson and Olivia Andrews for working tirelessly to put on such an impactful event! I'm working with students and staff who attended in order to help diversify the curriculum for future students.

It's been business as usual this week, by which of course I mean meetings, meetings and more meetings. With LeadLUU underway, I've been chatting with plenty of potential candidates for the position of Community Officer. It's been overwhelming to hear so many new and exciting ideas, and I can only wish the best of luck to everyone who's vying to fill my size '11' shoes.

This week we've been running lots of brilliant info and taster sessions for Student Volunteering Week! We've got 16 societies dedicated to volunteering here at LUU so it could be easier to give back while you're at Uni.

I've been lucky enough to take part in many different volunteering opportunities while I've been at Leeds, and although Student Volunteering

Hi everyone! So LGBTQ+ history month is well underway and I hope you're all having a fab time celebrating and learning LGBTQ+ history! This week saw non binary legend Jamie Windust in Roger Stevens of all places, thanks to the LGBT society, a lovely QTPOC crafting event, thanks to Liv Andrews, and a frank and honest discussion hosted by Monisha Issano about domestic violence in LGBTQ+

This week, we closed the Drugs and Alcohol survey that has been up and running over the last few weeks. A whopping 2,552 of you responded, and we'll be reaching out to those of you who were lucky enough to win a prize in the next couple of weeks - woohoo!

Other than that, I've been supporting candidates in the approach to LeadLUU, our annual election to see who'll be

which will be streamed by LSTV on Friday 22nd.

On another note of change, your new Co-op opens on Wednesday, which should give you the chance to influence important issues on a national scale by working with Co-op. I'm looking forward to seeing what impact we can have!

This week, we've had some positive conversations about selling Kosher food in Common Ground, which will

Tamsin, Lauren and I have also worked with Nick (LUU's Diversity and Engagement Coordinator) to put on an Allyship Workshop as part of LGBTQ+ history month. We also have LUU's debate night, the Give and Take, happening next Tuesday. This time the theme is gender and sexuality in academia and beyond.

You've probably also noticed that

Myself and the Exec visited Huddersfield Student Union recently, to see how we can continue to improve the student experience here at LUU. I also met with Councillor Rafique to set some further plans for Leave Leeds Tidy in stone, and I've been spending the rest of my time creating new partnerships in and around the city.

In other news, Rate Your Landlord

Week has been a huge success, it's important to remember that we shouldn't confine volunteering to just a single week of the calendar. There are so many opportunities to give up your time and raise some money or just help someone out, so if you want to chat about how to get involved, just drop me an email or pop into our office.

Also, I'll be launching the next stage

relationships. I was lucky enough to attend the last one, and it was honestly such a well crafted space that allowed everyone to listen, share and heal.

We also had a human library on Valentine's day hosted by Aysha, one of our amazing Liberation Co-ordinators. Aysha has also organised the Give and Take happening next Tuesday, which will focus on decolonising gender and sexuality, and will host an absolutely

directing the work of LUU for the year to come. It's so exciting to see students preparing to campaign in fun and interesting ways, and also shaping their great ideas for change into manifestos.

Over the next couple of weeks, aside from LeadLUU, I want to engage with students on what changing the mental health landscape of universities means to them in the lead up to the University

hopefully see meals arriving in March, which will mean more students being able to come to LUU to eat. We're always looking to make sure we have the most diverse offer we can, and we are continuing to work to offer more Halal options too!

Finally, next week we've got the next Give & Take coming up on Tuesday evening in Pyramid, focusing on Decolonising Gender and Sexuality, so come down to learn more at 5pm.

things are also really gearing up for LeadLUU! The candidates are getting ready to start campaigning next week, and we have a really strong and diverse group this year, so be sure to take the time to look at everyone's manifestos before voting. The LeadLUU burgers have also gone on sale in Old Bar where you can get 2 for £10. Enjoy!

is still live and there are still amazon vouchers up for grabs so do take the time to leave some feedback on your landlord at <https://www.rateyourlandlord.org.uk/>. Lastly, culture cooks starts up again on the 26th of February 2019 from 5pm to 8pm at the Rainbow Junktion Cafe. Tickets go on sale this week and there are limited spaces available so please book your place ASAP.

of the Tell Me More campaign very soon where I'll be asking you what you'd like to see changed in our Clubs and Societies. I really want to ensure that you all feel welcome and that you can access all the fantastic societies at LUU, so please keep an eye out and get involved! The last session had a fantastic response, and it would be great to keep that trend going.

fab range of panellists from leeds uni and beyond!

LeadLUU is here too, which means I'll be getting replaced soon! I'm so excited to see how the next couple of weeks pan out, and to see if anyone's stolen my idea of putting their face on condoms for votes. It's such an exciting and nerve-wracking time for all the people involved, so make sure you support anyone you know that's involved!

Mental Health Day on March 7th. So anyone with burning questions and ideas, please reach out to me!

And finally, we're looking forward to the opening of the new Co-op store which should give students great new choices at lunchtime, and finally bring in the value that our dearly beloved Essentials just wasn't able to.



# Campus Watch



## 1 The University of Farmington Over 100 students arrested for enrolling in fake US university

129 Indian students have been arrested for enrolling at a fake US university. The University of Farmington, supposedly based in Michigan, was run by undercover agents from the Department of Homeland Security to expose “pay-to-stay” immigration fraud.

The fake university was set up in 2015 to try to catch foreign nationals who had initially travelled to the US on student visas and wanted to stay in the country. The university had a fake website as well as a fake Facebook page with a calendar of events.

The Detroit Free Press reported that a total of 130 students, of which 129 were from India, were arrested and charged with civil immigration charges. The Indian government said the students could have been tricked into enrolling. The Indian Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) issued the protest to the US

embassy in Delhi. “Our concern over the dignity and wellbeing of the detained students and the need for immediate consular access for Indian officials to the detainees was reiterated.”

Some immigration advocates in the US also believe innocent foreigners were entrapped by the government. Over the past two years, the Trump administration has clamped down on undocumented migrants and visa overstayers.

The pressing issue has raised concern with the detained students. The MEA added, “we have urged the US side to share full details and regular updates of the students with the government, to release them from detention at the earliest and not to resort to deportation against their will.”

Sophie Denham

## 2 Swansea University University introduces decolonised English literature course

Implementing changes proposed by students, Swansea University is to announce an English module based on the “hyper-contemporary” international Dylan Thomas prize. The course will focus on introducing more books written by black, Asian and minority ethnic writers.

Each year, students in this course will study books longlisted for the prestigious prize for writers under the age of 39, the age that the Swansea-born writer Dylan Thomas died.

The module leader, Dr Nicholas Taylor-Collins said: “This really is a landmark module for English literature.

“The International Dylan Thomas Prize Module offers our finalists a unique opportunity to read excellent, hyper-contemporary literature which explores important themes, including those of gender, race and politics, all the while exploring how literary prizes help to produce, promote and celebrate that writing.”

Zornitsa Stoycheva

## 3 University of North Carolina Watch out for the man in your closet!

A student at the University of North Carolina had a nasty surprise last week, when she arrived home to find a man in her closet wearing her clothes.

The student, identified as Maddie, believed she was being haunted by a ghost, after having her possessions go missing or moved. She arrived home last week to hear a noise from her closet, only to find Andrew Swofford, aged 30, in her closet wearing her clothes with a bag full of more of her possessions.

Swofford was taken into custody by local police officers and was described as not violent or threatening, although was later verified by police to have been on drugs. He is also suspected of breaking and entering, identity theft and failure to appear in court.

The property management company believe that he entered through a living room window. Following this incident, they have taken steps to inspect all windows, as well as increasing patrols for the near future.

Unsurprisingly, both Maddie and her roommate have requested to move to another apartment as they no longer feel safe.

Matthew Plant

## 4 The University of Technology, Australia University introduces ‘all gender’ bathrooms

The University of Technology (UTS), have recently announced their brand-new, ‘all-gender’ bathrooms, to promote inclusivity and “make students feel safe and welcome on campus.”

The university previously had unisex bathrooms in place. However, students and members of the UTS Queer Collective felt that this wasn’t inclusive enough. The UTS Queer Collective ran a campaign to replace ‘unisex’ with ‘all-gender’, to combat discrimination faced by non-binary and/or gender-fluid students.

Erin, a member of UTS Queer Collective said: “Gender neutral bathrooms are something that have helped with reducing my dysphoria and anxiety about being verbally abused in a bathroom setting.”

In addition to the difference in terminology, UTS’ all-gender bathrooms also include an additional symbol.

UTS currently has placed all-gender bathrooms in ten campus buildings, however, due to its positive impact, the University is currently looking into more opportunities to establish all-gender bathrooms across campus.

Maariyah Fulat

## 5 University of Sussex Beaverworks, Bierkeller or a brew?

Students at the University of Sussex have decided to ditch nightclubs and parties for societies that are dedicated purely to activities such as bingo and a British favourite, drinking tea.

A total of 276 societies operate within the University of Sussex’s Student Union, including ‘Spill the Tea’. Sussex are the first student union to offer a society dedicated purely to drinking tea.

Becky Doran, the University’s Activities Officer, said, “with a total of 155 student groups at the Sussex fair, this is an opportunity for students to see the amazing things our groups are doing and join something new...all you need to get started is three people to be your committee and an idea.”

It can be hoped that students at other universities around the country will be inspired to form their own non-drinking societies that are still fun and inclusive, especially with such unconventional ‘student’ activities becoming so popular amongst students at the University of Sussex.

Charlotte Loughlin



# Emily Thornberry Visits Leeds Labour Students

**Zahra Iqbal**

News Editor and Social Media Secretary for LLS

On the 2nd February, Leeds Labour Students were very lucky to catch up and have a cuppa with Shadow Foreign Secretary, Emily Thornberry. Emily visited us at Hyde Park Book Club for an informal chat about all things politics and student life. In all honesty, the entire room was captivated and in awe of her. As an avid campaigner for many humanitarian campaigns, Emily is a fantastic advocate for social change and a perfect representation of what a Labour government would look like. When asked about student involvement in local elections, Emily admitted that it is hard to engage students.

However, she expressed that the majority of students voted Labour in the last general election and, therefore, LLS should tap into this following and develop more student involvement on a local level. Emily also told us that, as students, in order to show Theresa May that we want a Labour government, we should exercise our limited power in local elections. By having more Labour local councillors, it will send a message to the Conservative government and show that it's not only governmental control that is important – local councils make a massive difference to our country too.

Emily was very humbled by her experience as an MP. Her proudest moment was being elected as the MP of her constituency, South Islington and Finsbury in 2005. Emily also spoke a great deal about how her main concern is making a difference. She was inspirational and told us about how much she campaigned on the streets to remain in the EU. Emily expressed how much she enjoys talking to people face-to-face, hearing their opinions and being more of a hands-on and engaged MP. I think her approach is admirable. As a woman who is a senior member of the Shadow Cabinet, she still found time in her busy



schedule to come and chat to us, demonstrating how dedicated she is to grassroots politics in Britain.

Unfortunately, being an MP hasn't always been a barrel of laughs for Emily. On the brink of tears, she said that one of her hardest moments as an MP was a few weeks ago – when she had heard of a killing in her constituency.

She told us how she visited the family of the deceased boy and mourned the loss of their son with them as the room fell silent. It is truly admirable that she is still in touch with her local constituency and helps people in need, as politicians should.

As students who will graduate soon, Emily also warned us that there is an overwhelming need for social, affordable housing that isn't being delivered by the Conservative government. Students that are already riddled with debt after completing higher education cannot afford to move to big cities and climb the property ladder as there simply aren't enough houses.

Emily said that under a Labour government, there would be more social housing and that, in her district, she is in talks with construction agencies to exclusively build affordable housing.

Having Emily Thornberry visit was truly inspirational and we hope she comes to visit Leeds Labour Students again!

# Students Call For Warwick Vice Chancellor to Resign Over 'Chat Rape' Scandal

**Olivia McGhie**

The embattled Vice-Chancellor of Warwick University, Stuart Croft, is refusing to stand down amidst calls for his resignation by student protestors – who marched on campus last Wednesday.

Hundreds of students descended onto the campus' piazza on the 6th February to protest the way in which the University has handled the 'rape chat' scandal, in which several male students encouraged each other to rape specific women enrolled at Warwick.

Last summer, *The Boar*, Warwick University's newspaper, broke the story of the group chat in which boys from across campus made racist, anti-Semitic, and misogynistic comments. One of the men said, "r\*pe her in the street while everybody watches," with another replying that it "wouldn't even be unfair."

The fresh wave of protests was triggered by a decision to reduce two of the men's bans from ten years to just one, meaning that they could potentially return in September of this year.

This decision caused widespread outrage amongst students, alumni, and staff at the University.

Steffi Felton, a female student at Warwick, has told *The Gryphon* that she feels angry at the response of the University, saying that "it felt like we didn't matter at all." Although the two boys will now not return, she begs the question, "did we really have to scream and

shout that much for this decision to be made? It's not good enough."

The reinvigorated campaign has led to an independent review of the University's disciplinary measures, as announced by Warwick's Pro-Chancellor David Normington on the morning of the protests. The statement given by Normington and the University Council offered an apology saying "we are deeply sorry and understand the distress this has caused the victims of this abuse and the wider impact which we know has been felt by our students and our staff."

However, this announcement did little to dent the passionate feeling of injustice felt by the students who marched to the Senate building.

The 'Reclaim Our University' group, who organised the demonstration, wrote in the description of the Facebook event, "The University is sending a message [that] this behaviour is acceptable, and the rehabilitation of those who glorify sexual violence is more important than the safety and education of those they seek to attack."

Similarly, one of the girls who was mentioned on the group chat published an anonymous letter on *The Boar* expressing her disillusionment with the University – concluding that "It is only now that your reputation and profits are on the line that you are finally taking this issue seriously."

The immediate protest over the reduced ban for the

students may be over, but Warwick students and staff alike are now looking to tackle the wider problem of 'rape culture' within universities.

Student Steffi Felton says that "we need to listen and believe every woman who needs to speak out, so that we can continue to raise awareness and be able to say: this is not acceptable, this behaviour will not be tolerated, and you will be punished."



Image: BBC



# Housing Crisis: One Million More Young Adults Living With Their Parents

Oliver Murphy

New research into the housing crisis suggests that there are nearly a million more young adults living with their parents than was the case 20 years ago.

A quarter of 20 to 34-year-olds now live with their parents, a third higher than in 1997, according to the think tank Civitas.

The research suggests that higher house prices, more expensive bills and a decline in social housing have fuelled the rise in young people staying at home.

Civitas editorial director Daniel Bentley said: "As owner-occupation and social housing have each become more difficult to enter, hundreds of thousands of young adults have taken one look at the high rents in the private rented sector and decided to stay with their parents a bit longer instead."

The biggest increase in the trend was amongst 23-year-olds; 20 years ago, 27 per cent lived with their parents, compared with 49 per cent in 2017.

The growth in young adults staying at home across this period has been strongest in London, where house prices are highest, with an increase of 41 per cent in 20 years.

In cheaper areas, such as north-east England, there was an increase of only 14 per cent. In Yorkshire and Humber, there was an increase of 17 per cent.

Umar Parkes, 22, an estate agent who lives with his mother in London, said: "The figures don't surprise

me. I almost feel like I'm born a generation too late... I don't know anyone, from the top of my head, younger than 30 who has purchased a property."

Population science journal, *Demographic Research*, has found that, in addition to housing costs, the age at which relationships and families begin has increased over time, leading more 23 to 34-year-olds to live at home.

More young people are also going to university, leaving them financially dependent on their parents for longer.

Civitas suggests that there has been a "collapse in single living," as those who do move out are far more likely to live with partners or friends.

Data from the Office for National Statistics has been used in the study to look at average household sizes. From 1951 to 2001, average household size fell from 3.3 people per household to 2.36 people. By 2017, it had risen to 2.39 people.

The government uses projections about how many houses are likely to be formed to develop house-building targets. But, as Bentley argues: "building new homes in line with household growth during this period would entrench the under-supply of housing for decades to come."

The Shadow Housing Secretary, John Healey, said: "These figures should shake the government out of their complacency. Home ownership has been in freefall for younger people and the number of new

genuinely low-cost homes being built has fallen to near-record lows."

Polly Neate, the Chief Executive of Shelter, said: "Shelter has found that we need 3 million new social homes in the next 20 years, including for young families unable to get on the housing ladder. This requires bold action. The cost of not acting is far greater."



Image: The Independent

# New Drop in the Number of State School Students Going to University

Elena Sotelo

The number of state school students progressing to university has dropped for the first time in eight years, according to the Higher Education Statistics Agency. In the academic year 2017/2018, only 89.5 per cent of the enrolled full-time first year undergraduates came from state schools, in comparison with 90 per cent in 2016/2017.

Despite more young people than ever being able to access higher education, this report reveals there are still challenges to face in order to ensure equal opportunities for all students from across the United Kingdom.

The HESA summary highlights the concerning admissions gap that exists in the country's top universities. Although only 6.5 per cent of school children in the United Kingdom are privately educated, their admission rates to some universities are above average. 15 universities saw just under 30 per cent of their first-year undergraduates coming from independent schools.

Even though they are a small minority, students from private schools make up most of the admissions to some of the best universities in the United Kingdom.

The Russell Group of research-intensive universities are amongst the biggest culprits, with 60 per cent of pupils from independent schools enrolling at one of these institutions.

The University of Oxford continues to have the highest proportion of privately educated students. For the academic year 2017/2018, only 58 per cent of students admitted into Oxford came from state schools. According to a study carried out by the Sutton Trust, privately educated students are seven times more likely to be admitted into Oxbridge. The University of Cambridge, Durham University and the Imperial College also present alarming numbers, with around 63 per cent of their enrolled students coming from a state school.

Even though there has been a drop in the number of state school students enrolling in university, the number of students from disadvantaged areas progressing into higher education has been steadily increasing over the past few years. The percentage of students from low participation neighbourhoods across the United Kingdom has increased 0.2 per cent from 2016/2017 to 2017/2018, making up 11.6 per cent of the students across the country.

The institutions which have seen the biggest

improvement are also Russell Group universities. In 2017/2018, the number of students from low participation neighbourhoods increased by 8.2 per cent. For 2018/2019, the Russell Group will invest £270 million in narrowing the socio-economic admission gap existing in its universities. Through bursaries, grants, mentoring schemes and support for prospective students, they expect to continue attracting students from diverse backgrounds.



Image: The Economist



# #LeadLUU

The campaigning stage for the upcoming student elections kicks off next week, giving students the opportunity to choose who they want to represent them as next year's Student Exec. We caught up with the two candidates running for Gryphon Editor, to find out why they want to be in charge of the University of Leeds' Student Newspaper.



**Ed Barnes**  
Views Online Editor

*Why do you want to be Editor-in-Chief?*

Since joining the Gryphon team, I have honestly enjoyed being online editor for the Views Section more than anything else I've done at Uni. I want to be Editor-In-Chief because I want to take The Gryphon to the next level as a publication and produce serious student journalism. The Gryphon should be important in Leeds students' lives whether it's holding the Union, the Council or the University to account or being their go-to source for all things Leeds related.

*The students' union often has a clear political or social agenda. Do you think The Gryphon should also have an editorial agenda?*

I don't think The Gryphon should have a clear political agenda. It should always be representative of the

student body and that includes the many different voices and opinions students have. An inevitable consequence of pursuing a partisan agenda is that you're going to alienate a large section of students. However, The Gryphon should support and hold the Union and University to account on non-partisan issues that have broad support amongst students like environmental waste and student safety on campus.

*What are some of the key policies, or changes to the paper, that you would hope to implement if elected as next year's editor?*

As a member of the LGBT+ community who grew up isolated in the country, the issue of representation and diversity in all areas of the media is incredibly important to me. Therefore, one of my main initiatives is to collaborate with minority group media and reach out to societies across campus in order to encourage people from all backgrounds to join The Gryphon team. I also want to see The Gryphon become the go-to news source for Leeds Uni students by providing in-depth and breaking news stories on local issues, without losing sight of our international outlook. Lastly, I would seek to continue improving the website and the paper, as they are the face of The Gryphon. To do this, I would collaborate more with LSTV and LSR and also appoint a web development associate to develop and maintain the site.

*Do you think it's possible to pursue investigative stories while also reacting to breaking news? How will you balance the demands of both types of story?*

Absolutely! The Gryphon already publishes larger features and interviews that require a more in-depth approach, and I believe that more investigative work does not present a challenge we can't handle. The investigative stories would come from ideas which writers have picked up on in Leeds. We will help them delve deeper to see if there is a story there and hold workshops to learn these skills. I've learnt first-hand that being able to investigate is a key aspect of good journalism. Alongside this, the breaking news stories would be short, factual and easy to write, operating in response to anything happening in Leeds.

*In a sentence or two, why should people vote for you?*

I have the determination and drive to see The Gryphon expand its reach and become an organization that pursues bigger investigative stories that would require leg work but give a voice for every student and make us competitive with other student and local publications. I want to see The Gryphon be more relevant in students' lives by being the publication that keeps us informed on what is going on around us in Leeds. Some people don't know what The Gryphon does or what it even is. I hope to change that.



**Ian White**  
Newspaper Associate Editor

*Why do you want to be Editor-in-Chief?*

Being involved with The Gryphon has been one of the highlights of my time at University. I've committed a lot of time helping to edit The Gryphon over the past two years, but it's never felt like a chore and I would love to be Editor-in-Chief next year. I've got a clear vision of how I want to take The Gryphon forward - with better training and support for writers, improvements in our social media/online presence and a commitment to holding the University to account.

*The students' union often has a clear political or social*

*agenda. Do you think The Gryphon should also have an editorial agenda?*

No, I don't think The Gryphon should have a political, editorial agenda. It isn't the role of the editor to tell students what to think, or to advocate a specific political position. Instead, The Gryphon should be a platform for all students to express themselves and write about the things that they're passionate about. When discussing controversial issues, I would strive for balance and nuance, informing students by presenting both sides of the argument.

*What are some of the key policies, or changes to the paper, that you would hope to implement if elected as next year's editor?*

I would hold a workshop for writers early in the year, so students can develop their writing skills, familiarise themselves with different styles of articles and get to know the editorial team so that they feel like a valued and important part of The Gryphon. I also want to increase The Gryphon's presence online through more consistent, creative and interactive use of social media. If we treat social media as an opportunity rather than a threat, we can increase our reach to students who don't normally pick up a copy of the paper. Finally, I wouldn't be afraid to hold the University or the Union to account. This year we've covered stories on University divestments and the cost of sanitary

products in Essentials. One of the best things about being an editor of The Gryphon is feeling that you've made a contribution, however small, to improving the experiences of students at Leeds - something I'll be looking to do much more of.

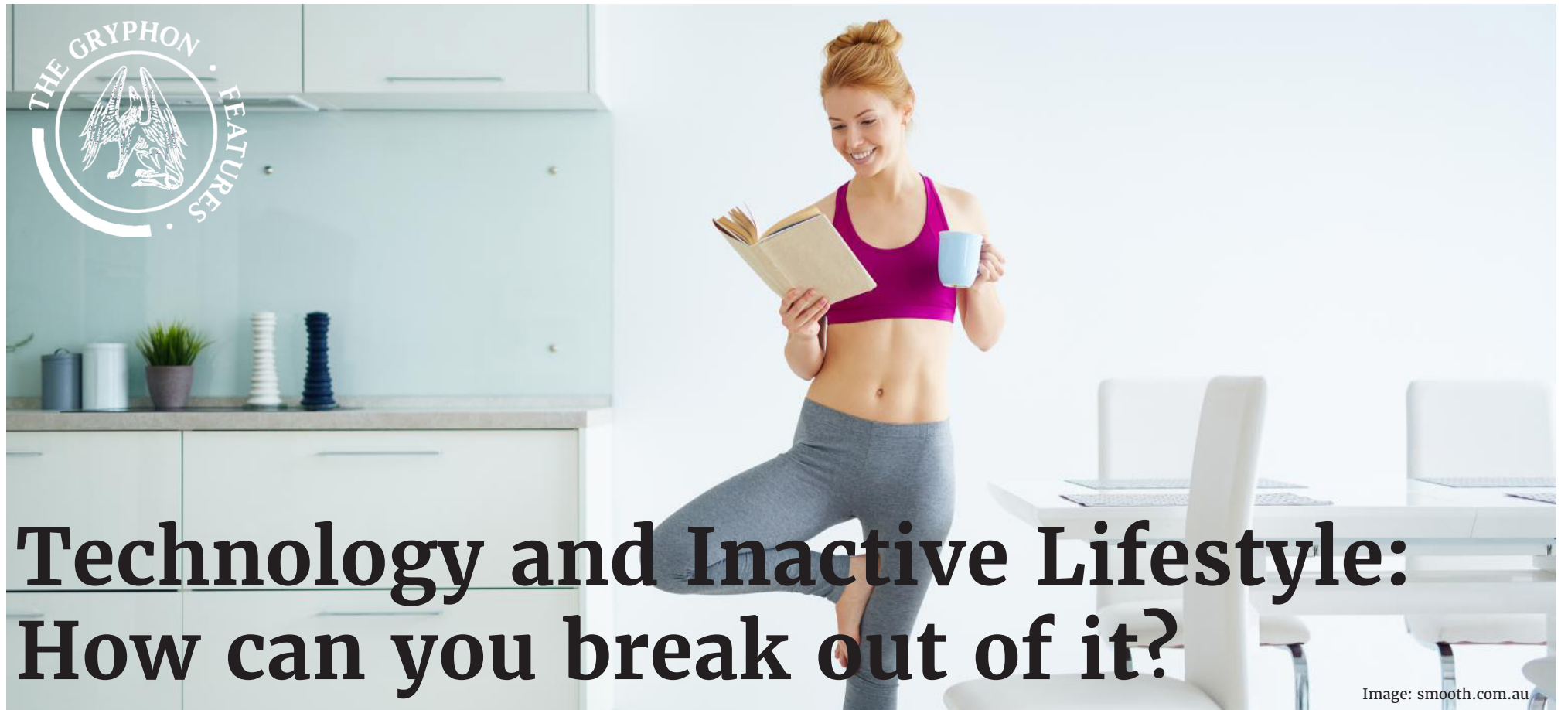
*A lot of writers join The Gryphon late in the year. How would you ensure that these writers feel like they have the appropriate skills if they miss the workshop you're planning?*

Nobody should feel that they can't write for The Gryphon, but I appreciate there will be writers who can't make it or don't get involved until later in the year. If the workshop at the start of the year is a success, then I would like to run a similar 'refreshers' event after the Christmas holidays - so writers who missed the first one don't feel left out. I'd also put information from the workshop in our Facebook groups and on The Gryphon website - so writers who are a bit unsure still have access to the workshop's resources as a point of reference.

*In a sentence or two, why should people vote for you?*

Because I'm passionate about student journalism. I've got two year's experience editing The Gryphon, so I know what makes us one of the best student publications in the country, but I also have a clear idea of how to build upon the achievements of previous editors - so The Gryphon can continue to get better and better.





# Technology and Inactive Lifestyle: How can you break out of it?

Image: smooth.com.au

From university work to social media, laptops, tablets and phones are the essence of modern life. *The Gryphon* discusses the repercussions of inactivity and spending too much time in front of computer screens.

**Helena Smith**

In an age where everything is centred around technology, we might consider it impossible to take time during the day to leave our screens. Whilst these forms of technology are undoubtedly extremely useful for almost everything imaginable, they are not doing wonders for our health, neither physical nor mental. If we think about it, human bodies were built to move. Consider our ancestors, running wild in forests hunting for their own food. Now think about the way in which we sit statically for hours on end, sometimes whole days before realising we haven't even moved to eat, drink, or give ourselves a quick break! Surely this complete change in our bodily dynamics cannot be healthy?

Studies have proven that people who sit down all day compared to those who incorporate a small amount of exercise are twice as likely to suffer from heart problems in later life. James Levine, a doctor of endocrinology at the Mayo Clinic, told the *New York Times* in 2011 that "excessive sitting is a lethal activity." Illnesses like diabetes and strokes are strongly linked to inactivity. Furthermore, degenerative mental illnesses such as dementia have recently been related to unhealthy lifestyle.

**"In a recent study, it was shown that people that spend more time in front of screens [...] were likely to develop social anxiety"**

You may be thinking that everything under the sun causes health scares: additives in certain foods, overexposure to the sun, various chemicals in the air... but the potential effects of such things are too far in the future for you to worry about, right? That view seems justifiable. There are plenty of other things to be concerned about, like getting tomorrow's assignment done, or not drifting so far into your overdraft that you risk never getting back out of it. However, perhaps the more immediate issues caused by excess screen time are something to bear in mind. In a recent study by American Psychological Society, conducted among teenagers, it was shown that people who spent more time in front of screens, as opposed to social interactions and exercise, were more likely to develop conditions such as social anxiety which is often followed by depression.

The annual National Sleep Survey (2011) showed that 95 per cent of Americans use screens just before they go to sleep, which is leading to an increased number of sleeping disorders such as insomnia due to the interactive and stimulating nature of technology. As students, you're probably thinking that it is normal to suffer from a lack of sleep or social deprivation. It's a given that you'll be sitting in your room writing essays (or procrastinating on YouTube) into the early hours of the morning. But these issues can become so serious that people begin to completely avoid social situations or sleep so little that they end up

missing the majority of their lectures and seminars.

So, given technology's prominence in our lives, what are we supposed to do? Evidently, going to the gym before or after a long day of sitting is helpful; it'll improve focus, or help you wind down in the evening. However, the real problem is long periods of sitting without a break. One of my professors has a brilliant method to tackle this problem in lectures. After 22 minutes (apparently the length of the average concentration span), he gives us a few minutes to chat to our course mates and have a stretch. Once, he even brought in juggling balls and tried (unsuccessfully) to get a volunteer to give a demonstration, which in the end, he performed himself. I assume this method was tried to refresh our minds, relieve us of any boredom, and of course, had anyone volunteered, to get us moving. Whether it was his general charismatic approach to teaching or the refreshing nature of this brief pause which was so engaging, I'm not sure. Either way, for the remainder of the lecture it felt surprisingly unlikely that I would drift off.

Perhaps this proven period of concentration time is why I have a similar technique when it comes to exam revision. If you also struggle to concentrate for long periods of time, I encourage you to try out this slightly unorthodox idea. So, this is how it goes: I get my laptop out, set up my word document and internet resources to carry out the given piece of work. Then, I set a twenty-minute timer on my phone and research and type away, with a slightly pressurising but also oddly comforting awareness of the time constraint. As soon as the alarm goes off, I stop, mid-sentence if necessary, and then I put on a catchy tune, maybe some Abba or Kate Bush (I strongly recommend), and dance around the room for its duration. Yep – I actually do this. Once the song has finished, I sit down again, set another twenty-minute timer and repeat the whole process.

Think of it as High Intensity Interval Training, but for your mind. This can be sustained for about four or five twenty-minute sessions before I take an hour's break for lunch. You might not consider an hour and a half of work to be much, but in my experience, the resultant quality and quantity of the work is so much better than if I had sat for hours and hours, half working, half scrolling through Instagram.

So, I would challenge you to try this method, although perhaps not in the library. In this case, agree times with your friends when you'll both take a ten-minute break to close your laptops and a converse for a bit, rather than disturbing each other every two seconds to laugh at the relatability of various memes. It's all about having proper periods of concentration and then allowing yourself proper breaks to chat, get up, walk about and get a coffee; it's far more rewarding that way. Remember that we are not robots (yet). Essentially, keep yourself active and don't ask too much of your mind. Let your body tell you when you need a break to move, breathe and look up at the world around you.



# Does ‘You’ Romanticise Stalking?



Image: The Growl

**The Gryphon discusses the dangerous romanticisation of Penn Badgley’s character in the latest Netflix hit series, *You*.**

**Meg Jacobs**

At first glance, *You*, the recent Netflix hit drama, might seem like your average love story – boy meets girl, falls in love, and then attempts to win her over by figuring out her likes and dislikes. However, this is not your classic tale of romance.

This is a warning – if you don’t want any spoilers, stop reading now. The series is in fact about a psychopathic killer who sets out to win the female protagonist’s love, no matter what the cost. His efforts to win her over lead him to stalking, gaslighting, emotional abuse, stealing her valuables and eventually murdering her previous boyfriend and best friend.

When stated as bluntly as the above, we would immediately assume that the character of Joe Goldberg, played by Penn Badgley, would be seen as the villain and despised by the majority of viewers.

Yet, perplexingly, on the whole, this appears to not be the case. It seems quite the opposite phenomenon has occurred on social media, where users have taken to platforms such as Twitter to document their hate for Beck and love for Joe. But how can this be the case when the whole premise of the show is based on a murderous stalker? How can we hate the victim in all of this and romanticise the perpetrator? This raises a very interesting question: do shows such as *You* highlight the devastating threat of stalking in a social media age, or do they in fact glamourise this dangerous obsession?

The author of the book-turned Netflix show, Caroline Kepnes, has striven to avoid this narrative. Her aim was to satirise the commonly held view that men are the active participants in a relationship whilst the female counterpart is merely passive and awaits for him to demonstrate his love. The show attempts to fulfil Kepnes’ wishes. However, there is a fine line between what is considered romantic and what is seen as emotional abuse, and unfortunately,

the predominant audience response to the show falls short of Kepnes’ intentions.

So, why is this the case? The use of Joe’s first-person narration, meaning that we largely hear his side of the story, is a clever cinematic device but one that may have had unintentional effects. It allows the audience to assess situations from his perspective, leading us into the trap of sympathising with him and even rationalising his actions. However, whilst Kepnes’ goal was to highlight how terrifyingly easy it is to become complicit with a killer when we are allowed insights into situations from his perspective (all the more so when they seem to be portrayed from an ordinary person), what the show failed to do was make this point explicitly obvious. It is all too easy to watch the series and fall victim to Joe’s charisma without sitting back and questioning what you have just watched.

Instead, the series shows numerous forms of stalking and emotional abuse, whilst at the same time normalising this behaviour due to Joe’s first-person narration and various internal monologues. This would have, and has had, some very serious effects on its audience, with numerous people blaming the victim on various social media platforms and viewing his actions as normal.

Furthermore, with the recent release of the new Ted Bundy trailer starring Zac Efron, *Extremely Wicked, Shockingly Evil and Vile*, it is evident that controversy is rife when dealing with this topic. This particular trailer and upcoming film are even more controversial as it is based on real-life events, throwing up numerous ethical concerns. People have been questioning if the trailer has accurately portrayed Bundy, or whether it seems to present him as more of an anti-hero due to the music choice for the trailer making it more like an action film rather than a thriller.

Once again, we have a clear-cut example where killers have become sexualised by the media. Whilst it is apparent that Bundy used his charisma and

physical appearance to lure in his victims, thus it would be wrong for the film to undermine this aspect of his character, there is, however, a difference between portraying this and becoming victim to it. Rather than condemning this threatening nature and highlighting how killers can disguise themselves as ordinary civilians – which the media has failed to do in this trailer – it has instead simply glamourised an extremely violent criminal in an already over-commercialised age. Both the trailer and *You* fall victim to romanticising very real and serious threats, having far-reaching effects in a social media age where news and ideas can be passed instantly among thousands of people.

Despite many viewers failing to recognise the show’s true intentions, it is apparent that Badgley has been fighting back against those who advocate their sympathy for the character of Joe. Taking to Twitter, he has responded to numerous tweets to remind viewers of the character’s murderous tendencies and why we should not be lusting after him. Badgley has admitted that the terrifying romanticisation of his character has given him all the more motivation for season two of the series, meaning he will actively try to step up the creepiness of his character, hopefully resulting in the show finally achieving what it set out to do.

Whilst *You* had a great potential to address the very real threat of stalking in a social media age, as well as the opportunity to increase awareness surrounding this concerning topic, it insteads normalises the same issue it sought to prevent. The worrying matters that the show aims to ignite a conversation about are something that anyone can use to examine how they use and manage their own social media accounts. Let’s hope season two does a better job at highlighting plainly the problem at hand.



# Mantality Talk MENTal Health on Campus



Image: LUU Mantality

**This week, Imogen Bicknell, treasurer of LUU's Mantality society, sat down to discuss how the society are opening up new discussions and creating safe spaces to talk about male mental health on campus. Set up in 2018 with the help of former Gryphon Editor-in-Chief, Reece Parker, LUU Mantality have been going from strength to strength – and here's why.**

**Imogen Bicknell**  
Treasurer of LUU Mantality

They just get on with it don't they? Men don't talk about 'feelings'. Men don't cry. When they have problems they just...? What? Have a beer or a fight and then it's over?

Why is men's pain so trivialised? Made so silent and diminutive? It's a problem that spans a lifetime.

Other than the socially acceptable emotions of anger and aggression, we tell young boys that crying is for girls and distress is for sissies. A spokesperson from ChildLine revealed they receive calls from boys as young as nine who are frequently told to 'man up' when they are upset. Boys in primary school are told to shut their mouths, hold it in and pretend there is nothing wrong.

Men are just as prone to feeling hurt, angry, upset or depressed, only men are notoriously worse at dealing with these feelings. Seeking help isn't an option; boys don't cry remember. Men are more likely to use 'self-help' measures such as drugs or alcohol. They are more likely to seek avoidance behaviours such as pornography or gambling. They are less likely to open up than women. And this is all reinforced by the society we live in.

It is well known that suicide is the biggest killer amongst men under 45. According to Campaign Against Living Miserably (CALM), every two hours a man takes his own life. Often, few people are aware these men are struggling. For someone so young, seemingly confident, with a bright future in front of them, it seems to come out of nowhere. But years of trying to suppress feelings of helplessness, isolation and loneliness can rise in an unshakable conviction that the world would be a better place without them.

After endless darkness and confusion, suicide offers clarity because we give these men no other answer.

Who are these men suffering in silence, too depressed to leave the house, who feel like a fraud when they are socialising with friends, numbing themselves with alcohol and narcotics, contemplating suicide because they genuinely feel they have no other way out of this hole? They are your friends, your brothers, the guy serving your morning coffee, the person sitting silently in a lecture theatre, the rugby playing hero on a night out with his mates. You've probably just walked right past him. They are everywhere.

They are people like Stevie Ward, rugby player for Leeds Rhinos. Ward battled with depression, going public with his experiences following the realisation that he was not alone in suffering with mental illness. Ward discovered that many men do want to be honest about their experiences but feel unable to express or articulate them. Stigma steals the words from them. Ward since founded Mantality, an online lifestyle magazine and mental health movement, openly discussing issues faced by young minds.

I myself have made the mistake of thinking men are not as mentally troubled as women. I assumed their silence and stoicism meant that they didn't feel emotional pain. I've been swept up with the stigma that real men don't cry, finding such a display of vulnerability uncomfortable. I used to believe when men had a problem there would be a blank box in their mind where problems didn't get to them. I used to envy men, wishing I had a blank box. There is no blank box, pain does not discriminate against gender. Mental illness is a silent killer. It takes joy. It robs confidence and sense of self. It takes lives. We need a world that says to people of all genders – "I will not judge you if you talk."

Here at the University of Leeds, we've taken Mantality to campus. We are a free society that gives men a safe space to talk. We hold men's circles every fortnight to discuss REAL issues that are affecting our students. This is followed by a meditation session to give men tools to deal with stress, increase motivation and empower them mentally. We also have links with LUU Yoga and offer regular exclusively male yoga classes. We have events, guest speakers and a Mantality retreat in the pipeline. At Mantality we build resilience, give a support network and let men know it's okay to not be okay.

To all the men on campus: here is a new option. You don't have to self-medicate. You don't have to shut up. Here is an alternative to internalising pain. Building mental health is never easy, it takes persistence and the best time to do it is now. Do not wait until you've reached crisis point. Mental health is a muscle that needs to be regularly flexed for maximum performance and protection from illness. It's disheartening when the GP loses your referral, your parents refuse to accept you have a problem or your friends don't take you seriously – but at Mantality we 100 per cent will. There is no shame in mental illness, you are no less of a person for suffering. Facing your problems head on is inspiring and brave, and we could do with more men like you!

LUU Mantality meets fortnightly on Tuesdays in Baines Wing room 2.15 between 6pm and 8pm. Find us on social media for more info @luumantalitysociety or email us at [luumantalitysociety@gmail.com](mailto:luumantalitysociety@gmail.com).

Check out [www.mantalitymagazine.com](http://www.mantalitymagazine.com) for exciting articles, mental stimulation and mental health inspiration.



# In the Middle



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

# Issue 8

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Audre Lorde, courtesy of the  
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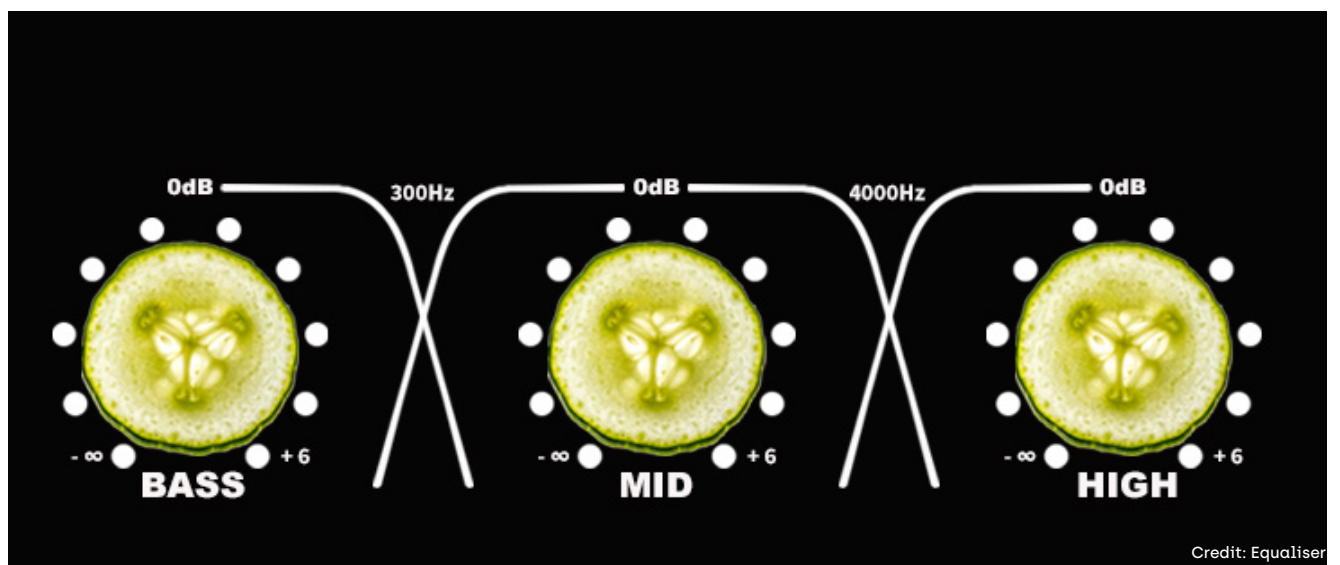
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# In the Middle with Equaliser

Rosabella Allen caught up with two DJs involved in Equaliser, a collective of female, transgender and non-binary artists based in Leeds. Carlos - a sound designer and resident at Brudenell Groove - and Luce - the event organiser and workshopper - have both been involved with Equaliser since their humble beginnings. Here, they discuss their journey so far, as well as the need for more safe spaces within the clubbing scene.



**Luce:** Similar here really with it being accidental, I never intended or wanted to become a DJ. I was lucky enough to borrow decks off my old boss about 3 or 4 years ago, he lent me 2 turntables and his old mixer. Initially I just wanted one turntable to play my records, and thanks to the equipment being in my room I just got hooked. Then it turned into a hobby and still is really. I love doing it and just being able to play tunes I love to my mates. Also, after noticing the lack of non-cis men DJs, I wanted to make a difference because it always inspired me to see the minority gender categories in the scene playing out.

**Did you have people around you to help and support you to pursue DJing and did you face any difficulties or challenges trying to do it?**

**C:** The Leeds scene is very tight-knit and encouraging, I've always felt really supported. There's too many wonderful people to name specific names, but members of Brudenell Groove, Equaliser, and Love Muscle have been endlessly helpful, generous and inspiring over the past few years.

**L:** Yes. Like I said before, having my old boss Andrew Blake lend me his turntables and mixer - that for me started everything, someone seeing the potential and knowing it'd be worth them being in my room, rather than collecting dust in his garage. Also, just going out and seeing my idols play and having them to look up to, Lena Willikens being one of them. These role models help massively. Outlaws Yacht Club crew, I've been playing there for a few years and they're like family and have really given me a solid platform to play the tunes I love, and have confidence in doing so. Lucy Locket has also been an inspiration and supportive of the whole of Equaliser, giving amazing advice and experience, sharing knowledge and skills. She's just an all round super star!

**Have you ever felt uncomfortable when playing a set or felt any sort of prejudice?**

**L:** Yes, many times. I often feel uncomfortable in most spaces I'm not used to playing in. It's a confidence thing for me. I'm getting a lot more used to it now - but I have experienced many mansplaining situations in the past.

**Saying that, are you noticing a change or an increase in diversity within the electronic music scene or even just an increase in representation and creative spaces for LGBTQ+ people?**

**L:** Yes, definitely. It's getting better. Just the awareness and choice for people is really important in the LGBTQ+ scene. One of the most important factors for me is being able to create and have access to a safe space for people. A lot of the ideas which have come with the need to create awareness of LGBTQ+ communities and genders has often stemmed from experiences people have faced in certain clubs or dance floors. For example, negative, passive-aggressive comments, feeling unsafe or judged by people, others not being aware or making you feel small or unwelcome and unable to express who you are, even being touched or stared at by men without any indication that it's ok to do so. These are the issues mostly women, non-binary and trans people are faced with most of the time they're in a club or dance music environment. Luckily, it doesn't happen as much in the underground music scene than the mainstream, but it still can regularly. Spaces like Love Muscle create this safe space very well - absolutely no tolerance for unsafe behaviour. This is what all club spaces should be making a priority. Thank god there's a space and choice for us in Leeds because freedom of expression is so important within LGBTQ communities.

**So what inspired you to first get into DJing? Was there any sudden point which really sticks out to you that made you think it was something you wanted to start doing, either as a hobby or a career?**

**Carlos:** I kind of got into it by accident - I had been going to a lot of nights and collecting music for years but never had any equipment or ever thought about really DJing. Then I started doing my radio show on KMAH and then people just kind of started asking if I wanted to play at stuff, and even though I didn't really consider myself a proper DJ - and still probably don't really - I just thought fuck it, that will be fun!



no tolerance for unsafe behaviour. This is what all club spaces should be making a priority. Thank god there's a space and choice for us in Leeds because freedom of expression is so important within LGBTQ+ communities.

**What are your personal future dreams and plans for the year and Equaliser as a whole?**

**C:** By the end of 2019, I want to have released an album. I have all the music, I just need to stop being afraid of starting the recording and mixing process. For Equaliser, I would love to start collaborating with other collectives doing similar stuff and try to encourage similar collectives to start up in different cities and towns, so that we can help create these opportunities for people in other places.

**L:** I would love to focus on the music side of things more, getting a mix series properly going with guest shows and expanding in this way, collaborating with other collectives, and so on. We have some really talented DJs and producers in the collective so it's time to celebrate our talents and show them off. Also, getting better at hosting workshops and opening up the idea and option for people to explore experimental mixing and layering of textures and sounds, which is how I learnt to get to grips with the equipment before beat matching.

**Finally, what words of wisdom and advice can you give to aspiring DJs out there? how can they get involved with events around Leeds and are there any upcoming Equaliser events that people should look out for?**

**L:** One word of advice is, as much as anyone tells you that there's a specific way to DJ, do not listen - there is no right or wrong way. Everyone learns at their own pace and when you're watching someone in a club, they practice a lot to get to a level of being able to DJ on their own. DJing in a club is a whole new level in itself, but it also helps you to learn and push yourself, so be patient! Also, tune selection for me is a priority over learning how to beatmatch, unless beatmatching is your thing and gets you more excited,



Credit: Meg Firth

**"There's a space and choice for us in Leeds. Freedom of expression is so important within LGBTQ communities"**



Credit: Meg Firth

I'd say try not to put too much pressure on yourself to be technically perfect. Like I said, things take time!

**C:** The Leeds scene is great because it's small and friendly enough to get to know everyone, but there are also lots of people who are interested in hearing all different kinds of weird stuff and creating platforms for people to share it. So some advice would be to go and listen to the music that you like at the nights you like, and then have a chat and get in contact with the people running those nights. The DIY nature of the Leeds scene means that most people are super friendly and willing to help people out with advice or let people get involved in some way. If you're not really sure what you like yet, but want to try some stuff out, come to one of our Equaliser workshops, and we'll help point you in the right direction.

**L:** Come join one of the Equaliser workshops if you're interested in learning or just trying something new. I'll be helping one on the 22nd of March and we have such a friendly crew who love to share skills for all levels. We have an event on the 8th of March for International Women's Day at Sheaf Street. Myself and some past workshopers will be taking over the decks, so come along. Also, check out the Equaliser Facebook page for more information about future workshops and events.



# AIMing for Diversity and Inclusion in the Workplace: The new partnership between AIM and Stonewall

Music and musicians are often championed for their self-expression and willingness to explore topics which are considered taboo elsewhere, but diversity behind the scenes of the music business is an ongoing issue. Previously, the exposure of the gender pay gap and lack of women in senior leadership roles caused plenty of controversy and subsequent debate. Now, during LGBTQ+ history month, the focus shifts to another area where the music industry needs to improve its efforts.

One of the leading music industry organisations, AIM (Association of Independent Music), recently announced that they were partnering with the LGBTQ+ charity, Stonewall. The charity focuses on ensuring institutions understand the value of individuals from the LGBTQ+ community and creating inclusive cultures in the workplace. The importance of creating a workplace free of prejudice is evident when you consider the statistics. Stonewall's Work Report, published in April 2018, stated that 35% of LGBTQ+ people hid their identity at work in fear of discrimination, and less than half of LGBTQ+ people would say that there are policies in place to protect trans people in the workplace. Whilst there are no clear figures currently focused on the independent music sector alone, this highlights a clear

need for improvement across wider employment, the responsibility for which is not just down to individuals, but should emphasise the role of employers. More training and clearer guidelines need to be set out while disciplinary action should be implemented against staff who use homophobic abuse.

On the announcement of the partnership, AIM released an article clearly identifying their commitment to tackling the issue of inclusion and listing practical steps that they will be taking. These include encouraging their members to focus on diversity within recruitment, encouraging companies to review their equality policies and organising educational 'Empowerment Programmes' for their members to ensure that there are visible public role models supporting the LGBTQ+ community.

AIM, however, are not alone in their efforts within the music industry, as other key companies have begun to focus on improving these statistics. The three major labels, Universal Music, Warner and Sony, alongside a number of other music companies, became members of a new non-profit charity and network, called Pride in Music. The charitable network, which launches



this February, was setup to provide the British music industry with a "cross industry network for the LGBTQ+ community and allies." Their membership board consists of prominent figures in major labels such as Blake Price, director of artists and partnerships at Universal Music who identifies as a homosexual man, and Jamie Ahye, Marketing Manager at Atlantic Records, who identifies as a queer trans man. It is the visibility of LGBTQ+ role models across the industry, both on the artist and behind the scenes front, that can lead to progressive change, and hopefully the fear of discrimination will be alleviated for fellow LGBTQ+ colleagues.

Within the music sector, inclusion seems like an obvious fit; the diversity of music genres that are accessible in the streaming age means that there is music for everyone's taste. But in order to support diverse artists, the companies championing these artists must also employ a diverse range of people. Due to AIM's partnership with Stonewall focusing on the independent side of the industry, while Pride in Music tackles the major labels, it is clear that positive steps forward are being made to ensure inclusion for the LGBTQ+ community throughout the music industry.

Jennifer Hyman

## Album of the Week

Queen Zee - Queen Zee



Hot off the DIY scene, Queen Zee release a 10-track debut *Queen Zee*, a varied, excellent and thrilling album that, despite the band outright rejecting the label of 'punk' in interviews, oozes punk from its very ethos and don't-give-one attitude.

There are some comparisons to larger artists that a first listen might initially drive you to make, but it is unfair to do so; Queen Zee make every song their own and provide something for fans of every genre. 'Loner' being the most interesting example, a catchy gut-punch of a starter with a western twang, as well as 'I Hate Your New Boyfriend', which is what Avril Lavigne's 2007 'Girlfriend' might have sounded like for an 18+ audience with a bottle of Smirnoff in hand. Each song is distinctive both stylistically and lyrically, with zero filler; from the raw thrash of 'Sissy Fists' to the angry-mob jab at 'PC gone mad' culture in 'Victim Age'.

As the band's name suggests, deriving from the reclaimed homophobic slur, the band use their music to raise issues. The topics of homophobia and transphobia

are sprinkled evenly throughout – a distinctive, constant flavour that avoids overpowering anything else. 'Boy' is the main exception and phenomenal for it; Queen Zee proving they can masterfully toe the line between serious and cheeky, delivering the latter with a wagging tongue and the former with a slap. Throwaway lines summate struggles of transgender life: "They'll cut you down if you don't cut that hair", but the track develops to retell a transphobic assault.

"They hate me 'cause I'm not like them," becomes, a verse later, "Do you hate me or just want to kiss?" which definitively tilts the album towards a middle-finger-to-the-haters approach.

Clocking in at just over half an hour, it can only really be complained that the album is too short. Other than that, *Queen Zee* is a stellar debut from a staggeringly intriguing group.

Tom Poole

# Gig Round-Up

## Marc Rebillet

Belgrave Music Hall,  
28/01

Marc Rebillet brings his improvised live show to Belgrave Music Hall & Canteen on a freezing January evening and has the sold-out crowd warmed up without a moment's hesitation. His increasingly popular brand of beat-driven comedy is one perfectly suited to today's social media zeitgeist; endlessly watchable and eminently shareable, this is music at its most meme-worthy.

Highlights of the evening - all of which are entirely improvised and often inspired by jeers from members of the audience - include tracks about driving tests, prostate exams and going to bed with "The Lord". The magic of the show lies in this spontaneity, with Rebillet and the crowd bouncing off each other comfortably for the full ninety minutes.

As a debauched version of comic Bill Bailey's performances, the night sometimes bears more similarities to a stand-up show than a traditional gig - that is, until Rebillet's ridiculously funky beats kick in and remind the crowd that they came here to dance.

That such beats are conjured up on the fly highlights Rebillet's astonishing dexterity on his setup. The ease with which he plucks his melodies out of thin air, harmonises with loops of his own voice, and drops all this on top of several layers of intricate percussion prompts audible cries of disbelief throughout the evening.

If there is one critique to be made of this show, it is that its greatest strength is also its greatest weakness: the reality of improv is that sometimes the song ideas are great, but sometimes they aren't. It comes with the territory of spontaneous performance that occasionally the audience is left waiting patiently for the next great idea. After tonight, though, this Leeds crowd will be waiting not-so-patiently for the next time Marc Rebillet rolls into town.

Tom Paul

## White Lies 02 Academy, 03/02



Photo Credit: Amy Brown

White Lies returned to the O2 Academy on the back of their fifth album, FIVE. Opening with 'Time to Give', the first song on the new album, followed by 'There Goes Our Love Again' off Big TV, got the crowd moving, a sight which had frontman Harry McVeigh very happy to be in Leeds once more.

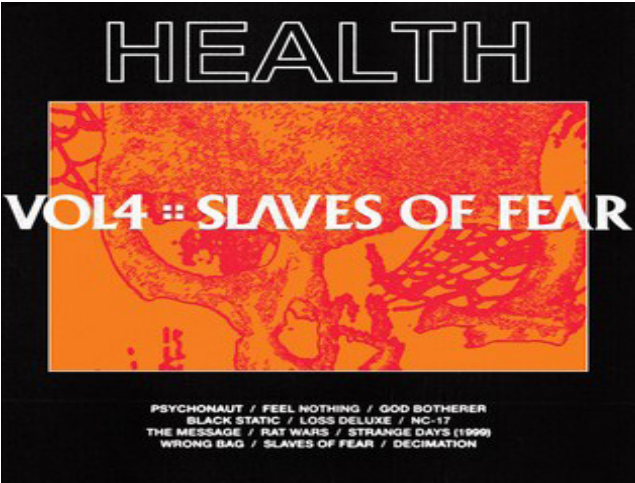
Their new songs, 'Tokyo' and 'Finish Line', have a post-punk influence with a new twist, creating a sound both old and new, as the audience seemed pleased to hear some new songs from the four-piece. New album aside, they played a range of songs from across their other four albums, with fan favourites 'Take It Out On Me', 'Don't Want To Feel It All' and 'Big TV' truly energising the crowd.

The classic old songs, 'Unfinished Business' and 'Bigger Than Us', brought out their traditional alternative-rock sound. For 'Death', a sea of people on shoulders appeared with clapping in unison to the beat and jumping in time to the intense strobe lights.

The encore began with McVeigh performing a moving solo performance of 'Change' on keys, a slower and emotional encore opening but ending with the lively 'To Lose My Life' filled the packed-out venue with applause.

Amy Brown

## HEALTH - Vol. 4 :: SLAVES OF FEAR



Having produced the soundtrack for 2012 video game, *Max Payne 3*, and featuring prominently on the *Atomic Blonde* soundtrack with their cover of New Order's 'Blue Monday' – a phenomenal cover of a classic, in all honesty - HEALTH's successes are sporadic. More likely than not due to their feature on Crystal Castles' cover of HEALTH's own song, 'Crimewave', over ten years ago, the noise-rock band have earned themselves a 'This is:' playlist on Spotify.

New HEALTH release, VOL.4::SLAVES OF FEAR: a 38-minute collection that is, from the start, clearly designed to peddle an experience as a whole rather than a collection of hit singles. Bar the titular 'SLAVES OF FEAR' and midway-marker, 'THE MESSAGE', featuring Code Orange drummer Jami Morgan on vocals, no tracks stand out individually but instead contribute to a continued provocative. It is an album that, in other parts of the country, might go untouched; in the 'edgy Leeds' scene, however, it provides a pummelling and anthemic electronic listen to down your VKs and lace up your Filas.

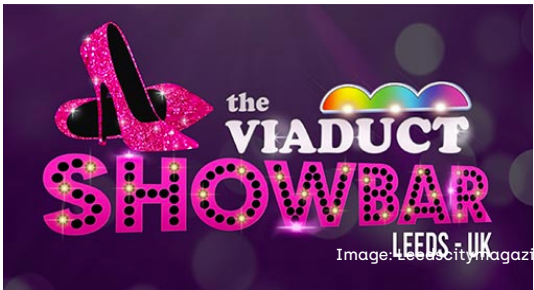
Shared on their Instagram, HEALTH give two tips for listening to SLAVES OF FEAR: play it in order and play it loud. These are not so much tips as mandatory conditions. The swirling atmosphere of impending doom – achieved largely by the pounding electronic, deep bass, and synthetic monotone vocals – can only be fully achieved when the vibrations can be felt through the table.

Essentially, it is good – but nothing original is really occurring here, neither in the case of the style it follows or HEALTH's discography generally, nor does HEALTH do much to tackle the inaccessibility of the genre to newcomers and non-fans. The brooding tone that VOL.4::SLAVES OF FEAR adopts means it is unlikely to often feature as a 'listen' for fans; rather, it seems more appropriately relegated to background music, be that late-night essay procrastination or pre-drinks.

Tom Poole







# 5 Reasons why Viaduct Showbar is the perfect club for every day of the week

Located on Lower Briggate, Viaduct offers nights that cannot dissapoint; from ‘Mouth Off’ lip sync battles on Mondays to “Gaymes” Wednesdays, there is something for everyone to love about Viaduct.

### Cheap Night

Already wondering when the next student loan drops? Viaduct is always free entry, so no need to stress about being in your overdraft! They even have an app for you to win drinks or money off your next round [so far I've won free shots and 50% off!]

### Iconic Photos

Over the summer, Viaduct had a huge revamp and it has payed off. The multicoloured showbar lights in the downstairs bathroom makes a nice contrast from the grey dungeon bathrooms in Beaverworks' basement.

### Free Cabaret Shows

Get down before 12am on Thursdays to Sundays and catch the fully choreographed drag cabaret shows. Witnessing one of these will definitely get you ready for the night, with a DJ taking over with disco and pop tunes until 4am on Friday and Saturday nights!

### Friendly Staff

There's nothing worse than overly aggressive bouncers on a night out. You're unlikely to get that at Viaduct. All the staff, including the bouncers, are really friendly and are genuinely there to ensure everyone is safe and having a

### Gender Neutral Toilets

The Showbar provides a welcoming atmosphere no matter what the individual's race, sexuality, or gender identity. This subtle feature is a perfect exemplar of Viaduct's non-discrimatory atmosphere.

Maz Mansfield-Njie

## 8Profile: Honey Dijon.

I first came across Honey Dijon a couple of years ago in 2016 when she played at Sunfall, a new London festival. She gave an outstanding set as day drifted into night, her sensuous transitions between house and techno created an ethereal but heavy vibe.

Honey Dijon is known for her defiance against being defined by one genre; she is associated with cross-genre sets mostly within Techno and House. Born and raised in Chicago, Honey grew up listening to her parents' Soul and R&B records at home and spent her time collecting records, rummaging through record stores bins and obsessively reading magazines from local book shops. Here, she was exposed to the underground scene of Chicago and the corresponding Detroit Techno scene. Through this, she was introduced to the house legend Derrick Carter, who later became her mentor and life-long friend.

Honey relocated to New York City, where she was introduced to dance label Maxi Records and Danny Tenaglia. To *I'm A House Gangster* she comments that **“Danny heavily influenced my sound as a DJ...the drama of his delivery and risk-taking always informed me of how I wanted to present music.”**

In New York she saw a clear separation of sounds across the different clubs, in comparison to Chicago where in one place and in one night tracks

shifted between diverse genres. Honey didn't like what she heard, so started playing cross-genre sets herself. With her integrity and deep passion, she began to mix her roots of the Windy City and the New York House scene with what was happening at the time: **“since there has been a resurgence of House in Europe, it was the perfect time to pull out a few forgotten classics.”** This is seen in her more recent sets and authentic mixes: additional contemporary European influences.

Honey has not only taken the Disco, House and Techno scene by storm, but was also the DJ behind the soundtrack of the famous Supreme x Louis Vuitton Men's Fashion Week 2017, collaborating closely with former LV Menswear designer Kim Jones for the past 7 years. For this specific show, Honey took inspiration directly from Sound Factory Classics, the renowned New York club from the 80s and 90s. In an interview with HighSnobiety she discusses her relationship with Kim Jones: **“Kim is an avid collector of culture and we share a look of the same interests and thus a deep friendship was born.”**

Honey is also an active speaker on issues surrounding gender in club culture. In her Channel 4 interview on Trans-Visibility, she commented on how DJ culture is dominated by white heterosexual males and how her pride of being black, being a woman and being transgender is a stark contrast against the bleak backdrop of statistics indicating

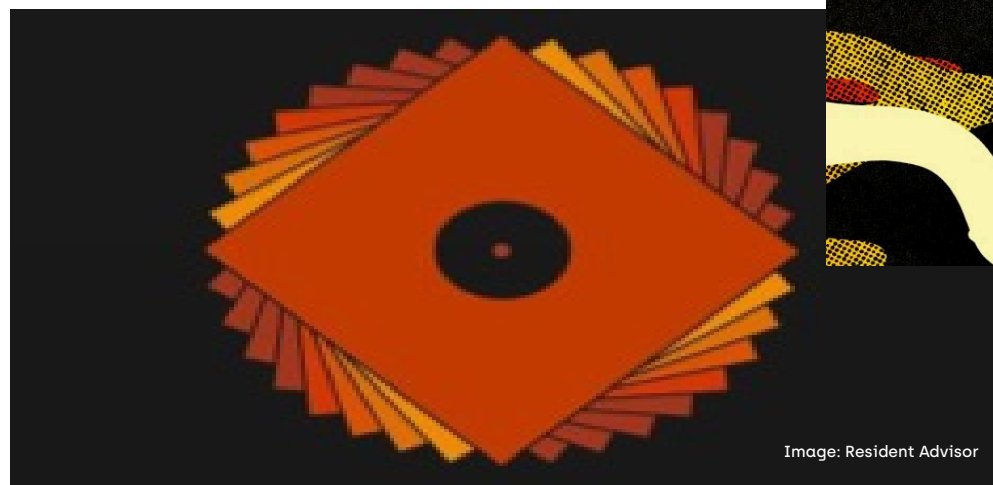


how rare it is to find this, despite the eclectic industry. She believes in strong trans-visibility and wants “to be able to see that there is a possibility for you; that you can do something. You are able to be seen, you matter and you should value that you can contribute to something.”

Honey believes we are only at **“the tipping point of gender and sexual orientation”**, where people can no longer be placed into boxes. Honey's high-profile rise to success is important, especially in helping to highlight how difficult it can be for trans people to find their place in the world.

From once being a show-girl herself -with her own night called A Taste of Honey - to becoming an illustrious DJ with a magnetic energy, Honey believes





# Four Years: On Rotation.

DIY party crew On Rotation have been killing it on the Leeds scene for just over four years. They celebrated this milestone back in November at the cosy Open Source Arts and are now gearing up to start their residency at Wire at the end of this month. Just after the On Rotation birthday event, I caught up with crew members Alex T, Chris L'Anson and Marlon Morris to discuss some of their highlights from the past four years, their plans for the future and favourite nights in Leeds...

**So, four years of On Rotation...tell us about some of the highlights?**

**Alex:** Well I guess the bonus of jumping around venues quite a lot is that you get some very particular highlights; we did Lena Willikens at Blueberry Hill Studios which sold out and that was really good, then we did Vladimir Ivkovic at Wharf Chambers earlier this year and that was also unreal...

**Marlon:** That was definitely the best party Wharf has seen, I think.

**Alex:** Well, the best party that's not Love Muscle. We can't pretend to be on that level but for a party that wasn't Love Muscle...

**Marlon:** He (Vladimir Ivkovic) actually said it was his favourite party that he's played in ages.

**Chris:** There were some stand-out nights at 212 as well - Bruce was a crazy big one.

**Alex:** Yeah we announced it (Bruce at 212 Bar) on the day and then it packed out - he was just playing ambient to a full bar for 45 minutes. Kerrie from Eastern Bloc (Manchester) smashed it at 212 as well - she always brings a massive crew from Manchester so you end up with like 20 people absolutely having it anytime she plays.

**The night at Open Source Arts was a special one, where does it rank in terms of your favourites?**

**Alex:** That was probably like a solid 8.

**Chris:** We haven't done that many big, big nights outside of the 212 residency. The Yarden Party (at Sheaf Street) we did was really fun - doing parties outside is always really different.

**Marlon:** The way that space was set up as well makes it kind of strange but kind of cool at the same time - for once we didn't have to set much up so it definitely ranks quite high from that perspective.

**Alex:** On that note I guess the reason we've not used a lot of these spaces more than once is because, aesthetically, I'm a big believer in the space matching the music that you're playing - so like with Lena Willikens at Blueberry Hill Studios, whilst it was a really sick night, the space didn't always work with the stuff she was playing.

**Can you tell us a bit about your upcoming residency at Wire?**

**Alex:** Basically, we're kind of done with DIY parties, at least for the time being, and with events that are very hard to make your money back on.

**Marlon:** On Rotation's 4th Birthday was a perfect example. Moving into Wire we don't have to be running around all night, worrying about setting up and all that kind of stuff.

**Chris:** We're still gonna do DIY but after four years of losing money...

**Marlon:** Moving into Wire also means we have a much larger pool of people we can book.

**Alex:** Wire have been great. They obviously have their own constraints but they've pretty much handed us a blank slate - they said we can come in and do our thing but essentially we have to make it big.

**Marlon:** To be fair we've gone in hard. Obviously we can't say who they all are but the ideas for the forthcoming parties are several levels above what we've been doing up until now. For most parties it's either a Leeds or UK exclusive for the DJs, otherwise we're not moving the scene forward at all. We just want to open people's minds and show them where the good shit is.

**What about your nights at Eastern Bloc in Manchester?**

**Alex:** Since booking Kerrie all the time we've developed a pretty sweet relationship with them; they'll give us a Saturday every couple of months where we'll come in, bring a guest and just play some tracks and get really drunk. Some of our most popping parties have been at Eastern Bloc - that space is absolute vibes.

**Marlon:** It's tiny, and it's fucking heated, mate. It really is, it's great.

**How did On Rotation actually start out? I'm aware that only one of you is an original member...**

**Chris:** Yeah, that's me. I was at Leeds College of Art but went to BPM (Leeds Uni DJ society) a lot in my first year to meet people. Back then it was only 5 or 6 people but a friend and I managed to get it going again. The next year I ran it with Owen (former On Rotation member), and from there we started the On Rotation residency at 212 bar.

**Marlon:** That was the very start of On Ro - the beginning of the story.

**Chris:** At the time in Leeds it was a lot of big DJs and not many locals - it seemed to be the same big names over and over again. We wanted to try and get more locals in, make it more of an evening rather than a night. Everyone would come down, hear some really good stuff and it'd

be free. There'd be room for a dance but mainly I wanted people to relax and have a chat...

**So how did you two get involved?**

**Alex:** I did the first or second ever guest-slot at 212 and then the loft party, which was the first ever big party we did. After that I played another couple of parties and then they were just like 'do you want to be a resident?'

**Marlon:** For me, when On Rotation did the Lena Willikens night I came along with my housemate to help set up. I went to one or two On Ro's after that and... I can't really remember how but I just remember getting involved soon after. Ever since then it's been going really well. I think we've got a very good balance now of people who like different things and who follow different spheres of artists.

**Alex:** Yeah there was actually a point where Chris was gonna call time on the party... Owen got really sick and had to drop out and then really soon after that Lawrence (another former member) left for Love Muscle, so it was just me and Chris. We ended up having a four-or-five-month period of just like 'is this gonna carry on?'

**Marlon:** I came along at just the right time...(laughs)

**Alex:** It was very much dependent on who joined and what their pedigree was. Owen was very much involved in the networking aspect of the night whilst Lawrence was more about the tunes and the curation but never the promotion. When they both left we had two gaping holes and Marlon has luckily filled both of those for us.

**Marlon:** It's a lot of work but when it comes down to it on the night it's always worth it for a good party. Because it's always a good party.

**Finally, what other parties in Leeds are you guys into?**

**Alex:** Love Muscle, hands down. For me there's not another party like it in the UK.

**Chris:** I love Sub:Terranea... They're always smashing it.

**Alex:** I actually played at this night, Depth, last week and the residents were sick. They were playing like Terry Francis, Craig Richards style 90s tech-house - sometimes you go to these student run parties and they're literally just slamming it out at like 11pm.

**Marlon:** No, those guys (Depth) were playing really good tunes and they're all really nice. Keep an eye out for them!

**On Rotation start their residency at Wire on February 22nd.**



# Fashion: A 'Safe Space' for the LGBTQ+ Community?

The fashion industry has spawned some of the most iconic and influential gay designers, but does it still have a problem with LGBTQ+ discrimination? Tasha Johnson investigates.



Homosexuality and fashion have always been curiously linked, with the ever-prevalent stereotype: 'of course he's gay, look how well dressed he is.' Furthermore, some of the most famous fashion designers have been gay men who have often included statements of queer pride on the runway, such as Christopher Bailey's final show for Burberry in 2018. But does the industry actually respect the talents of gay men, or are they just used as pawns to profit off in much the same way that some designers appropriate black culture in order to present 'original' material? This question is near impossible to answer, since individuals cannot be said to represent a whole community, but the way in which some gay models have been treated in the industry demonstrates that there are still deep-rooted issues to be addressed.

In 2015, John Tuite and Carlos Santolalla became the first openly gay couple to be signed to a major agency as a pair; but when speaking about his experience with Dazed magazine that same

year, Tuite expressed that "my very first experience with modelling was homophobic... The guy that scouted me online immediately told me his agency wouldn't sign me because they 'don't work with gay men.'" Santolalla shared this sentiment, adding, "In NYC, it's pretty common practice for your agent to tell you before signing to not be 'gay' and to 'act like a man' as if being gay demeans your manhood." Similarly, in an interview with i-D magazine, model Marc Sebastian Faiella said his first agents told him to "always carry around my skateboard, never wash my hair, and constantly talk about girls so I would appear 'masculine and bad boy-ish.'"

So why are the standards different for models than they are for designers? It's hard to imagine an uproar about a gay designer wearing a dress or acting 'feminine'. Geoffrey Macnab summed it up best in his 2013 piece for The Independent, discussing the topic of gay Hollywood: "The real issue here, of course, is economics... [Only] gay and lesbian directors, producers, studio heads and

supporting actors can be open about their sexuality as long as it doesn't get in the way of the work." This same logic applies to designers – they aren't the ones whose personal lives and social medias must reflect their own personal brands – or at least not to the same extent as models. If you passed a famous designer on the street, chances are you'd walk straight by. You know the name, but not the face, but often the reverse is true with models.

Though these examples are not the most recent, it appears that in an industry where the most prominent individuals gained recognition decades ago – Valentino was established in 1960, and Versace in 1978 – progress is not being made at the rapid rate one would assume.

Furthermore, facing perhaps the biggest challenge out of all the LGBTQ+ community in the fashion industry is the trans community, who face an inordinate amount of discrimination in all industries and on a daily basis. Nowhere was this attitude clearer than in the recent

controversy over the Victoria's Secret Fashion Show. The brand has been accused of refusing to cast transgender and plus-size models, with Chief Marketing Officer, Ed Razek commenting to Vogue that "we market who we sell to, and we don't market to the whole world [...] it's like, why doesn't your show do this? Shouldn't you have transsexuals in the show? No. No, I don't think we should. Well, why not? Because the show is a fantasy." He has since made a lack-lustre apology for these remarks, though more likely trying to save face for the brand than issuing an authentic statement of support.

There have been notable improvements in the inclusion of transgender models on the catwalk in recent years, as figures such as Hari Nef, Andreja Pejic and Teddy Quinlivan are well on their way to supermodel status, walking for Louis Vuitton, Jean-Paul Gaultier and Jeremy Scott. Nef also became the first openly transgender woman to grace the cover of a major British fashion magazine in 2016, for ELLE's

September issue. Indeed, this last New York Fashion Week (SS19) saw Marco Marco make history by including only transgender models on his catwalk, among them YouTuber Gigi Gorgeous and actress Trace Lysette. Nevertheless, the industry still has major steps to take to normalise the use of transgender models as a significant proportion of their selection. Rather than using one or two famous faces to make a superficial statement of support, trans models should be hired in as many numbers as cisgender models, a practice that will hopefully trickle down from high fashion onto the high street to promote a positive message of inclusion and diversity.

So while the fashion industry has done a lot in the way of accepting and embracing the LGBTQ+ community there is undoubtedly more work to be done. Though potentially not the worst industry for LGBTQ+ discrimination, it still has a long way to go – after all, progress is never a bad thing.



# 5 Gender Neutral Brands to Watch

Caitlin Tilley rounds up the best gender neutral fashion on the high street.

COLLUSION by ASOS



Image: ASOS

Eytys x H&M



Image: Sportswear International

Community Clothing



Image: H&M

One DNA



Image: Pride

Toogood London



Image: Bbook

Targeting Generation Z, the range is designed by a collection of six young designers, models, artists and influencers. Inspired by youth, creativity and collaboration, the wardrobe is authentic and vibrant. The result of a collection “built for a new generation united in their pursuit for inclusivity and representation” is a neutral exploration of sportswear and casual pieces that remain gender non-conforming and designed to mix and match.

Renowned Swedish BFFs, H&M and fellow Swedish cult brand Eytys have teamed up to produce chunky shoes and unisex silhouettes. Shoes are a big part of the range, as well as jackets, t-shirts, sweaters, trousers and jeans in heavy cotton twill, faux patent leather, nylon and raw denim.

Founded by British fashion designer Patrick Grant, Community Clothing is a social enterprise with a simple mission – to make excellent quality affordable clothes for men and women. It offers wardrobe staples such as simple knits, selvedge-denim jeans and Harrington jackets in khaki and navy.

One DNA offers gender neutral basics made in New York. Designers Travis Weaver and Simon Black break down the barrier between womenswear and menswear without sacrificing style. Dubbed by PAPER as gender neutral basics which are “anything but basic”, Refinery29 also rated their hoodie among their “Best Hoodies” in 2017, and the brand has appeared in the 2017 print issues of Vogue España and Instyle.

Designed by sisters Faye and Eria Toogood, the outerwear designs are architectural and take inspiration from tradition workwear, transforming the idea of a uniform into a mark of individuality. They were inspired by the English countryside from an early age, with a tailor grandmother who used to make underwear out of parachutes

Caitlin Tilley

## Harnessgate - Appropriation or Acceptance?

Iona Tompkins reviews Virgil Abloh's debut for Louis Vuitton.

Men's red carpet fashion is traditionally a largely monotonous sea of black tuxedos, rarely receiving more than a passing mention from even the most thorough of fashion critics. Whilst men's fashion itself is incredibly innovative with some of the industry's best talent putting out collections, it has only been in the last few seasons that such innovation has crept onto the red carpet. In recent years, there has been a noticeable shift in the variety of formal menswear, with stylists taking far greater risks.

One such step away from traditional red-carpet style has been the BDSM inspired harness, which has now walked the red carpet 3 times. Jeremy Scott first

dressed Olympian Adam Rippon in a Moschino harness, made visible through a cut-out tux. The look was highly lauded, and in an interview between designer and muse for the Gay Times, Scott praised Rippon saying: “You did it purely. You were a vessel of my creativity”. But it has been the 2019 awards season and Virgil Abloh for Louis Vuitton which has really garnered attention as both Timothée Chalamet and Michael B Jordan have worn versions of what Abloh has instead decided to call a ‘bib’, a comment which has not been well-received within the LGBTQ+ community.

Virgil Abloh's portrayal of the harnesses during his debut presentation at Vuitton appears to have kickstarted the harness'

sudden resurgence in the public eye. Yet to claim that Abloh has been the first major designer to decontextualize the male harness from its BDSM birthplace would be inaccurate. Design titans such as Alexander McQueen, Dries Van Noten and Helmut Lang have all featured harnesses within previous menswear collections.

Abloh's decision to mislabel the garment has been viewed by some as a cowardly choice as the designer chose to avoid the item's rich LGBTQ+ history. Considering this fact, it is understandable that members of the LGBTQ+ community might express concerns as to the integrity of this recent surge in popularity, especially given the

notoriously fickle and fleeting tenure of many trends in the fashion industry.

Yet, in other ways, Louis Vuitton continues to blur the boundaries of masculinity in this #MeToo era and indeed, Jeremy Scott himself has praised the house's use of androgynous models. Plus, Abloh's inaugural collection was presented on a rainbow flag catwalk.

Ultimately, for many, the harness may still represent far more than an accessory, and it should be worn only with consideration and understanding of its LGBTQ+ roots.



Iona Tompkins



# You Should Be Following...

Georgie Wardall runs down a list of movers and shakers in the LGBTQ+ community to add to your feed for a dose of style inspiration.

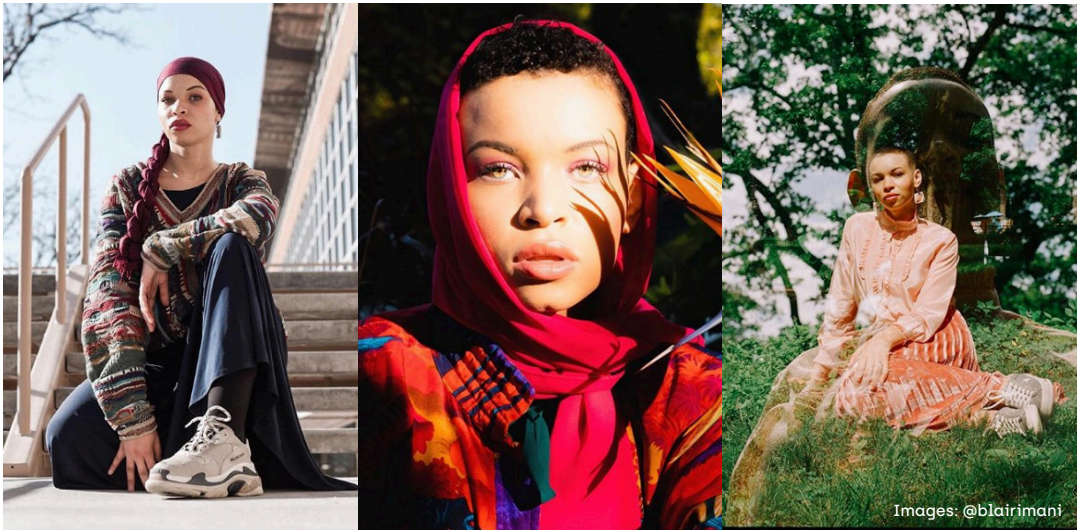
Nikita Dragun



Insta handle: @nikita\_dragun  
Age: 23  
Occupation: Social media influencer  
Followers: 3.8M

*Why you should follow:* Transgender influencer Nikita Dragun made waves on social media when she responded to the transphobic comments made by a Victoria's Secret exec by making her own Victoria's Secret ad. Captioning it "here I am as a TRANS WOMAN selling the FANTASY!" the video, posted on Instagram, has eleven million views to date. If that's not enough reason to follow her, her bodacious style certainly is: her outfits are unashamedly glamorous and eye-grabbing.

Blair Imani



Insta handle: @blairimani  
Age: 25  
Occupation: Activist  
Followers: 35.9K

*Why you should follow:* Blair Imani is a queer Muslim activist who founded non-profit organisation Equality For HER, a service promoting educational resources around diversity, representation and gender to empower women and non-binary people. Her style blends striking patterns with bold contrasts and her outfits normally feature the headscarf, in an unapologetically bright colour, traditionally worn by Muslim women.

Phillip Picardi



Insta handle: @pfpicardi  
Age: 27  
Occupation: Journalist and editor  
Followers: 59.6K

*Why you should follow:* Editor-in-chief of Out magazine, Phillip Picardi transformed Teen Vogue during his time working for Condé Nast by focusing on political and social issues in the magazine's content and by launching digital magazine Them for Condé Nast, celebrating the lives, stories and voices of LGBTQ+ people. It comes as no surprise that his style is impressively in-tune with the top trends of the moment, and his outfits are a devastatingly effective amalgamation of fashion elements that derive from vastly different cultural points.

Charlie Craggs



Insta handle: @charlie\_craggs  
Age: 23  
Occupation: Activist and author  
Followers: 9,786

*Why you should follow:* Charlie Craggs is the founder of Nail Transphobia, an organisation that aims to tackle misconceptions about being transgender, educate people about transgender issues, and create allies for transgender people by giving manicures and talking about transgender experience. The profits from her nail art brand, Nail It, all go to Nail Transphobia. Craggs' style is at once sophisticated and simple as she wears classic blazers, jackets and dresses.



# A Romance for the Ages: The LGBTQ+ Community in the Fashion Industry

Tasha Johnson looks at the impact LGBTQ+ people have had on our favourite designers, models and trends.

The enormous influence the LGBTQ+ community has had in the world of fashion is no secret. In honour of 2019's LGBTQ+ Month, we're celebrating the astronomical impact that the LGBTQ+ community has had on the iconic fashion pieces we yearn for (I'm looking at you, crocodile print YSL clutch), as well as the trends we wear day in, day out and take for granted.



Credit: De Fressange La Ines Karl



Credit: W magazine



Credit: Antonio D'Amico



Credit: Gareth Fuller



Credit: @zandwagon



Credit: @zandwagon

## Models

LGBTQ+ influence doesn't just stop at designers; with the industry growing more and more inclusive, there are an increasing number of LGBTQ+ models gracing the runways. I think I can speak for the vast majority of us when I say that Cara Delevingne and her fabulous bone structure make us all weep with jealousy. Other LGBTQ+ models include the likes of Isis King, the first trans woman on America's Next Top Model; Laith Ashley, Munroe Bergdorf and Laverne Cox. Cox is, technically, an actress, rather than a model, but following her closing of 11 Honoré's first runway show on 7th February 2019, people have been calling for her to be given a modelling contract - so watch this space.

## Designers

Some of the most iconic collections have been cultivated by gay designers. The world's most quintessential fashion brands have been the result of a gay man's love affair with fashion and the expression of self through clothes. Some names you'll undoubtedly recognise include Valentino, established by Valentino Garavani in 1960; Yves Saint Laurent, established by Yves Saint Laurent and his partner Pierre Bergé in 1961; Versace, established by Gianni Versace in 1978; and Alexander McQueen, established by its namesake in 1992.



Credit: Jamie Stoker



Credit : Andrew H. Walker



Credit: Kevin Mazur

## LGBTQ+ Icons

Another way in which the LGBTQ+ community has influenced and continues to influence the fashion community is through the looks that LGBTQ+ icons serve us on the red carpets. Pictured to the immediate right is actress Lena Waithe at the 2018 Met Gala. This was a particularly ballsy and iconic moment, given that the theme was Heavenly Bodies: Fashion and the Catholic Imagination, combined with the Catholic church's long history of homophobia.

## Trends

It is near impossible to credit any one singular person or community with creating a trend, however several of our favourite fashion trends are widely believed to have been started, or at the least popularized, by the LGBTQ+ community. These include plaid shirts, tie dye, suspenders and neck bandanas, as well as many more.



# In Defence of Insta-Poetry



It was a truth universally acknowledged by academics, teachers, parents and publishers that young people no longer cared about literature. In an age where social media can provide instant gratification, why go to the trouble of reading anything longer than a tweet?

However, statistics from UK book sales show that sales grew by just over 12% last year. Even more surprisingly, in 2018, a total of 1.3m volumes of poetry were sold. Additionally, a YouTube channel for spoken word poetry, Button Poetry, has nearly 430,000 subscribers, and the Academy of American Poets reaches more than 350,000 readers with its digital 'Poem-A-Day' series. So, to those of you who would despondently lament the demise of this dying 'art form', I challenge you to put down your paperbacks and turn your attention to Instagram instead. This social media outlet provides a platform for the newly dubbed 'Instagram Poets', who are redefining poetry's reputation and making it an integral part of woke millennial culture.

These multifaceted Insta-poets are digitally astute entrepreneurs and artists, who have managed to turn pithy statements into a budding literary genre.

**Are the so-called 'Instagram Poets' destroying poetry or resurrecting it? Hattie Graham takes a closer look at social-media based poetry and its effects on the long standing art form.**

Rupi Kaur, now a household name, has over 3.3 million Instagram followers and her debut collection, *Milk and Honey*, has been translated into 40 languages and sold 3.5 million copies, overtaking *The Odyssey* as the best selling poetry book. Kaur's delicate fusion of aphoristic poems and childlike doodles is an entirely new concept to the world of poetry. Her catch-all material covers themes from love, healing, abuse, immigration and female beauty standards. These topics are all popular avenues for debate on social media, which makes her a modern poet for a modern audience. Furthermore, Cleo Wade partnered with Gucci to produce a series of artworks in honour of International Women's Day. These simple yet poignant statements included "women of the world: we see you we hear you we are you" and "we do not change the world when we whisper we change it when we roar."

As is always the way, for every loyal fan there is an ardent critic – with every Susannah comes a Piers. It seems the contempt for 'urban outfitters poetry' is as strong as its popularity. This of course is completely understandable. The brouhaha caused by the arrival of the Insta-poets has upset the literary status quo and I can imagine some poetry purists are reluctant to regard such muses like "If you are not enough for yourself / you will never be enough for someone else", as being similar to those of Byron or Wordsworth. Furthermore, critics have been quick to argue that this style of poetry does not encourage a deep and intellectual engagement from the reader. How can they when the extent of their engagement is limited to a double tap on a screen? There is of course the argument that this form of poetry is perpetuating the overall idealistic aspect of Instagram; after all, this is the place where normal people are shown ideal lifestyles, travel, fashion and beauty. Perhaps the infamous Insta-poets are no more than the products of this heavily marketed idealised philosophy.

Despite these critiques, the popularity of Instagram poetry continues to grow. This support stems from the perfect equilibrium between adept technology and public desire for universally candid and personal accounts of the world. Never before has it been so easy to share personal

views and many others can also relate to them. The inspirational narrative of a self-made poet is also part of the reason why people gravitate towards it so much; their work is unfettered by publishers, who no longer act as the gatekeepers to success and repute. Instagram is an excellent platform for artists whose work may have been otherwise marginalised by literary tycoons. What most Instagram poems have in common is an accessibility not found in the traditional literary canon, and the emotional relatability found in TED Talks and motivational quotes. It is this relatability, which makes this style of poetry so resonant. In a world of divisions, it is comforting to find people who think just like you. Also, many Insta-poets focus on hard-hitting topics such as mental health. The popularity of such poetry could be attributed to a desire to face the difficult subjects head on, rather than ignoring their existence and reading poetry about daffodils instead.

Fights such as these about artistic taste are quite often founded in hostile cultural stereotypes – a critique of the audience as much as the author. The division between so-called 'high' and 'low' culture is at the heart of the Insta poet debate. Perhaps Rupi Kaur's literary downfall was that she engaged with a demographic whose taste is synonymous with One Direction and Topshop Joni jeans. The past ten years have seen a massive acceleration towards equality and diversity, why then should this not be applicable to the arts? The snobbery and exclusivity of the traditional literary canon has no place in our brave new world. Poetry, like everything else, must adapt to this changing world or risk extinction. Then again, what actually is poetry? Is it words put to paper hundreds of years ago, now bound and cloistered in the poetry section of Waterstones? Or is it something broader, malleable and culturally inclusive? Either way, it seems as if the Insta-poets are here to stay.

**Hattie Graham**



# Ella Carter on Directing *Blue Stockings*

Arts writer  
Connie Dimsdale  
catches up with  
Ella Carter on  
her first directing  
role, working with  
a team of 24 and  
*Blue Stockings'*  
contemporary  
resonance.



Image: Ella Carter

**Hi Ella, first of all, can you tell me a little bit about yourself?**

I am in my 4th year doing English and Theatre, as I took a year out and went to Canada on my year abroad. I really wanted to make the most of my final year, so I've been getting more involved with societies. I assistant directed *Shut Up Helen* last term, and now I'm directing *Blue Stockings*.

**What's the play about?**

The play tells the story of one of the first female campaigns for female graduation. It follows the story of students at Cambridge University in 1896 across an academic year. As the year progresses the female students get more involved in campaigning because women could go to University to study and take exams, but they couldn't graduate with a certificate. Their male peers, who had been in the same classes as them all year would get a degree, but the women just came out with the stigma around being an intellectual woman. There were lots of studies going on at the time, which are in the play, trying to prove that the more a woman used her brain in an academic setting, the less efficient her body was, so the less she was able to reproduce. A woman could either go to university and ruin her chances of being a mother and a wife, or she could set aside her ambitions and become a mother.

**It's set a long time ago but still seems relevant to contemporary discussions surrounding gender roles.**

Definitely. It's really relevant, which is actually why I decided to propose it. I'm also writing my final year project on the history of female education, so they work really nicely together. The play is really applicable to student theatre as the actors are playing characters who are the same age as them and in the same setting, just many years in the future. It's really interesting for them to see how different it was in the past and, at the read-through, people couldn't believe what they were reading in the script. They were especially shocked that there were studies trying to prove that women were less efficient as mothers if they were intelligent. By the end of the read-through everyone was so excited, there was such a good buzz around it.

**How have your rehearsals been going so far?**

Really well. We had an all-day rehearsal on Sunday with some of the lead actors, getting them more acquainted with their own characters and their relationships with other characters. We had our first whole cast rehearsal on Monday night, and we did the opening scene, which made me very excited. It looks very cool - it's atmospheric, there's lots of music and it's set at a train station so there's smoke and people walking in and out. That was really exciting for me because that's when it all came together. Suddenly having a room full of 24 people who are all working together to make my vision a reality.

**What's it like being the director of 24 people?**

It's fine, I've done a lot of work with people before. I ran camps in the summer with 16-

year olds so in comparison to some teenagers these lot are a dream! I proposed this concept for a show alone so it's crazy to think I've actually got a group of 24 people who are working hard to make my ideas come together. It's a really good feeling.

**As you were saying at the beginning, the characters are at a similar stage in their lives to us, at university. How are you going to make the historical context clear and how will you ensure that actors don't just play themselves?**

It's written into the language a lot. Even though the play was written in 2013, the writer, Jessica Swale, has adopted the language of the 1890s so that naturally makes it a bit easier. I've been playing with people's body language and the way people speak. We've got some people who perhaps need to alter their accent a little bit to fit into the period. The women who were at university were all from the Southern counties so we're going to have to change the accent of anyone who's Northern!

With the boys, it's really important to differentiate between the times because there is this 'laddy' culture. They're playing boys who are very educated - but then in other respects they're uneducated, in that they don't understand why the women are at university or why the women should be equal to them. It's very important that the boys realise that they're representing a whole different attitude while having the same playful tendencies as they would with their mates at uni but making sure that it doesn't cross over too much.

**What about the female characters? Are they equally as funny and three dimensional?**

They definitely are. There is a difference between the boys and the girls because the boys have been at uni for a while, so they've already bonded, whereas the girls are much more tentative at the beginning. But it's really nice to see the progression throughout the play as the girls get to know each other more, getting more comfortable with one another. At the end, the girls definitely have same group chemistry as the boys do. Women are very much the crux of the storyline in this play.

**I'm very excited to come and see it! What would you say to anyone thinking of directing a play in the future?**

I would say, never direct something or put on a play because you feel like you should, or because you feel like other people would like it; it first and foremost has to resonate with you and your interests. Once the director has a genuine love for what they're creating, the cast, crew, and audience are likely to follow suit!

**And finally, what is your favourite line from the play?**

"They say you don't have the capacity to be scholars. So read everything. Learn everything. Know the philosophers and then think for yourselves."

Connie Dimsdale

*Blue Stockings* will be at Stage@Leeds from February 28th until March 2nd.



# Spotlight on: LGBTQ+ Talent



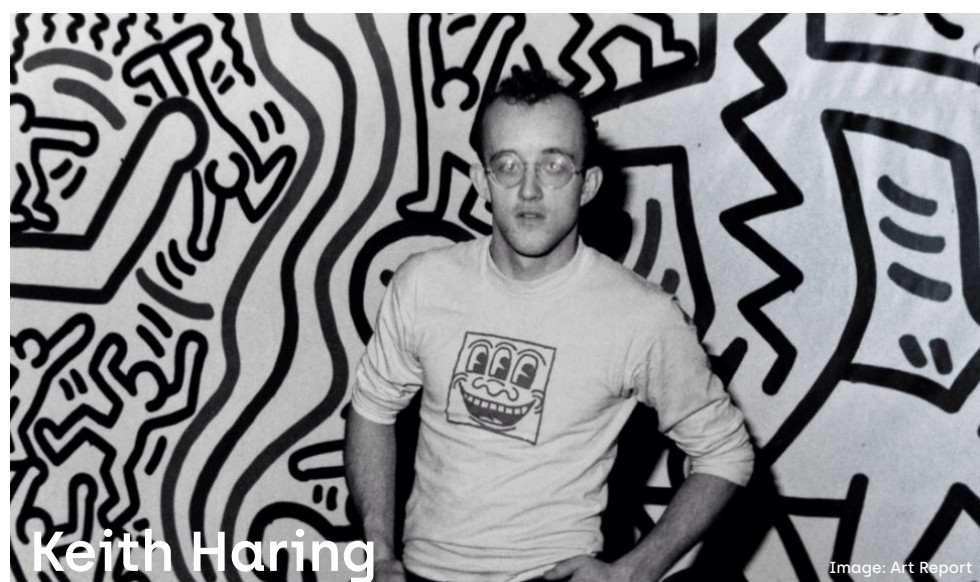
When recounting the most memorable performance artists of the last century, it's hard to think of anyone more transgressive and riotous than avant-garde provocateur Genesis P-Orridge. Long before Hull was named the nation's city of culture, P-Orridge and their East Yorkshire art collective COUM Transmissions could be found shocking the conservative society of 70s Britain by exposing its hypocritical morality through a "fab and kinky" body of work. Examples include a string of industrial art rock albums and an erotic photographic exhibition entirely staffed by prostitutes, transvestites and punks which led to Tory MP Nicholas Fairbairn labelling them "wreckers of Western civilization." Identifying as third gender, P-Orridge has explored the boundaries of the physical body throughout their career and embarked on the Pandrogeny Project with their wife Lady Jaye, an attempt to unite as a single entity through extensive surgical body modification. Despite drawing heavy criticism from the press, government and even the British arts scene, P-Orridge remains one of the most ground-breaking and influential innovators this country has ever produced.

Alex Gibbon



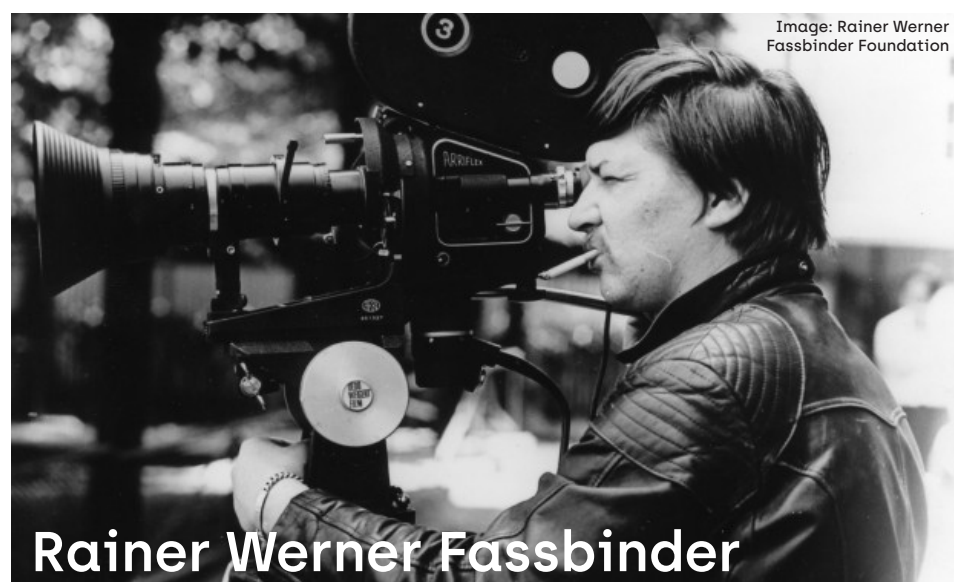
Working in New York City, painter Kehinde Wiley, whilst being a recognised name in the American art scene from the early 2000s, gained global acclaim in 2017 when he was commissioned to paint Barack Obama's portrait for the Smithsonian National Portrait Gallery's collection of official presidential portraits. Specialising in naturalistic portraits of people of colour, Wiley's vibrant paintings often reference the works of Old Masters in order to both critique art historical norms whilst simultaneously elevating and empowering his everyday subjects. Whilst tackling issues of race and the status of young African American men within contemporary society, Wiley also challenges pre-existing notions of masculinity in his work, setting his male subjects against intricately patterned backgrounds and often over-laying them with flowers, a traditional symbol of femininity.

Hannah Stokes



American artist Keith Haring came out in the 1980s against a background of political conservatism in which homosexuality was still not fully accepted. Haring's work is highly recognisable from the playful and colourful graffiti-style visual motifs of crawling babies, dogs, angels and hearts made up of distinct fluid simplistic lines and bright, bold colours. His images are highly accessible, allowing his work to be widely appreciated and enjoyed by a diverse range of people, saying himself that the people viewing his work "were not the people I saw in the museums or galleries but a cross-section of humanity that cut across all boundaries." Haring merges the aesthetic appeal of his iconic cartoon-like graffiti imagery with serious political aims, representing the struggles of the LGBTQ+ community and creating work focused upon issues such as homophobia, racism, drug addiction and the 1980s AIDS epidemic. Haring died from AIDS related complications in 1990, and his artistic and political legacy still lives on today through both his work as well as the Keith Haring foundation which is committed to education, research and care related to AIDS. Haring's use of energetic distinct pop-art like imagery combined with his political aims is one of the reasons why him and his work are still so important and prolific today.

Madeleine Gauci Green



Rainer Werner Fassbinder's whirlwind 15-year career, in which he directed 45 films spanning from 1967 to 1982, established him as a pioneer of the New German Cinema movement. His proudly gay identity meant themes of marginalisation permeated his personal life and manifested within his films, including highlights such as *Ali: Fear Eats The Soul*, and his idiosyncratic directorial style was integral in creating this isolation of his subjects. This was fully realised in 1975's *Fox and His Friends*; revolutionary in showing homosexuality as a normal facet of the characters' lives instead of their core problem, and unique in its portrayal of class issues as destructive and alienating within gay culture. In Fassbinder's final film before his death, *Querelle* (a rare adaptation of a gay author by a gay filmmaker), he articulates his struggle with ideas of gay masculinity through extravagant and oppressive artificial sets and lighting, and often uncomfortably explicit sexual content. Far too complex to unpack in a paragraph, Fassbinder's influence on LGBTQ+ art was profound in his examination of how and why gay culture is portrayed through film.

Jack Higgins





Robert Mapplethorpe, born in 1946, was best known as a photographer and a kingpin in the 1970s art scene in New York City. He worked mainly in large scale black and white photography which incorporated a range of themes but focused especially on homoeroticism; Mapplethorpe didn't seek to produce overtly political work, merely focusing on what he found beautiful. His most well-known pieces capture the subjects of the BDSM scene in New York in the late 1960s, however the controversial content of this work meant he suffered from censorship throughout his career and rarely gained public funding. He also photographed many of his friends and peers, including singer Patti Smith, who wrote a memoir entitled *Just Kids* about their relationship. He died aged 46, one of the first high profile victims of AIDS. This, alongside his often censored work, has led to his remembrance as a key figure in the struggle for gay liberation.

Alex Chitty



W.H. Auden is an important Anglo-American poet of the 20th Century. Born in York and educated at Oxford University, Auden emigrated to America and eventually became a US citizen. In New York he met Chester Hallam, who became his life-long partner. Auden's works have been lauded for his command of form and technique, as well as his astute attention to ideas of anti-fascism, morality, and his commitment to a Christian God. However, it is Auden's romantic poems, many dedicated to his lover Chester Hallam, that arguably have the most poignant impact on modern readers. Auden's passionate expressions of queer lust and love represent a brave contribution to LGBTQ+ literary history, writing predominately at a time when homosexuality was still a criminal offence. Perhaps Auden's most popular work is 'Funeral Blues', which is touchingly read in the film *Four Weddings and A Funeral* by Matthew in response to the death of his partner, Gareth. If you only read one Auden poem, read this: it is near on impossible to not shed a tear at this iconic portrayal of everlasting love.

Lucy Keitley



Bristol-born Travis Alabanza is a performer, writer and theatre-maker whose 2017 poetry book *Before I Step Outside [You Love Me]* is composed entirely of works inscribed in the public domain. The experience of publicity is a key theme of Alabanza's work: "Unfortunately, as a trans person, particularly a trans person of colour, we birth skills of survival. We all know the tricks, the areas we can't walk through at night, we talk to each other about the tactics to use to stay alive", Alabanza told a reporter. In *Burgerz*, their recent performance piece at London's Hackney Showroom, Alabanza's onstage burger cooking theatrically conceptualises the experience of having a burger thrown at them on public transport. Their art is a vehicle for processing the complexities of gendered and racial oppression.

Katherine Corcoran



Born and raised in the nearby city of Bradford, David Hockney took inspiration from Yorkshire throughout his life and it is very much reflected in his work - for example the 'A Bigger Picture' exhibition, which explored the East Yorkshire Landscape through various mediums. More poignantly, however, as a gay man, Hockney endeavoured throughout his career to represent gay relationships and non-traditional gender roles, seen especially in his work completed in Los Angeles. He frequently depicts his partners or other gay friends, normalising their representation in mainstream art, and his use of bright colour is seen as a subtle defiance towards the macho art scene. His work is undoubtedly unique, and acts as a reminder of the importance and value of LGBTQ+ artists.

Honor Chilton



Juliana Huxtable is an American artist working predominantly in the mediums of photography, music and poetry, often blurring the lines between the three. As a transgender woman, Huxtable tackles issues of art, gender and human rights as well as religion in her work, as she was raised in a conservative Baptist home in Texas. Focusing largely on self-portraiture, a key work by Huxtable is a series of photographs in which she inserted images of herself into desert landscapes inspired by the religious group Nuwaubian Nation. Huxtable also uses her own personal experience of gender transitioning in a number of her works, such as the series *Seven Archetypes*, as well as addressing more general issues of gender and sexism and the way these intersect with race. Exhibiting and performing in high profile venues such as the Museum of Modern art in New York and the Institute of Contemporary Arts in London, Huxtable continues to thrive as frontrunner of the New York LGBTQ+ art scene.

Hannah Stokes



Gertrude Stein's art collection remains to be not only a key piece of modernist art, but art history as a whole. Her close-knit Paris salon circle was comprised of the likes of Matisse, Renoir, Cezanne, Picasso and Toulouse-Lautrec. Stein's keen eye for not only exceptional people, but also the art they produced, established her as an iconic figure of the first half of the 20th century. She was a hostess, a collector, and a writer. It is worth mentioning that she achieved all of this as a Jewish orphan, who was in a relationship with a woman (Alice B. Toklas) and later lived in Nazi-occupied France. Bold, charismatic and intimate, the career Stein formed for herself matched the unapologetic nature of her identity, as well as opening the eyes of many to the brilliance of her peers' works.

Kate McCaughey



# LGBTQ+ History Month with Lifestyle and Culture

February is LGBTQ+ History Month, a month dedicated to improving awareness of LGBTQ+ lives and histories. The month’s celebrations are paramount, now more than ever, as the visibility of LGBTQ+ people and their history continues to be attacked – in recent times.

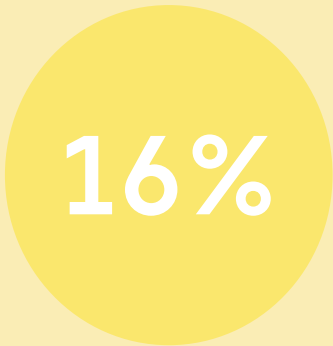
If it's a fact you're not acquainted with, the statistics throw the inequality faced by LGBT people into stark relief. A poll superintended by StoneWall and YouGov found that, in 2017:



of transgender people had experienced a hate crime or incident.



of LGBTQ+ people who experienced a hate crime or incident didn't report it to the police for fear they wouldn't be taken seriously.



of lesbian, gay and bisexual people had experienced a hate crime or incident because of their gender identity or sexual orientation, a figure which had risen by 78% compared to 2013.



of LGBTQ+ people avoided certain streets because they don't feel safe there as an LGBTQ+ person.



of LGBTQ+ people didn't feel comfortable holding their partners hand walking down the street.

It's clear, despite the leaps and bounds made in terms of LGBTQ+ rights and the fight for equality, we still have a long way to go. That's why LGBTQ+ History Month is so important.

The main targets of the month are to increase visibility of LGBTQ+ people; their history, lives and experiences, and to promote LGBTQ+ welfare. As stated on the LGBT History Month website, the month aims to do this by:

- Increasing visibility of LGBTQ+ experiences in the curriculum and culture

of educational institutes, other institutes, and the wider community.

- Raising awareness of matters affecting LGBTQ+ people.
- Encouraging educational institutes and other institutes to include a safe space for LGBTQ+ people
- Promoting the welfare of LGBTQ+ people by enabling them to reach their full potential.

It's true that, as a society, we all benefit from the inclusion and empowerment of LGBTQ+ people. With greater support

from educational institutions, and with wider acceptance from society, LGBTQ+ people can be fully empowered to contribute more and to receive more from the world we all share. The reality is that many still live in fear of the aggression they may meet for their gender identity or sexual orientation, or of the threat posed by others which can make them shy away from their true selves.

Not only that, it is surely a basic human right that we feel safe and accepted for who we are. This may be something some

take for granted, but for others, it's an everyday struggle. LGBTQ+ History Month reminds those in a place of privilege that it is equally their duty to support LGBTQ+ people from inequality as it is LGBTQ+ individuals' need to fight for their rights.

To find out how you can get involved and make a difference, visit <https://lgbthistorymonth.org.uk/about/>

Georgie Wardall



# Celebrate LGBTQ+ History Month with these 5 Incredible Queer Novels

This month, it is time to honour the lives and achievements of the rainbow community as we celebrate LGBTQ+ History Month. The rich tapestry of queer history is one that is often side-lined and overshadowed, yet luckily there is a wealth of literature that beautifully and sincerely chronicles the LGBTQ+ experience of both past and present.



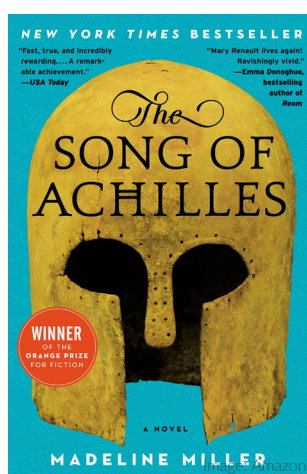
Oranges Are Not the Only Fruit  
Jeanette Winterson

This coming-of-age story about a young girl adopted into a working-class Northern community by evangelists is without doubt a must-read in the canon of queer literature. A semi-autobiographical work based on her own childhood, Winterson's novel interweaves the pains of a teenage identity crisis with the comically farcical fanaticism of an intense religious community as her protagonist uses her fervent enthusiasm for her faith to make sense of love's overwhelming strength. Such a bittersweet story tied together with an irresistibly charming wit is sure to enthrall all who read it.



A Single Man  
Christopher Isherwood

Following a day in the life of George, a professor who is left despondent after the sudden tragic death of his love, Jim, *A Single Man* is a study of the struggles of coming to terms with bereavement and loneliness. Isherwood offers us a perceptively nuanced portrayal of grief balanced with a protagonist with a gift for hilariously sardonic social observation, resulting in a novel that is in equal parts charming and sorrowful.



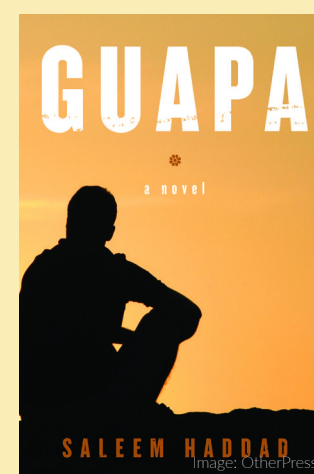
The Song of Achilles  
Madeline Miller

Painstakingly written over a 10 year period, Miller's compelling reworking of Homer's *Iliad* is more than just well-written high-brow fan fiction; it is a stunning love story that throws the reader into bouts of jubilation, pathos and hot-blooded passion. *The Song of Achilles* re-examines the relationship between Greek warrior Achilles and his fellow soldier and confidant, Patroclus, as a tragic romance that is tested against the worrying promise of an incoming war and choice between the human heart or immortal glory. Expect all the heightened drama, mythical mania and brutal bloodshed of a typical Classical Epic shrouded in the most compelling and absorbing love affair that history forgot.



Orlando  
Virginia Woolf

Gypsy tribes, a London ice age and numerous chance encounters with some of history's most famous characters all combine in this fictional biography to create the most magical, gender-bending, time-travelling adventure literature has ever seen. *Orlando* spans several centuries as the titular protagonist hurtles through time; days, months and years become as fluid as gender in the novel with the main character undergoing a mystical sex-change at the story's midpoint. Although this riotously entertaining caper is arguably Woolf's most accessible work, its pioneering examination of women's changing role in society, unorthodox sexuality and being transgender certainly mark the book as well ahead of its time.



Guapa  
Saleem Haddad

An impressive debut from the recipient of 2017's Polari First Book Prize, Saleem Haddad crafts a heart-wrenching love story that lies amidst the dust of a fractured and crumbling nation. Set over the period of a single day, *Guapa* follows Rasa, a young gay man caught between two worlds: the free-spirited hedonism of the city's clandestine gay scene and the ruthless tyranny of a tempestuous post-Arab Spring dictatorship. While perfectly encapsulating the stifling isolation of closeted life, Haddad masterfully depicts the harrowing pain of a destructive relationship that mirrors its own surroundings.



# LGBTQ+ TV Characters who Grabbed our Attention [and Hearts] in 2018

2018 was a landmark year, with the highest ever number of LGBTQ+ characters represented in TV shows. Here is a look at some of our favourites who have pushed the boundaries of LGBTQ+ representation:

## Sophia Burset - Orange is the New Black

Sophia Burset is a trans woman who is imprisoned in the Litchfield Penitentiary, the suffocating and brutal setting of *Orange is the New Black*. In the lead up to the fifth season, her backstory was revealed. She committed credit card fraud in order to finance her gender reassignment surgery, and it was her son who turned her in as he was having trouble processing her transition.

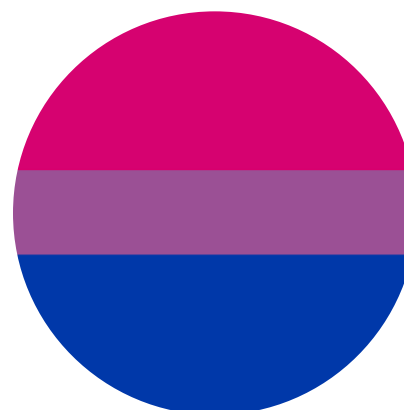
Despite being the only trans woman in the prison, and thus frequently facing aggressive transphobic comments from fellow inmates, Sophia is generally shown to be kind, witty and upbeat. While working as a hair stylist in the prison salon, she also works to make herself look as good as she can with the limited resources available. She's fierce and stands up for herself, not allowing anyone to mistreat her.



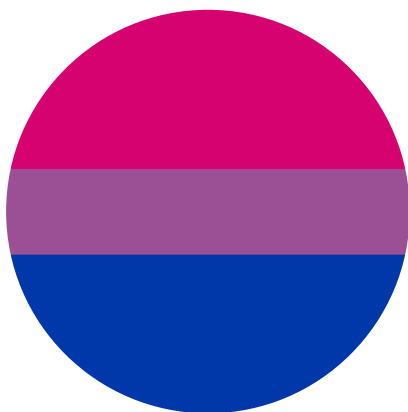
## Villanelle - Killing Eve

A brutal fictional assassin and openly bisexual, *Killing Eve*'s Villanelle quickly becomes involved in a game of cat-and-mouse with titular character Eve. As the series progresses, Villanelle's backstory is revealed: she is an orphan with a violent reputation, who once developed an obsession for an older, nurturing, female French teacher – and who castrated the instructor's husband due to her jealous infatuation.

Villanelle has been described as "a manic pixie dream assassin who's as charming as she is psychopathic", a "chillingly relatable monster" who takes "fulsome pleasure in a murder well performed." An innocent exterior hides a cold brutality, though she is also exceptionally gifted, completely soulless, rude and funny. She is twisted and conscienceless, but also irrepressible. In other words, a proper psychopath. Author Rachel Monroe writes, "when a woman commits a crime, she's not only transgressing laws, she's transgressing gender roles."



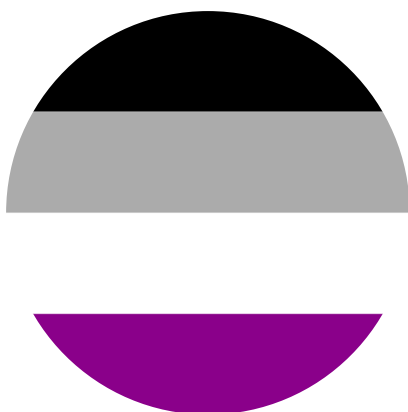




## Darryl Whitefeather - Crazy Ex-Girlfriend

There are many reasons why *Crazy Ex-Girlfriend* is one of the best shows on television, but its diverse representation of human sexuality is up there. Darryl Whitefeather is the sentimental and clueless owner of a real estate law firm where the main character - Rebecca - works. He is a middle-aged divorcee whose love and devotion to his daughters makes him one of the most endearing characters on the show.

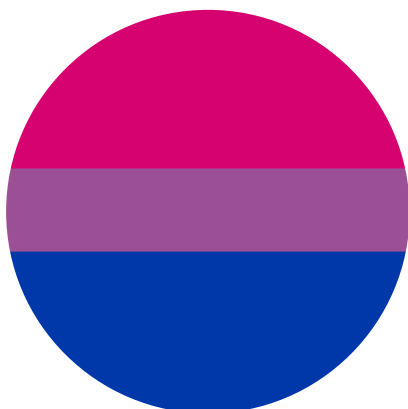
As the series progresses, we see Darryl come to terms with his bisexuality, which leads to one of the best coming out moments to ever grace the small screen. To his coworkers' embarrassment and the audience's delight, he launches into an upbeat song about 'Gettin' Bi' that involves keytars and saxophones against the backdrop of the bisexual flag. A true bisexual icon whose sexual fluidity is never questioned or dismissed.



## Todd Chavez - BoJack Horseman

In a remarkable first in TV, *BoJack Horseman* introduced the first canonically asexual character in the form of free-spirited and bumbling Todd Chavez. His revelation about his sexuality, or respectfully lack thereof, comes when his close friend tries to come onto him. While he flirts with her, he shows no interest in taking their relationship beyond that. While he is not interested in sex, he does search for love, even coming up with strange, yet ingenious ideas to reach his goal.

It is amazing to see in the televisual medium - where 'sex sells' - that it is not impossible to portray asexuality in a thoughtful and engaging way. We hope to see more varied and diverse asexual characters in the future.



## Rosa Diaz - Brooklyn Nine-Nine

It would be impossible to make this list without including at least one character from *Brooklyn Nine-Nine*. While Andre Braugher's groundbreaking turn as Captain Holt, the stoically hilarious captain of the 99th precinct - whose race and sexuality are as much a part of his identity as his intelligence and dry wit - is not to be overlooked, it is Rosa Diaz's recent arc in season 5 that involves her coming out as bisexual to the squad and to her parents.

Her coming out is received with a mix of love and support from her squad, but it leaves her relationship with her parents strained. It was incredible seeing this veritable badass show her vulnerable side, which honestly only makes her cooler in our eyes. With strong messages of choosing your family and embracing your identity, Rosa's story is more important than ever.



## David Rose - Schitt's Creek

David Rose is the snobbish and sarcastic son of the Rose family—who are forced to move to the town of *Schitt's Creek* after losing their vast fortune. This charming and hilarious fish out of water tale derives its heart from the eccentric family's interactions with the townspeople and with each other. One arc in the first season focuses on David's sexuality, which is revealed when his father gets high at a luau and expresses his misgivings about his son being pansexual, though he ultimately accepts it and the story moves on.

David's sexuality is never played for laughs, though it does lead to some laughably uncomfortable situations. What is so refreshing about David's storyline is that it eschews the homophobia that can be found in small towns in favour of exploring David's romantic relations in equal parts sweet, awkward, and life-affirming ways.



# Calling out Homophobic Behaviour

Astrid talks about The Weeknd's latest song, and the implications it has for the LGBTQ+ community.



The Weeknd's latest song with French DJ Gesaffelstein, 'Lost in The Fire', gained a lot of critical attention surrounding its lyrical content, particularly the speculation over a potential Drake reference – but why hasn't the focus been on the blatant homophobia and misogyny directed towards queer women in the second verse?

The Weeknd sings about his female love-interest possibly being into girls, marking her sexuality as “a phase” and telling her to “bring a friend” when he “fuck[s her] straight.” Shudder. It shocks me that chart-topping artists are still perpetuating such harmful attitudes in 2019, but what shocked me more was the response, or rather lack of response, these lyrics got.

While some people publicly condemned the song, such as musician Marika Hackman who called out The Weeknd for “managing to deride, fetishize and dismiss lesbianism all in one verse”, many others argued his lyrics can't be considered homophobic as they encourage a threesome involving two women. Because someone can't be homophobic if they fantasise about lesbian sex right? Wrong.

Defending the song on these grounds shows that the sexualisation of female queerness is a type of homophobia many people seem to overlook, but this homophobia isn't up for debate. It's damaging and needs to be understood, condemned and fought against. A woman's queerness does not exist for male sexual fantasy and it is definitely not a challenge for men to try and change or control through straight sex.

Yet, The Weeknd's lyrics epitomise these kinds of attitudes; from the moment he refers to this woman's queerness as a “phase”, to his explicit dismissal of lesbianism when he promises to “fuck [her] straight.” The Weeknd may be known and loved for his openly sexual lyrics, but the inherently violent undertone of “fuck you straight” hits unnervingly close to home for queer women who have been subjected to threats of sexual violence at the hands of homophobia that's rooted in misogyny. The context behind his choice of language encourages harmful a dangerous attitudes towards queer women, especially in a time where corrective rape is still happening as a form of hate crime and conversion therapy all over the world.

As a bisexual woman, the language in this verse is all too familiar to my own experiences of bi-erasure. The attitude hiding behind the lyrics represents every disturbing encounter I've had with those who objectify queer women, disregard lesbian sex and think ‘real men’ can turn lesbian women straight. The fact this discourse is present in a song that's become widely popular and will reach many younger, vulnerable members of the LGBTQ+ community is certainly worrying.

Writer Jill Gutowitz commented on the harm media portrayals of female queerness had on her as a teenager, saying “these are the kinds of lyrics that [...] subconsciously kept me in the closet.” Being a former fan of The Weeknd, who has yet to address the criticism of his second verse, leaves me feeling betrayed and disheartened with where pop culture stands today.

I don't believe The Weeknd should be ‘cancelled’, but I do believe in calling out destructive behaviour so outlooks can change and society can progress. This is why witnessing the homophobia in this song go unchallenged or debated is as problematic as the homophobia itself.

By ignoring or simply refusing to recognise the harmful nature of these lyrics, the normalisation of homophobia will continue at the expense of the wellbeing and safety of the queer community.

Astrid Lili

## LGBTQ+ History Month in 2019

Matthew reflects on LGBTQ+ history month, and how it remains necessary as time goes on...



In 2019, is the LGBTQ+ community *still* asking for equality?

Nowadays, LGBTQ+-centred events can garner some criticism for being overkill. With bi-annual events like LGBTQ+ History Month in February and Pride Month in June, it is truly remarkable that they haven't completed their gay agenda yet.

With reputable historical sources confirming that this event can be traced back to as early as 2005, LGBTQ+ History Month is allegedly dedicated “to raise awareness of, and combat prejudice against the LGBT+ community while celebrating its achievement and diversity and making it more visible”.

With its intention to illuminate the voices of LGBTQ+ history in order to teach the future LGBTQ+ generation, one would have thought that their effort to educate would be much less tiresome if they tried placing it into the national school curriculum as well. Statistically, in 2019, younger people are more likely to identify as gay, lesbian or bisexual: which must be really relieving considering that they would have been imprisoned/killed/beaten/ostracized/threatened/sterilised until just over 50 years ago.

Alongside this, with current major representation in Ariana Grande's latest music video and that film where Emma Stone fingers Olivia Colman, the LGBTQ+ community are centre-stage of the mainstream spotlight right now. If they are not pawns for feigned political acceptance, they are the trending topic on Twitter with

their exclusively anti-heterosexual hashtags such as #twentygayteen.

In a world where a quarter of young homeless people are LGBTQ+, why *can't* straight people join in on the #LGBTbaes? In a world where 80% of trans children have self-harmed (and half have attempted suicide), why *can't* straight people tell us that they identify as a microwave without such sensitive backlash? In a world where 62% of LGBT+ graduates who are already out, feel the need to go back in the closet once they enter the job market, why *can't* there be a Heterosexual/Cisgender History Month?

On top of *all* of this, in 2019 there is an openly gay footballer in the fifth league of the system, Father Christmas is now gender-neutral because the Daily Mail says so and it is only since very recently that LGBTQ+ individuals can no longer be advised by NHS professionals about ‘cures’... so what *more* do they want?

**P.S. I am forever thankful for the italics function that helps convey my sarcasm on behalf of the misters, sisters and binary-resisters of LGBTQ+ history that fought hard to get to where we are today.**

Matthew Rogan



# Jussie Smollett: The Case that Represents a Climate of Fear

Tasha discusses the recent attacks on actor Jussie Smollett, and the ever present climate of fear faced by the LGBTQ+ community.



We are living in the 21st century; a time of unprecedented advances in technology, increased equality and international communication - and yet the rates of hate crime and prejudice are rising with a terrifying momentum.

Recently, Jussie Smollett, a black and openly gay singer and actor, was attacked by two men who shouted racial and homophobic slurs, poured an unknown chemical substance over him, and put a rope around his neck.

The incident became even more controversial

when many began accusing Smollett of making up the attack as a way of making MAGA supporters look bad, using the phenomenon of 'fake news' to rationalise their claims. **In our digital age, it seems like anything that is not recorded simply did not happen.** The Chicago police have stated that they have no reasons to disbelieve Smollett: he is a victim, and will be treated as such.

This incident raises a wider question about the responsibility of the media to report and highlight these issues in an honest, transparent way. Misinformation is an epidemic and the resulting mistrust of media brings everything into question. This worldwide issue contributes to the suffering of many. For example, in Chechnya, gay men are rounded up, and tortured? Probably not, as large-scale coverage of this in Western media is scarce.

We are living in a world where these attitudes and actions are not only expected but are even condoned. In the US, Donald Trump is yet to condemn or speak about the hate crime Jussie Smollett suffered, and while Trump has not yet literally ordered the hunting down of LGBTQ+ people and racial minorities, his attitude of hatred and disrespect endorses these attacks. His presidency has been said to hark back to a time before the civil rights

movement. By creating a climate of fear, Trump has been successful in breeding hatred, which in turn is supported by unreliable news sources seeking to feed people's prejudices, rather than provide them with facts.

Most importantly, the long-term impact of this blatant hatred, prejudice and discrimination is ultimately the suffering of children. The effects on LGBTQ+ children are horrifyingly apparent. For instance, 84% of Trans youth self-harm, compared to 10% of the whole population, and 45% attempt suicide at least once. Conversion therapy, the effects of which are devastating, is essentially a system of torture and shockingly is still legal in the majority of US states. Incidents like this attack on Jussie Smollett are frighteningly common and scare LGBTQ+ children from coming out, resigning them to silence and continuing the cycle of shame which leads to suffering, self-hatred and often suicide.

This is what we must combat. We have to make sure that there are multiple narratives for LGBTQ+ people. That there is representation to show health, happiness, and success, but also a continuous narrative to highlight that, for some, it is still a matter of life and death.

**Tasha Austen**

## Navigating the Homosphere 101



### 8 things I know now.

1. Stereotyping isn't cute my boys, babes and non-binary buddies. I don't want to be your gay best friend or your lesbian side-kick. I want to be your equal, your friend, the kind of person you plan a crime with rather than have them for a certain function that fits your, unfortunately, ingrained homophobic manifestations. Treat us like equals, not like accessories.

2. Ugly bitches get stitches. Not literally of course, but a positive, inclusive attitude, especially towards friends, family and f\*\*\* buddies who might be coming to terms with themselves in their sexuality, and identity. Be encouraging, be kind and be supportive.

3. Condoms. Rubber Johnnies. Some say they're not cool, some say they make sex less fun. Personally, I'd rather use a love glove than get the clap. And if condoms really aren't the way for you, practice safe sex and speak to your GP; it's good practice and should be normal. Get tested, and encourage your friends and new partners to get tested. Safe sex is cool and to quote Coach Carr from *Mean Girls*, "you will get pregnant and you will die!" Well, not really, but you get the gist.

4. Keeping up appearances and being in a relationship. Sometimes it's hard for bisexuals to be recognised as having a valid sexuality whilst being in a relationship with some one of the opposite sex. Cardinal rule number one: being in a relationship with someone who doesn't identify as being your gender or sex does not eradicate your sexuality or your identity within that. You are yourself, regardless of who you share a bed with.

5. Diamonds are a girl's best friend. Committing to a long-term queer relationship and getting acceptance from family. Have the conversation, especially with those who may not quite understand the gender and sexuality spectrum. Be as patient as you can, but put yourself first, this is your life and your happiness is worth more than someone else's opinion.

6. Individual journeys; all paths are valid and, just because someone has had an easier or harder time than you in coming to terms with themselves and getting acceptance (if they want it) from others, it does not mean that your

experience is in anyway less valid or important. Your story is important and so are you.

7. Consent is between adults. That is an unquestionable truth. Consent is between adult humans, sober, awake and with-out pressure. Anything less is assault. Unfortunately, in every vector of society, including the LGBTQ+ community, there are those who don't understand this. Consent is between sober, awake, unpressured adults, regardless of time, location or attire. Bottom Line.

8. Keep Safe. Here are some numbers of help lines and advice pages for those in the LGBTQ+ community that are in crisis, feeling alone or just need someone to talk to:

**0345 330 3030** - A charity giving advice, information and support to those in the LGBTQ+ community.

**0300 030 0630** - Switchboard for the LGBTQ+ community with advisors who can recommend you to specialists and other treatments if needs be.

**01926 402 498** - A safeline for victims of assault, main number with specialist areas for males/females/non binary and trans members.

[Also, try and find my fun acrostic poem!]

**Georgina Fuhri**



# In the Middle

*“My sexuality is  
part and parcel of  
who I am...”*

*...I am deliberate  
and afraid of  
nothing.”*



Audre Lorde (b 1934-1992)  
American poet, feminist and civil rights activist.  
A self-described “black, lesbian, mother, warrior, poet.”



# FGM in the UK: A Silent Crime



Image: Getty Images

Michael Keating

In 2003, laws concerning female genital mutilation (FGM) were updated, making it a specific offense in UK law to not only conduct FGM but also to aid or assist in someone else performing it. This legislation aims to give more protection and justice to the vulnerable women and girls affected.

Despite these efforts, the first FGM conviction only took place this year, with a mother convicted earlier this month after performing FGM on her three-year-old daughter in the summer of 2017. The jury came to a guilty verdict in less than a day as a police search of the woman's home while on bail uncovered disturbing evidence of witchcraft that further incriminated her and demonstrated her intent. These included cow tongues pierced with nails and wrapped in wire, notes with names of social workers, police and others hidden in fruit, and a picture of a social worker in a jar of pepper. Supposedly, the spells were intended to stop the investigation by preventing people from speaking about the case. A photographed

note, supplied by the Met Police, reads, "to everyone who I don't know who talk about I have freezed u mouths never talk shit about me think about leave my name out of mouth [sic]."

It is a positive step that a conviction for FGM in the UK has been achieved, but it begs the question: why has this taken so long? FGM is far from rare, but there are huge challenges in uncovering cases and aiding victims coming forward, leading to flawed and widely varied statistics about its prevalence. The vast majority of cases worldwide occur in central Africa, with Somalia, Sudan, Egypt, Mali, Guinea and Sierra Leone having FGM rates of, according to UNICEF, over 88% across the female population. In Somalia the rate has been estimated to be as high as 98%. As such, cases registered by the NHS in the UK are often the result of FGM abroad, taking place before the victims emigrated to the UK. Between April 2017 and March 2018, nearly 5,000 cases of FGM were recorded by the NHS in a new study, with most victims being African immigrants that had suffered FGM abroad as children. The Black Health Initiative estimated that between 1,761 and 2,667 women and girls have undergone or are at risk of FGM in Leeds alone. Furthermore, as FGM is most often carried out or overseen by family members, many victims are forced to choose between staying quiet or condemning their own family to criminal charges.

In order to combat the horrific abuse of women and girls, the focus must be the education and empowerment of women in those communities affected by FGM. Emphasis should be on the support of victims, creating a safe environment for them to open up and enabling a dialogue that challenges the cultural and social norms of those advocating FGM. The driving forces behind this abuse centres on maintaining the perceived purity of girls before marriage and discouraging illicit sexual activity, as well as social pressures that exclude uncut girls as cursed, unclean or unfeminine. These prejudices must be changed over time with grassroots projects and dialogue within at-risk communities.

In the meantime, cases of FGM should be approached and prosecuted in the same way as other instances of violent child abuse, with cases mandatorily reported to child protection authorities and lengthy sentences given to those found guilty of a brutal crime against some of the most powerless and marginalised people in society. It is yet to be seen what the sentence for the convicted mother will be, but more criminal charges against other enablers of FGM must follow if we are to begin to end the suffering caused by FGM.

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# Do True Crime Dramas Glamourise Violence At The Expense Of Victims?

Eloise Barry

For the average person, fascination and repulsion often go hand in hand when it comes to serial killers. The idea of murder, rape, torture and necrophilia as a source of enjoyment is so incomprehensible to civilised society, that we are filled with an intense but natural curiosity to understand the motivations behind these crimes. Psychologist Scott Bonn suggests that society's morbid intrigue is due to the fact serial killers "offer a safe and secure outlet for our darkest thoughts, feelings, and urges" while "also remind[ing] us that despite all of our faults, the rest of us are just fine."

The media's sensationalist coverage of serial killers has cemented their place in popular culture. It is not surprising, therefore, that Netflix and other entertainment platforms have jumped onto the true crime drama bandwagon to profit off society's guilty pleasure. From the glamorous drama miniseries, *The Assassination of Gianni Versace*, to the in-depth true crime story, *My Friend Dahmer*, dramas consistently place the perpetrator in the foreground, obscuring their victims. The effect of this on the families of victims can be distressing. The parents of murdered two-year-old James Bulger released poignant statements last month regarding the Oscar nomination of *Detainment*, the upcoming film about their son's killers. Ralph Bulger pointed out the hypocrisy of filmmakers in turning their "living nightmare" into money-making entertainment: "We've been very public about how devastating it is to see such a sympathetic portrayal

of James's killers ... will [Hollywood] remember that on Oscar night in their fancy dresses and tuxedos?"

Similar complaints have been lodged against newly-released Netflix Docuseries *Conversations With A Killer: The Ted Bundy Tapes* and the soon to be released film adaptation of the same events, *Extremely Wicked, Shockingly Evil and Vile*. The former centres on the well-known crimes of the serial killer, Ted Bundy, but with the addition of previously unheard interview tapes with Bundy and investigative journalists. The documentary insists that it is Bundy's good looks, charm, and intelligence which allowed him to operate in plain sight. However, the series perpetuates the persona that Bundy crafted by giving voice to a narcissist. The 'conversations' are one-sided, allowing Ted to bathe in his own lies and narrative. His victims are reduced to a catalogue of photographs and archival newspaper clippings, almost as if Bundy had curated a list of personal achievements himself.

Many people, including the mother of Debra Jean Kent, one of Bundy's victim, have criticised the film and documentary for glamourising Bundy. The fact that the documentary repeatedly hails Bundy as a mastermind capable of mass deception is problematic. It would be more accurate to say that he is not exceptional, not a freak of nature, but one of thousands of sexually motivated perpetrators of femicide. In the US, eighty per cent of serial killers are male and are far more likely to involve sexual violence in their attacks. In *Conversations With a Killer*, Bundy admits to having been driven by the desire for "sexual release", and that "killing [became] a way of

destroying evidence."

Joe Berlinger, director of the upcoming film adaptation, has denied that the drama glamourises Bundy, instead suggesting that it offers "a very valid lesson" on the workings of psychopathic minds. This statement, coupled with Bundy survivor Kathy Kleiner Rubin's suggestion that "hopefully [the film] will make women more aware of their surroundings and be cautious", puts the onus onto women to prepare for sexual violence rather than society to tackle the issue as a whole. It is unsettling that Hollywood is profiting from sexually motivated murder when only last year the Thomson Reuters Foundation's study found that the US is the third most dangerous country in the world for women in terms of risk of sexual violence.

**"A line must be drawn to prevent our intrigue for killers from overshadowing wider societal issues that allow them to perpetrate such crimes"**

It seems unlikely that the trend for true crime dramas will disappear any time soon given our natural curiosity for morbid stories. However, a line must be drawn to prevent our intrigue for killers from overshadowing wider societal issues that allow them to perpetrate such crimes. When the murders are only recent history, we have to question whether an adrenaline rush is worth the pain of those involved.

## Does Leeds' LGBTQ+ Scene Cater too much for Straight People?

Adina Rees

From New Penny, the oldest running openly LGBTQ+ venue in the UK, to Viaduct Showbar, where drag shows are performed every night, Leeds only has a handful of LGBTQ+ clubs. So, when Mission 2 rebranded into Tunnel and gradually removed the LGBTQ+ content from their image, it unsurprisingly caused controversy as the LGBTQ+ scene was already underrepresented.

When I noticed the changes, I took to Tunnel's Facebook page to question whether their new branding signified a permanent move towards becoming another ordinary, straight-dominated club in Leeds, albeit one with drag.

**"Gay bars should be more about offering a safe space for members of the LGBT community than for straight men to watch lesbians and for straight women to throw bachelorette parties"**

I wrote: "During my first year of university, Tunnel offered a judgement-free club for myself and many other members of the LGBT community – a sanctuary and safe area in comparison to the straight-dominated

clubs in Leeds. Over the last few months, I have noticed that all signs of LGBT branding have been removed from the website and now even the Pride video has been removed. The last experience I had there, myself and my friends entailed a lot of groping and unwanted advances from straight men, many of whom did not even know it was supposed to be an LGBT club."

The manager of Tunnel responded to my query stating, "In a more modern generation, our aim is to be an inclusive venue which provides a safe space for each and every person from all walks of life... Tunnel caters to a wide demographic of LGBTQ+ and non-LGBTQ+ people." The post quickly became heated with a number of comments in support of my observation and it became apparent that many people were dissatisfied with this response too. The main question I had in mind when reading the statement was – Why? Why do you feel the need to cater to a demographic that the rest of the world already caters for? This discourse extends beyond Leeds, with a number of popular gay clubs around the world either closing or rebranding. This issue serves to highlight the fact that we absolutely still need gay clubs and bars.

Never before have I heard a non-LGBTQ+ person utter the words "I really wish there were more

straight-friendly clubs in Leeds!" Gay bars are the one public space that an LGBTQ+ person can enter without being fearful and without having to scan the crowd, worried that someone will cause trouble. There are so many people who seek solace in gay bars and have no other place to be open about their sexuality or gender. People may believe that because attitudes are changing, there is no longer a need to cater to LGBTQ+ people but that is misinformed. Despite Tunnel no longer being branded as an LGBTQ+ club, there are still drag queen performances. By exploiting integral aspects of gay culture to appeal to non-LGBTQ+ audiences, gay culture is being reduced to nothing more than a zoo-like attraction. When I was last in Tunnel, my girlfriend and I kissed and a man behind us pushed our heads together to try to force us to kiss again. It was a demeaning and entitled act that spoke volumes. He acted as though we were performing for him, clearly demonstrating why LGBTQ+ clubs matter.

Gay bars should be more about offering a safe space for members of the LGBTQ+ community than for straight men to watch lesbians and for straight women to throw bachelorette parties. We need to maintain LGBTQ+ spaces and preserve the culture. We still need places where we can collectively celebrate who we are and the things we have been through without holding back.



# The Power of First Ladies

Alex Chitty

They say that behind every man there is a great woman. A lot of the time, however, it seems that these women attract even more attention than their husbands. Earlier this month, a fifth book on Brigitte Macron was published, which reached number one on Amazon France. Across the Atlantic, Michelle Obama's autobiography has topped bestseller lists since it was published late in 2018. She also surpassed Hillary Clinton to claim the top spot on December's Gallup poll of the 'Most Admired Woman' in the USA, following in a long line incumbent of previous First Ladies who have topped the list every year since its creation in 1948 (excluding a couple for Mother Theresa and Margaret Thatcher). First Ladies, and their international counterparts, have been drawing headlines, admiration, and their fair share of scandal too.

According to the anti-Macron press, the book is merely an attempt to humanise a President who is notoriously out of touch with the public, at a time when his ratings are at an all-time low. Regardless of the motivations for its writing, this calls into question the power of the spouses of world leaders in general. Having such unrestrained influence over a President, Prime Minister, or other leader, doesn't seem democratically viable for an unelected individual. However, I would argue that this isn't the greatest power of these women. That, in fact, lies in their celebrity.

Where does this celebrity status come from? Perhaps in the eyes of the public they take on the role of a modern-day princesses, especially in countries without a monarchy such as France and the US. This would be an easy way to explain why the husbands of world leaders, who are few and far between, are generally left to themselves - just think about Philip May Joachim Sauer (husband of Angela Merkel). On the other hand, often this celebrity status is cultivated and used as a political weapon. In 2008, here in the UK, David Cameron inherited a Tory party sorely lacking in female representation, with only 17 female MPs and poor track record on women's policy. However, with him came Samantha Cameron, or Sam Cam. She fulfilled the role as perfect wife: feminine, supportive, childbearing.

The British press embraced her with open arms. Although never overtly political, she nevertheless took on a very public role in campaigning and has been heralded as salvaging the party's image in regard to women. Clearly, she was a great electoral asset to her husband.

The attention these women receive, however, is a double-edged sword. Their place in the spotlight means they can end up being a target for political enemies of their spouse. In 2016, the Trump and Cruz campaigns used the supposed sexual activity of the opposing candidates' wives to attack each other. Inevitably, it seems that what determines both the popularity of a politician's wife, and their electoral usefulness to their husband, is whether they play the



Wikipedia Commons

role of the 'good wife' properly.

Brigitte Macron doesn't necessarily fit this category. The President's ex-teacher, 25 years his senior, divorced her husband for her ex-pupil. Not exactly the traditional housewife. It's hard to measure what her impact has been on her husband's popularity and whether this new book will do anything to boost his ratings. However, there is no doubt that through redirecting the attention of the press and public to Brigitte, at least some of the attention from the social unrest which has dominated France for the last few months has been shifted from Macron.

As politics becomes more and more personal, and the lines between celebrity and politician, entertainment and politics, are blurring, perhaps it is time to reevaluate the power of the wives of our leaders.



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# Sustainable Shopping – Going Away or Here to Stay?

Will Southall

Tucked away in the Central Arcade at the bottom of town you'll find EcoTopia, Leeds' newest environmentally conscious shop. Set up just three months ago, EcoTopia is a weigh-and-pay style convenience store built around one all-important rule – no waste. The shop aims to provide an eco-friendly alternative to everyday supermarket shopping by allowing customers to fill up their own jars with cereals, seeds and much more, avoiding the use of any packaging at all.

Upon first impression it is clear the owners have taken great care to consider how to avoid all of the negative environmental impacts that come with regular supermarket shopping. Selling everything from bamboo toothbrushes to muesli by the kilo, it certainly feels like you could get a large amount of your weekly shop in this one little store, reducing the amount of packaging and left-overs to almost zero.

But is sustainable shopping a trend? Or is it a more fundamental societal change, that all businesses will soon have to reflect? Co-founder Michelle was naturally betting on the latter:

"I really hope sustainable shopping isn't just a trend...for the sake of the environment much more so than our business."

Michelle admitted that they would have liked to have had a much bigger space to work with, in order

to accommodate all of their eco-friendly innovations. It seems like this a shop which could have lots of room to grow. Moving to a bigger location in the city centre is certainly an obvious way of growing their business, but perhaps a different step forward might be to open another shop in a neighbourhood area – something which might mark a move away from a novelty shopping experience to a serious convenience shop contender.

*"I really hope sustainable shopping isn't just a trend...for the sake of the environment much more so than our business"*

It's difficult to say whether or not shops like EcoTopia will become the new norm. People are certainly becoming more educated and aware about the environmental impacts of their shopping and for this reason lots of us are starting to think more about what we're buying and where we're buying it from. But with the persistent growth of budget supermarkets such as Aldi and Lidl, price still seems to be the dominant factor in determining where we're willing to get hold of the essentials.

If shops are going to move towards more environmentally sustainable products then they are going to need to do this in a way that doesn't drastically increase their prices. EcoTopia has managed to achieve just that, as the prices here seem to be very competitive, although admittedly somewhat more difficult to work out in pence per kilogram.

For now though, shops like EcoTopia offer a fun alternative to the more mundane and traditional supermarket shopping. With record numbers signing up to Veganuary in 2019, it seems quite possible that the environment will have more and more of an influence over our lifestyle choices in the future and, if that's the case, then EcoTopia may very well be one of the first movers in a soon-to-be dominant market.



Image: Will Southall

## We Want You! Graduate Recruitment at the LUBS Night of Exchange

Dmitry Fedoseev

Last semester, I was given the opportunity to represent the Gryphon Business Section at the Leeds University Business School (LUBS) 'Night of Exchange', and speak with graduate recruiters from a slew of big-name companies. Whatever your degree, the prospect of entering professional employment can be a stressful world of rehearsing competencies, assessment centres, and the occasional jacket fitting. It was for this reason that I was pleasantly surprised at how relaxed the atmosphere was, and the extent to which Leeds graduates are truly valued.

Of the companies I had the pleasure of talking to, technology consultant and developer Accenture was the first. Bringing innovation to every aspect of the workplace, Accenture dispense with traditional, competency-based questions, preferring to focus on your strengths. Peter McMahon, Tech Arch Delivery Manager, was keen to stress that they 'don't pigeonhole you'. Whether your background is in French, archaeology, or computer science, their teams are looking for anyone with a passion for technology, as well as the capacity to learn. While advantageous, a tech background is by no means necessary. Progression is remarkably fluid too, with the possibility of moving

into almost any area of the business, from consulting to cybersecurity, after you've settled into the company. This drive for diversity extends far beyond your choice of degree, as Recruiter Charles Smith pointed out, proudly displaying a lanyard in vibrant LGBT colours – "it's not just for show". An authentically modern, forward-thinking corporate culture is a make-or-break factor for a growing proportion of graduates, and Accenture has been a pioneer of this for a long time.

Jazz Moodie, a recent Leeds graduate and Mars Associate, reinforced the importance of being familiar with the values of your prospective employer. Despite its prodigious size, Mars is still fundamentally a

family-run business, which translates into the countless community projects they have set up across the planet. Researching the firm's activities is not only crucial for interview, but will offer you insight into whether the company culture would be a good fit for your personality. While the majority of firms, Mars included, utilise competency-based questions as part of their recruitment process, they place equal weight on their 'Five Principles' (quality, responsibility, mutuality, efficiency, and freedom), and how closely those align to your own values. Luckily, the University of Leeds is seen as 'one of [Mars'] biggest talent pools to recruit from', due in no small part to our Career Centre. Moodie was quick to remind students to make use of this invaluable resource, which offers one-on-one interview prep, psychometric testing, and even mock assessment centres – all inevitable parts of the real-life application process.

All in all, I found the night to be an informative, low pressure, vodka-infused setting for professional networking. While it was impossible to have a chat with every recruiter, I came away with a much clearer idea of how a graduate should prepare to enter the job market. My thanks go out to the LUBS Society for organising the event, and I heartily recommend you keep your eyes peeled for the next one.



Image: Dmitry Fedoseev



# UK PLC Still On Course For A Good Year

**Julia Constable**  
Business Editor

Despite the closures of many banks and shops on the high street, the unemployment level in the UK is the lowest it has been for 40 years. Recent wins on employment terms and conditions by Hermes Drivers, are showing a gradual movement in regularising the “gig” economy by mirroring the terms offered in the mainstream economy. Whether zero hours contracts come to an end we will have to wait and see, but progress is being made.

After the judgement on Hermes, which gives drivers holiday pay and sick pay, many other gig economy employees are likely to win the chance of improved conditions now this new precedent for Hermes Drivers has been set by the court – making Deliveroo; Uber Eats and Just Eat workers likely to have improved terms and conditions in the future, although (of course) delivery costs will inevitably have to rise. This judgement is the first sign that fairness in the work place is making a fight back and is to be welcomed. The drop in the value of Sterling as a result of the Brexit uncertainty and investors taking fright, has oddly been a tonic for exports. The cheaper pound has made UK exports less expensive abroad and the UK continues to see its exports boom to their highest level since 2008.

Although a worrying statistic is the reduction of investment from external sources, which has seen a

2/3 fall in the latest statistics – undoubtedly this has been caused by the Brexit uncertainty. But, if stability returns to the economy, it may well bounce back.

Store closures are at a rate of around 6,000 per year (year on year) so there is a huge change taking place on our high streets. However, new ideas from the private sector and local councils to breathe new life into high streets are being developed across the country. Huge pressure is now on local councils to reduce rates and parking charges to encourage people to visit their high streets and not allow the online revolution destroy these valuable assets. Despite the store closures unemployment is still not rising and the Bank of England has said salary increases are growing fast at around 3.8% p.a.

Further good news is that the Government has announced “the end to austerity”. Austerity was a policy designed to better match the country’s outgoings with the income of the nation, seeking to avoid year on year overspending which had become a feature of both political parties. Last year saw the first signs that the country was balancing its expenditure with income and reduced borrowing. In 2019 the borrowing level is 1/4 lower than this time last year, the UK government’s budget deficit was better than expected in the latest financial year, according to figures published on Tuesday by the Office for National Statistics.

The headline level of borrowing was £42.6bn in the 12 months to the end of March, down from £46.2bn

the previous year, beating official forecasts. So, whilst we are all concerned about the future, the underlying statistics in the economy are still robust and as Germany enters a technical recession, the UK is still in a growth zone predicted to be around 1.6% by the end of 2019.

Due to the overwhelming doom and gloom surrounding Brexit it is easy to imagine that things are tragically worse than they really are, but the figures simply don’t back up that negative impression. Hopefully the news will continue to remain positive, and if the Brexit impasse can be resolved soon, the future might actually start looking pretty bright.



Image: Getty Images

# Morrisons Set to Pioneer Paper Bags

**Daisy Woodford**

Being only a swift twenty-minute walk from Leeds Uni campus means that for many of us, Morrisons is our local supermarket. But it looks like we will be paying for the convenience of proximity, as the chain plans to completely get rid of the 5p plastic bags and instead exchange them for eco-friendlier, yet less budget-friendly, 20p paper bags. For now, Morrisons is planning an eight-week trial of paper bags to be held at eight stores across the UK. Although none of the trials are taking place in Leeds, there are several in nearby Yorkshire towns: Skipton, Hunslet and Yeadon as well as in their Camden and Wood Green stores in London, Erskine in Scotland, Abergavenny in Wales and Gibraltar.

This plan to pioneer paper bags is as a result of the ever-present, impending doom of climate change and the long-overdue increase in environmental awareness. We all know how destructive plastic is for the environment: one plastic bag can take anywhere from 10 to 1000 years to decompose, meaning that disposable plastic bags play a large part in contributing to plastic waste.

To try and reduce the amount of one-use plastic being made and bought, the 5p plastic bag charge was brought to Britain in 2015. However, some retailers use higher prices or other methods in order to deter plastic bag sales. For example, Tesco and Asda charge 10p for its cheapest reusable bag, while Aldi and Lidl charge 9p for a similar product. Waitrose, on the other hand, claims to be replacing its plastic fruit and veg carriers with a home compostable alternative by

spring 2019, and it intends to remove its 5p carrier bags from circulation, much like Morrisons.

Efforts such as these may seem small but when looking at the figures, have had a significant impact. This is shown by the drop in the number of single-use plastic carrier bags sold per year by the top seven supermarkets. The amount has dropped to just over 1 billion, down from more than 7 billion before mandatory charges were introduced for large retailers in 2015.

While this reduction in plastic may be a good thing, this alternative to paper bags may not be as promising as it appears to be. Many have pointed out that although these bags can be recycled and reused, the production of these paper bags releases more carbon dioxide emissions as they need three times as much energy in order to manufacture. This has raised more questions than answers about the problems faced by supermarkets and those trying to reduce their carbon footprint. Ultimately, is plastic or paper more harmful in the long-term?

However, Julian Kirby, waste and resources campaigner at Friends of the Earth, spoke about this and said, “We welcome this – especially if they scale up from a trial. What stands out is that the bags are designed to be reused and will be less resource intensive to produce than the heavier duty tote bags and are fully recyclable. It would be better still if they were made from recycled material themselves.”

Whether this change will be beneficial for both customers and the environment remains unseen, but the trial suggests that Morrisons is making environmentalism a focal point for the future.



Image: Julia Constable

*“The bags are designed to be reused and will be less resource intensive to produce than the heavier duty tote bags and fully recyclable”*

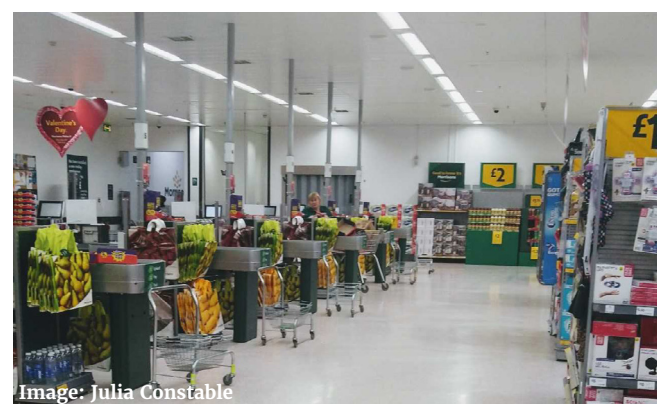


Image: Julia Constable





# Shocking New Research into Stutter Treatment

**Freya Harrison**  
Science Writer

Stuttering is defined as the involuntary repetition of sounds when speaking. It may be neurogenic (caused by the nervous system) or psychogenic (caused by the mind or mentality). Stuttering is relatively common in childhood, affecting roughly 5% of children between the ages of 2 and 5. While most children grow out of this disorder, persistence into adulthood is not uncommon, with more than 70 million adults suffering worldwide. Famous stutterers include King George IV, who was immortalised by Colin Firth in *The King's Speech*. Comedian Ronnie Barker portrayed a stutterer in *Open All Hours*, where he used it to comic effect. In fact, stuttering is commonly the butt of jokes, and people who stutter can be socially marginalised and ridiculed. In reality, this legitimate medical condition can have vast implications for a person's quality of life, affecting function across social, emotional, occupational and economic domains.

But all is not lost for those who stutter, as therapeutic research in the field of language disorders is ever increasing. Current speech therapy strategies involve conscious acknowledgement of malades in fluency, articulation, cognition and vocal tone, as the patient aims to actively alter their speech patterns. While this has been shown to be very effective, it is often a lengthy process with stages of abnormal sounding speech.

In a current ongoing trial conducted at the University

of Oxford, titled 'INSTEP', Watkins and colleagues investigate the use of transcranial direct current stimulation (tDCS), in aiding stammer control in patients undergoing fluency training. tDCS is a method of brain stimulation, which involves placing electrodes on each temple, and passing a very weak current through the brain. In this randomised controlled trial, 20 participants received tDCS, and 20 received no neuronal stimulation while pronouncing one syllable per beat on a metronome (a technique encouraging fluency in those who stutter). Learning and repetition increases the number of synapses (junctions between nerve cells) in the brain; strengthening them, and enabling neurons to communicate information much faster. Stimulation through tDCS increases neuron firing rate, which researchers believe could reinforce learning of fluent speech patterns. In this way, the active effort of correcting speech patterns could become more unconscious or habitual. While this may not completely eradicate the disorder, it may result in faster and more permanent learning of speech therapy strategies.

Interestingly, tDCS may not only have implications for those with speech impediments, but may also serve purpose as a therapy for a range of neurological conditions, including stroke or even depression. Neuronal stimulation has previously been associated with increased neuroplasticity, resulting in a greater ability of the brain to repair, reorganise and restructure itself after trauma, or in cases of age-related neurodegeneration. Not only that, but when

electrical stimulation is directed to the spinal cords of paralysed patients, the ability to walk is partially regained, with vast improvements for quality of life.

Electrical brain stimulation (EBS) may also be a surprising way to treat criminality. In 2018, researchers from the University of Pennsylvania and the Nanyang Technological University discovered that just one session of EBS increased the participant's moral awareness and reduced their desire to commit violent assaults. In light of the vast amount of emerging research in this area, electrical stimulation could prove to be a new effective method of managing a range of neurological disorders, with implications on both the individual and societal levels.

It is important to distinguish the difference between tDCS and Electroconvulsive therapy (earlier known as the dread-inducing electroshock therapy). While the former utilises a very weak electrical current, the latter uses a higher voltage to induce seizures, aiming to relieve the symptoms of various mental disorders. Electroconvulsive therapy often resulted in side effects such as retrograde amnesia (memory loss), and other cognitive deficits. While tDCS may be used in contexts of various neurological conditions, electroconvulsive therapy was more commonly used for psychiatric disorders including depression, catatonia, mania and schizophrenia. Arguably, tDCS is a much safer alternative to this rather primitive therapy. Although it is still in the early stages of testing, tDCS could provide a much kinder, non-pharmacological treatment for a variety of disorders.



**Anna Davison**  
Science Writer

## Dr. Chicken, G. M. D.

efficient than any previous efforts, reducing the cost of developing the drug produced by 10-100 times compared to factories.

Many diseases are caused by a lack of a certain protein which can be controlled by giving the patient drugs containing that protein. The genetically modified chickens have a human gene which produces this essential protein within the white of the egg. It only takes three eggs to provide enough protein for one dose and chickens can lay up to 300 eggs a year. Although the proteins produced from this method have been limited to IFNalpha2a (powerful anti-viral and anti-cancer) and macrophage-CSF (stimulates damaged tissue to repair itself), this method could be applied to other useful proteins in the future. Before this can happen, it will need to go through rigorous drug regulations and trials which can take anywhere

from ten to twenty years.

Despite the potential to provide affordable and effective medication to those suffering from arthritis and some cancers, the inclusion of genetic modification does not sit well with many people. The idea that we can manipulate the very essence of other animals is as unnerving as it is amazing. This is one of the reasons why genetic modification is one of the research avenues that is most scrutinised by the media. However, chickens kept in laboratory conditions such as these enjoy an easy life compared to farmed chickens, and the egg laying process is no different than in normal chickens. It seems the moral issue with this practice is more philosophical: should we be altering species for our own benefits?

We've all seen the scene in *Rocky* where Rocky Balboa downs a glass of raw eggs, but the health benefits of this questionable beverage haven't gone beyond a heck of a lot of protein – until now. Genetically modified chickens have been developed to lay eggs containing drugs for the treatment of arthritis and some cancers. This has already been done with goat and rabbits' milk, but the new approach is far more





Image: washington.org

## Examining the Scientific Impact of the U.S. Government's Shutdown

Laura Krusin  
Science Writer

The US government shutdown broke the record for the longest federal shutdown in American history. While this had an obvious impact on many issues, the negative implications for scientific research have perhaps been overlooked. Scientists from organisations such as NASA, the NOAA (National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration), FDA (Food and Drug Administration), and the NSF (National Science Foundation) – along with many other companies – were not at work for 35 days, a significant loss of valuable research time.

Now the shutdown has ended, things have not just returned to normal. It can take weeks or perhaps even

months for research to be resumed and for operations to run smoothly once again. This is all exacerbated by the fact that there could be another shutdown in the near future.

Before addressing the problems an imminent second shutdown presents, let's first focus on the issues created by Trump's 35-day negotiations. Despite the shutdown lasting 'just' 35 days, the effects will be felt for much longer. For example, NASA have stated there will be overruns in project costs as the shutdown caused a five week lag in research. Investigations that have been going for decades, like the Antarctic ice depth records, now have gaps in their data due to the shutdown, such losses of knowledge never occurring before in the programme's history. This is just one

example of the many interrupted research studies, from medical drug trials to studies on California's fisheries. Also, many open access data sets, such as weather data, had to be taken offline – negatively impacting students who depend upon federal open access data for research purposes.

It isn't just scientific research that has been affected, with American National Parks feeling the aftermath of the shutdown too. It directly removed management of time sensitive tasks in the parks, such as wildlife population counts, and prescribed habitat burns to promote biodiversity. Furthermore, the lack of rangers has allowed the general public to wreak havoc. The amount of litter abandoned in national parks is up, and so is the damage to wildlife – with people straying off the footpaths and harming life such as cyanobacteria (which could take years to recolonise the area).

The combination of both wages and research funding being held back has made many scientists reconsider working for the federal government. NASA has already seen this brain drain, with many of its scientists quitting during the shutdown. Some smaller companies that rely on contracts with NASA saw a 20% drop in their staff. PhD applications were also stopped during the shutdown, with researchers receiving government funding not wanting to take on students with undetermined support. This left a lot of people's futures hanging in the balance.

With the chance of another possible shutdown following the 15th of February, researchers cannot yet breathe a sigh of relief. They may once again be banned from their labs, field centres, or even from checking their emails.

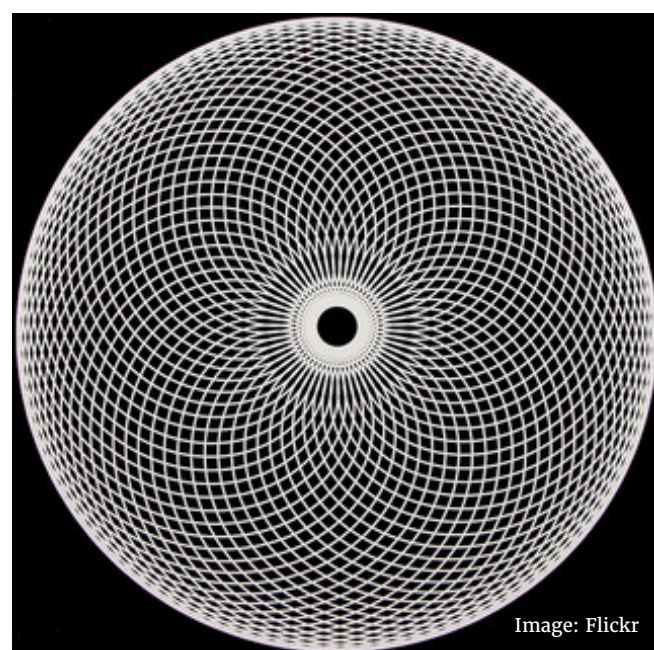


Image: Flickr

Leo Kim  
Science Writer

Being awake during open brain surgery is an ordeal inconceivable to most, but a stark reality for many sufferers of epilepsy and brain tumours. Early research provides compelling evidence that hypnosis-aided awake surgery leads to reduced intraoperative pain and complications, compared to standard awake surgery. In cases where general anaesthesia cannot be used, this novel method could lessen patient anxiety and pain during intracranial surgery.

When brain tumours or epileptic regions are located near, or within, functionally significant areas (e.g. the motor or visual cortex), patients must be awake during the operation to minimise damage to these parts. During the surgery, the brain is mapped with the aid of MRIs, electrical stimulation and real-time

## An Anaesthetic Alternative: Hypnosis

feedback from patients. This means the surgeon can avoid damaging the patient's functional areas whilst removing the problematic brain region.

In a 2018 study, 52 per cent of subjects who underwent awake brain surgery reported slight or severe pain during the operation. The average duration of surgery was 223 minutes. With no general anaesthesia, a non-pharmacological alternative to increase patient well-being had to be explored.

Dr. Alessandro Frati, Italian neurosurgeon, believes that hypnosis is the answer. His innovative study was recently published in *World Neurosurgery*, where six patients had their brain tumours removed using hypnosis-aided surgery (HAS). Local anaesthesia was used to access the brain, then patients were hypnotised during the operation, which put them in a dissociated "safe place."

Frati's results found that HAS produced significantly lower pain and discomfort during the surgery. In his sample, 0 per cent of his subjects reported intraoperative pain. Additionally, the overall incidence of complications both during and after surgery were significantly reduced. He states that HAS is useful to "preserve the patient's ability to perform tasks," and to "cause amnesia of the entire surgical procedure at the same time." The method suggests a simple and effective alternative to standard awake surgery.

"Hypnosis is clearly a very interesting and helpful tool to provide more comfort for the patient, reducing pain and anxiety during awake neurological monitoring," says Gilda Pardey Bracho, of France's

Department of Anaesthesia and Critical Care. For the last two years, Bracho has been training in medical hypnosis to use HAS protocol in neurosurgery. She commends Frati's study, and adds that hypnosedation "optimises the comfort and well-being of the patient during surgery."

However, it is important to note that not everyone is susceptible to hypnosis. "Of course, such a method cannot be used with all patients," says Dr. Rupert Reichart, medical hypnotist and neurosurgeon of the University of Vienna. He suggests that there are still limitations to the use of HAS protocol. "But patients who do not tolerate anaesthesia, for example, can benefit from it – if they are hypnotic," says Reichart.

A 2018 study showed that the effectiveness of hypnosis varied within the population, with 60–79 per cent of people being moderately susceptible, and 5–10 per cent being highly susceptible. This suggests that HAS protocol has the potential to be widely used as a safer alternative to awake brain surgery in patients with brain tumours and epilepsy.

Although a novel method, the results could lead to improvements in the physical and mental health of awake brain surgery patients. "Hypnosis in this kind of surgery is not well documented but represents an innovative technique that aims to improve neurosurgical management," says Bracho. It is early days, but the intuitiveness and potential of hypnosis-aided surgery is obvious. Would you want to be awake during surgery?



# Adesanya Defeats Childhood Hero

Israel Adesanya remains undefeated, claiming a victory over his childhood idol, Anderson Silva, at UFC 225.



Image: Getty Images

**Udit Shankar**  
Mixed Martial Arts

Billed as a Middleweight title eliminator, this fight was originally scheduled to serve as the co-main event. However, with just hours to go, it was promoted to the main event as Australian Robert Whittaker pulled out of his Middleweight title defence against American Kelvin Gastelum with a severe abdominal injury. Silva and Adesanya did not disappoint however, delivering a thrilling show to a sold out Rod Laver Arena, in which their spectacular striking techniques were on full display.

In an emotional build-up, at 43, Silva is in the twilight of his career and he struggled to hold back

the tears after the weigh-in. After the fight, he hinted that he may fight one last time at UFC 237 in his home town of Curitiba, Brazil, on 11th May.

For Adesanya (29), this match-up was a dream come true. Growing up idolising Silva, he said that beating Silva would be mean more to him than winning a UFC belt. In the post-fight interview, Adesanya said, "This is crazy. This is like, for a kid, just to play... If I'm playing basketball, to play against Michael Jordan. This is it for me." Adesanya's rise through the ranks has been remarkable given he only made his UFC debut at UFC 221 in February 2018. Now, after claiming the biggest scalp of his career to date, Adesanya is one step closer to his dream of becoming the Middleweight champion.

Meanwhile, Robert Whittaker's run of bad luck continued. Illness and injury had forced him out of a title defence in Perth in 2017, whilst his victory over Yoel Romero at UFC 225 left him with a broken hand. Whittaker's manager, Titus Day, said that around 6pm, he was feeling bloated, but that it was not uncommon with fighters regaining weight following a weight cut. Then, at around 10pm, Whittaker's wife alerted his coaches that he was suffering from stomach cramps and was in considerable pain. UFC doctors were then called to his room, at which point, he began vomiting and was taken to hospital at around 3am on fight day.

UFC president, Dana White, revealed that he had been diagnosed with a hernia and described it as a freak injury. "His bowel and his intestines poked through the hole and it didn't happen yesterday [at the weigh-ins]. They think he had this problem and it's been going in and out. And it's one of those situations had it popped out during the fight, it could have been fatal for him. So this is really serious."

Meanwhile, Kelvin Gastelum, sporting a UFC belt, declared himself as the new Middleweight champion because he "showed up, travelled thousands and thousands of miles from home, [and] made the weight." Gastelum explained how, "in my world, the wrestling world, if the guy shows up and makes the weight, for some reason cancels the bout, the guy forfeits the match – I win. I am the champion." Dana White later quashed Gastelum's claims by stating that Whittaker would remain the official champion and that they would look to reschedule his title defence. He also revealed that the belt Gastelum was wearing was in fact Henry Cejudo's, the current Flyweight champion.

## From Russia With Drugs

The International Paralympic Committee has lifted the ban on Russian athletes, placed on them for doping.

**Millie Frain**  
Paralympics



Image: New York Times

Russia have been told they can rejoin the Paralympic community next month, after the International Paralympic Committee decided to lift the suspension imposed on them after widespread state-sponsored doping was uncovered in 2016.

The Committee claims that the athletes have reformed themselves following their ban, but many remain sceptical, with doping in Russian sports continuing to be an issue. In fact, with the country having 41 medals stripped from them due to violations, by far the most of any country, it could even be said that their punishment should be even more severe with harsher sanctions.

The IPC have acknowledged the potential upset that may arise following their decision. The chairperson of the IPC, Chelsey Gottell, admitted that "some para athletes may disapprove of the governing board's change of position on the original criteria," but argued that it is "vital for para athletes to consider how far the Russian Paralympic committee have come since August 2016."

This is proven with Russia meeting 69 of its 70 reinstatement criteria, yet the fact they did not meet all of them surely creates room for more doubt. The one exemption was Russia's inability to respond to the McLaren report, which exposed the fact that more than 1,000 Russian athletes were involved in a

massive state-sponsored doping programme.

Yet the doping issue in sport is not just confined to Russia, or Paralympic athletes in general. In recent years, we've seen doping in tennis and cycling, with Maria Sharapova and Lance Armstrong springing to mind. Despite this, both stars had short bans and were given the chance to return – one could argue the Russian athletes should be given the same opportunity to not only redeem their country, but themselves.

Of course the IPC will be taking precaution; imagine the embarrassment if Russia were to be caught doping again, so soon after their reinstatement. Further testing will be taking place before the events, and Gottell herself even said "if the conditions are not fully met, I am confident that, just as we did in August 2016, the IPC governing board will act swiftly to ensure appropriate action is taken."

It is clear that Russia will be scrutinised by the world when they travel to Tokyo in 2020, and their undeniable talent may add further suspicion. When the country hosted the 2014 Winter Paralympics in Sochi, they topped the medal table, and in London two years earlier their gold medal count was only beaten by China. Therefore, the Paralympians must inevitably expect harsh scrutiny, and showcase their talent without the assistance of performance enhancing substances.



# May-Day For France

England go top of the table as France meet their Waterloo at Twickenham, while Wales and Ireland's wins keep them in the running.



Image: INPHO/James Crombie

**Jonathan Burnett**  
Rugby Union

A Jonny May hat-trick within the first half hour set England on their way to a thumping 44-8 victory over France – sending them top of the 2019 Six Nations table with maximum points from their two games. Wales and Ireland also won to keep pace with Eddie Jones' side, however the ruthlessness of England's victory suggests that they are the pacesetters in this years' championship.

Like last week against Ireland, England's start was lightning quick. A French knock-on led to Elliot Daly kicking forward for May to pounce, the Leicester flyer opening the scoring 65 seconds into the contest.

May's second was even more impressive. After being set up by a pinpoint Owen Farrell pass, May's footwork dazzled France winger Damian Penaud, who couldn't stop the England flyer touching down again on 24 minutes.

May & England's third came just before the half hour mark. Almost identical to the first try, another French mistake led to a kick through, this time from Chris Ashton, with May again winning the race to give England a commanding 23-3 lead 30 minutes in.

France finally showed some composure to reduce the daylight between the sides on 35 minutes. Some lackluster 'tackles' allowed fullback Yoann Huget to scythe through England's defence and grant Penaud some redemption by finishing in the corner.

Despite this, England rounded off the first half by securing their four try bonus point. England's smart regather and kick from another France knock-on culminated in a long ball finding Henry Slade, who stepped inside to finish expertly.

England showed little prospect of relinquishing their 30-8 halftime lead after the break, with Slade's interception and kick resulting in Gael Fickou taking Ashton out illegally and a penalty try being awarded. The somewhat controversial decision also saw Fickou receive a yellow card.

Fickou's sin-binning left France massively exposed, which England exploited on 55 minutes. Farrell kicked through for May to chase, but despite France's cover defence denying May his fourth, Farrell was on hand to finish off the scoring. The England captain

converted his own try to seal a thumping 44-8 win at Twickenham, a result that shows England mean business in 2019.

Wales kept pace with England by beating Italy 26-15, equalling a 109-year win record in the process. A low-scoring first half saw Italy lock Braam Steyn get the only try. However, four Dan Biggar penalties gave Wales a 12-7 halftime lead.

A fluid backline move after the resumption saw the ball passed through five pairs of Welsh hands to give Josh Adams an easy stroll to the line, giving Wales a 19-10 lead.

Wales extended this when Gareth Anscombe's chip over Italy's tryline resulted in Owen Watkin touching down with 10 minutes remaining, to all but seal victory for Warren Gatland's men.

A smart break from Italy fly-half Tommaso Allan on 76 minutes sent winger Edoardo Padovani in the corner to tighten the scoreline, however Wales held on to win 26-15 and remain the only other team with a 100% record in this year's championship.

Defending champions Ireland responded to last week's defeat by England to beat Scotland 22-13 at Murrayfield. Early, relentless pressure from Ireland forced a Scotland error on their own line, with Conor Murray gratefully regathering to score Ireland's first try 10 minutes in.

Ireland's second was far more intricate. A cleverly-worked set play close to the ruck sent Jacob Stockdale racing through a gap, with Scotland's defenders left in the wake of the winger as he touched town to extend Ireland's lead.

Scotland's response came on 29 minutes. Finn Russell's interception of Joey Carbery's pass saw him tackled 5 metres short of the Ireland line, however the Scotland number 10 smartly popped the ball up to centre Sam Johnson to score in only his second test.

Some stoical Irish defence prevented Scotland from scoring again, and when Carbery broke through 15 minutes into the second half, the supporting Keith Earls was on hand to extend Ireland's lead.

Both sides exchanged penalty goals, however Scotland couldn't break through Ireland's brutish defence, which held on to record a 22-13 victory and get the defending champions' Six Nations campaign off the mark.



## BUCS Fixtures 20th February

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

Basketball Men 1st vs Beckett 2nd  
1pm, Arena, Headingley Campus

Fencing Women 1st vs Glasgow 1st  
2.30pm, The Edge  
Fencing Men 1st vs York 1st  
2.30pm, The Edge

Football Women 1st vs Shef Hallam 1st  
TBC, TBC  
Football Men 4th vs York St John 3rd  
TBC, TBC

Golf Mixed 1st vs Newcastle 2nd  
11am, Leeds Golf Centre

Hockey Women 1st vs Liverpool 1st  
TBC, Sports Park Weetwood  
Hockey Women 2nd vs Newcastle 2nd  
TBC, TBC  
Hockey Women 3rd vs Durham 4th  
TBC, TBC  
Hockey Women 7th vs Leeds 8th  
TBC, TBC  
Hockey Men 1st vs Beckett 1st  
5pm, Hockey Pitch, Headingley Campus  
Hockey Men 6th vs Beckett 3rd  
12pm, Hockey Pitch, Headingley Campus

Netball Women 3rd vs Shef Hallam 2nd  
1.30pm, Gryphon Sports Centre  
Netball Women 4th vs Sheffield 2nd  
3.30pm, Gryphon Sports Centre

Rugby League Men 1st vs Gloucestershire  
1st  
TBC, TBC

Rugby Union Women 2nd vs Hull 1st  
2pm, Sports Park Weetwood

Squash Women 2nd vs Shef Hallam 1st  
1.30pm, Gryphon Sports Centre

Tennis Women 2nd vs Liv John Moores 1st  
12pm, David Lloyd Leeds  
Tennis Men 1st vs Beckett 4th  
12pm, David Lloyd Leeds  
Tennis Men 2nd vs Shef Hallam 1st  
12pm, John Charles Sports Centre  
Tennis Men 3rd vs Durham 5th  
TBC, TBC

Volleyball Women 1st vs Derby 1st  
7.30pm, Gryphon Sports Centre



# Bielsa's Boys Back on Top



**Wednesday night saw Swansea City travel across the Pennines to face Leeds United.**

Ryan Wan  
Football

On Wednesday night, Leeds United faced Swansea City at an electric Elland Road. However, in recent weeks, both teams have had issues off the field overshadow their football, with Spygate still looming over Bielsa and the resignation of Huw Jenkins as City's chairman.

The club later issued a statement citing concerns over their recruitment policy. Some have speculated that this may be connected with winger Dan James' failed loan move to Leeds, in which a medical was completed only for the Welsh side to pull out of the deal at the last minute. There were even rumours that Swansea simply refused to pick up Leeds' calls to torpedo the deal.

Regardless, United's form has taken a dip in 2019, with the team managing only three victories since the New Year and only one after the controversial Derby game – a 2-1 win at Rotherham, in which the details behind Spygate were revealed. Despite all this, Leeds were still within touching distance of leaders Norwich, who were only two points ahead of them.

Swansea, on the other hand, were looking to get themselves closer to a playoff spot and back into the Premier League, in which they have resided for the last seven years.

The match had an added dimension too, since Dan James was starting for the Swans, who was so close to becoming a Leeds player on deadline day. However, it was the home side that struck first on the 20th minute through birthday boy Pontus Jansson from a corner that the Swans failed to clear properly.

Both teams had chances following the opener, with United having Roofe's shot going wide and Swansea captain van der Hoorn failing to connect from a set piece. However, it was Leeds that managed to grab the second goal through Jack Harrison, heading home an Ezgjan Alioski cross to put the hosts up 2-0 after 34 minutes.

Chances were few and far between for the travelling team in the second half, but Matt Grimes gave United a shock when his deflected free kick hit the post just after half time. James' appearance came to a rather tame end with the manager choosing to substitute him after 67 minutes, with his would be team keeping the winger relatively quiet throughout the game.

In the end, Swansea were unable to salvage a point at Elland Road despite Luke Ayling gifting a penalty to the away side in the 89th minute. Oli McBurnie slotted it past the keeper, but it was ultimately too late to mount a comeback.

Bielsa was somewhat disappointed with the result, saying: "We deserved to win. It's hard to understand that we only won by one goal because we dominated the game and had many chances."

Although Norwich's loss to Preston played a part in Leeds taking the top spot, it was a good result for the home side, and something that Bielsa will hope to build upon to regain the late 2018 form that saw Leeds climb to the top of the table. On the other hand, Swansea will hope to regroup and make a push for a playoff spot in order to return to the top flight where fellow Welsh rivals Cardiff currently reside.

Leeds' upcoming fixtures are:

- Leeds vs Bolton (home) 23/02 @ 3pm
- Leeds vs QPR (away) 26/02 @ 7.45pm
- Leeds United vs West Brom (home) 01/03 @ 7.45pm
- Leeds United vs Bristol City (away) 09/03 @ 3pm



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A thick, hand-drawn style green wavy line is positioned directly beneath the 'The Gryphon' text.



