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LEADERSHIP RACE

LEEDS 2018



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PRESENTS

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# THE GRYPHON

The official newspaper of Leeds University

[www.thegryphon.co.uk](http://www.thegryphon.co.uk)

@TheGryphonLeeds

Issue 10

23/02/18

## Your New Editor-in-Chief

The three Gryphon candidates take you through their manifestos.

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## Black Panther

The film shaking the foundations of colonialism.

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Science discuss the condition that causes individuals to remember everything.

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Image: Silvia Blanco Tejerina

# Four Weeks of Strike Action Begins

*Proposed Changes to Staff Pensions has Prompted Industrial Action Across 61 University Campuses*

**Reece Parker**  
Editor-in-Chief

Strike action has unfolded across campus this week, with university staff beginning a total of fourteen days of industrial action, spread across four weeks. The University of Leeds is not the only higher education body to be impacted, with 61 universities across the UK experiencing strikes.

This action has been triggered by a dispute between the Universities and College Union, who represent staff, and Universities UK, a body which

represents universities. These two groups have been meeting in what is called the Joint Negotiating Committee (JNC) to renegotiate the Universities Superannuation Scheme but have failed to reach agreement.

Despite over 35 meetings of the committee since the start of 2017, talks between the two bodies haven't been amicably decided upon, and therefore the plans offered by UUK were made decisive by the chair's casting vote.

The dispute centres upon the introduction of a 'defined contributions scheme' for pensions in place of one

with a guaranteed retirement income. This scheme would end guaranteed pension benefits, meaning that final pensions would depend on how investments perform rather than contributions. This has been described by Students Union UCL as staff's financial security depending "entirely on stock market gambling by fund managers".

Analysis by independent experts First Actuarial has suggested that this switch could leave staff £200,000 worse off over the course of their pension. UUK contend that "this figure relates to an

example where someone, not currently a member of the scheme, retires on an annual salary of over £100,000 in today's terms", something which they insist is "certainly not a normal career profile". Moreover, UUK stress that all pension benefits saved up to April 2019 will be unaffected by the changes, and that employers will continue to pay in 18% of salaries into pensions, double the private sector average.

UUK insist that the introduction of the defined contributions scheme is a necessary change, a result of

*Continued on pg.5*



Editors of the Week

Stasi Roe, Jonny Chard, Lydia Varney

With three of our Associate Editors missing in action due to their respective bids for the Editor-in-Chief role, Stasi and Jonny stood up to the plate to cover them like the absolute legends they are. Elsewhere, Lydia also went above and beyond in regards to our Fashion section.

Quote of the Week

“All old men in nursing homes should have their ears and nose hairs trimmed regularly.”

Nigel Yates

Credits

Editor-In-Chief ~  
Reece Parker

Associate Editors ~  
Nancy Gillen  
Robbie Cairns

Digital Associate ~  
Juliette Rowsell

News ~ Rabeeah Moeen,  
Ian White, Jonny Chard

Society ~ Lara Groves,  
Mary Lumley

Features ~ Esther  
Marshall, Jodie Yates,  
Stephanie Uwalaka

Views ~ Lauren Walker,  
Helen Brealey, Kane  
Emerson

Science ~ Sam  
McMaster, Leo Kindred,  
Louise Muller

Business ~ Charlie  
Harrocks, Chloe Pryce

Sport ~ Ryan Wan, Elliot  
Van Barthold, George  
Bains

Satire ~ Chris Tobin

Design ~ Alissa Lad,  
Jenny Thomas, Carys  
Norfor, Nina Whitley-  
Jones

# Editor’s Letter:



Dear Readers,

As you’re likely all aware, especially as you’ve already opened this paper, this week has seen the beginning of strike action across our university, and sixty others, which is set to last fourteen days in all.

Unlike many university newspapers, *The Gryphon* has chosen not to take a distinct editorial line. The reasoning behind this is that charged disputes which involve university staff are often the subject of inflated, vague rhetoric without any sense of subtlety or nuance. I feel that our role in regards to this story is to bring light to this debate, to give the story fullness from both sides so that ultimately you, as readers, can make an informed decision.

Once you have made this decision, it is down to you to act on it. In the few years since a LeadLUU campaign video has gone viral, political engagement across our campus has slumped. Despite the huge student turnout in the general election, this has failed to be represented both in our campus wide elections and in grass roots movements across the student population. This must change. In a world where students are under increasing pressure to perform from every possible angle, respite will only be achieved once we begin to challenge that which we feel is unfair. It doesn’t matter

how you do it. Whether it is joining a picket, writing to someone in a position of power, or emailing me to call me a scab, it is necessary that you must do something.

We are entering a tumultuous and challenging time to be a student. The introduction of the Teaching Excellence Framework and the increasing levels of marketisation within education are undoubtedly troubling. However, they may begin to work in ways in which the government could not predict. With these strikes, many students have begun to sign petitions asking for refunds from their universities, including at Leeds. With students now treated as consumers who are utilizing a pre-paid service, if the university fails to provide a suitable level of education, then why shouldn’t they have to provide a refund? It is becoming clear that we may have reached a situation where marketisation has actually created a stronger bargaining position for unions moving forward, where strike action could be compounded with compensation payments.

The next few years will be a proving time for universities, and it is you who can decide the outcome.

Yours Sincerely,

Reece Parker,  
Editor-in-Chief  
editor@thegryphon.co.uk

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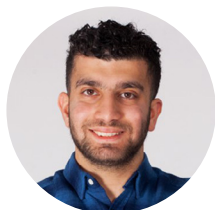


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Campus is full of banners and posters, candidates are hoping for your votes, it can only mean the Student Union elections are on. The 'Search' phase saw over 40 of you put yourselves forward and the 'Debate' phase has seen candidates go 'speed dating' with committee members and answer questions on 'Lead LUU Live'. Voting kicks off on Monday 26th until the end of Thursday. Don't forget, you can rank

So the week began at Graduate Board where I had the opportunity to talk about my experiences at the Postgraduate Officers Conference in early February. I stressed how important mental health provision for PhD students is and how isolating research can be. There are plans to expand the way PGRs are supported and how loneliness can be combated with the help of the

The Leadership Race is upon us. It was over a year ago that I was elected to be your Community Officer, but now it's time for you to pick who I'm passing the mantle to. Best of luck to Laura, Tom and Kathryn for the week ahead. You can check out their manifestos on the Leadership Race website.

You may have noticed that the Community candidates' posters are

Hello, I have decided to do something a little different for this week's column. I would love to highlight and give a massive shoutout to all the new societies that have officially formed in this academic year. I absolutely love new societies that are providing new opportunities and activities in Leeds. A massive thank you to the following societies for all their hard work so far. Mixed Martial Arts, Third Culture Kid,

As voting week approaches, I am so excited to see so many candidates for the position of Equality and Diversity with such fantastic ideas on how to improve campus. Please make sure to check out all candidates manifesto and vote for who you would like to replace me!

As for me, this week I have been working in the refugee and asylum seeker campaign that the exec will

On Thursday I spoke at the NUS Alcohol Impact Conference with our national VP Welfare, Izzy Lenga, who I've loved working with this year. We celebrated the work SU's have done around Alcohol Impact and planned further work for the future. This is an important welfare issue for students, having an impact on mental health, physical health, and safety.

your candidates in order of preference so that if your favourite is knocked out, your vote gets transferred to your next choices until there's a winner!

This week, strike action has begun as UCU members protest proposed changes to staff pensions. It's been great to see so many students engaging with the issues and we remain committed to supporting students with the right information and access to

Postgraduate Research Tutors. The PGR Rep Forum the next day was a good chance to explore this in more depth in an open format as well.

THE 24 HOUR LIBRARY SURVEY IS OUT TOO! Remember how it was one of my main manifesto promises? And even though we are being pushed back, it's vital that students demand for a 24 hour library all year around

a little different to everyone else's. That's because there's a tradition that for the past five years, we've been doing 'paperless' campaigning. Sustainability is an important part of our role, and every year candidates tonnes of paper to win your vote. To try and reduce environmental impact, Community candidates only use upcycled materials for their posters and banners.

Cocktail, International Creative Writing, Actuarial, Bereaved and Young Student Network, Canadian, Marine Science and Conservation, Coppafeel UK Uni Boob Team, Somali, Cryptocurrency and Blockchain and Food for Change. Make sure to check them out on our website.

Also not sure if you have heard about this little thing we are doing called the Leadership Race. VOTE VOTE and V.... remember to try the new, fantastic,

be launching in a few weeks. We will also be tying in our campaign with international women's week and hearing the voices of Women of Colour refugees and the current situation in U.K. detention centres.

We are also entering into a period of strikes and many of you will be affected in many different ways. I urge you to inform yourself on all the information surrounding the strike and politically

This month I'm proud that real progress is being made with the hate crime support project. Now that student ambassadors have been recruited, I'm excited to see the amazing work they carry out this year across the student community. As part of this project, we should have a centralised reporting system for hate crime, sexual assault and online harassment by the end of the academic year.

those involved. Check out our website for more information and advice!

Recently, I've chaired a meeting of our Board of Trustees and we're getting closer to a campaign we're going to run from 5th - 15th of March in solidarity with Refugees and Asylum seekers. There are going to be some great events and initiatives to get involved with, so make sure you keep an eye out!

is communicated. Other universities have one so there's no reason why we shouldn't too! School Reps have the survey so it's worth contacting them and if you don't know who yours is then, email me and I'm happy to send the link over! The LUU twitter account will be tweeting about it so it'll be there too. Make sure you fill it in!

Nightbus update: I promised a year ago to introduce a 'Fruity Bus' that would take you home safely from Fruity when you've lost all your friends and don't have the cash for a taxi alone. We should soon be seeing some changes soon that make it easier to find. After 2am, the Nightbus stop will be moved down to opposite Salad Box.

outstanding, unbelievable, out-of-this-world 'absolute melt' burger in Old Bar. Also I have heard the Bassett's Buttie in Terrace is a bargain at £3 for a chip buttie with cheese and a jug of gravy. What is not to like?

engage with it in anyway you seem fit.

Looking ahead, my next big project is planning for a mental health awareness campaign. I think students are already very aware and passionate about mental health, which is why this year I want to dig a little deeper. I want to continue to focus on accessible and inclusive mental health support - no matter who you are, no matter your mental health condition.

# Campus Watch



## 1 University of Aberdeen Local cat stands for election, makes university hierarchy paws for thought

Hundreds of students at the University of Aberdeen have signed a petition calling for Buttons the cat to be included as a candidate for the position of Rector.

The rector of Aberdeen, a post once held by Winston Churchill, is tasked with representing the interests of students and working with university management.

However, the post has become mired in controversy following accusations of 'dirty tricks' in the previous election, the result of which has now been declared null and void.

Disillusion with the status quo has fueled Button's populist rise. Alex Kither, a third-year history student behind the campaign, said: "There's been an issue between university management and the student body. Often their interests are not taken seriously."

Unfortunately, Buttons has been deemed ineligible to serve as rector by the powers that be. As a cat, he is unable to serve as a trustee of a charity, and therefore can't stand for the position of rector.

Despite this, the feeling of dissatisfaction at Aberdeen hasn't gone away, with students planning on continuing their campaign with a show of support for Buttons at an upcoming hustings.

Ian White

## 2 University of Ulster Students' union calls for 'sexist' professor to be sacked

The students' union of Ulster University has raised demands asking the University to end its association with psychology professor Richard Lynn.

Although professor Lynn no longer works at the University, he holds the title of 'emeritus professor'. The title is often conferred by the university to retired academics who have been illustrious in a particular department.

Some of Lynn's prior work as an academic has been described as controversial in nature. He is alleged to have claimed that black people in sub-Saharan Africa have lower IQs than black people in the USA, and that men have a higher average IQ than women.

The students' union has passed a motion calling for the revocation of Lynn's title. The main reason behind the motion is the belief that the professor advocates views that are "racist and sexist in nature".

The union believes that by continuing to honour him with the 'emeritus professor' title, the University is "giving weight to his statements".

A spokesperson for the Ulster University has said that, "the university has been actively considering this and a decision will be reached shortly".

Sagar Kar

## 3 University of Bolton Vice chancellor criticised for attending 'presidents club' dinner

The Vice Chancellor of the University of Bolton attended the infamous President's Club fundraiser dinner in London where some hostesses claimed they were groped, sexually harassed and propositioned.

Professor George Holmes was at the event at The Dorchester Hotel as a guest of a university business sponsor, but says he told an undercover reporter at the dinner that he felt 'uncomfortable' with the 'influx of hostesses and certain auction lots'.

He also said he did not attend the 'after party' and left the event as soon as it was polite to do so.

A spokesperson for the University & College Union (UCU) said: "It is wrong for a University vice-chancellor to be anywhere near an event like this. Who invited the vice-chancellor, and did he not ask them or check what kind of event it was?"

In a statement, the University of Bolton said: "The University can confirm that its President & Vice Chancellor, Prof. George Holmes, attended The Presidents' Club Charity Dinner event held at The Dorchester Hotel, London on Thursday, 18 January 2018. Prof. Holmes has never previously attended any event held by The Presidents' Club and is not a member."

Ian White

## 4 Ivy League Colleges, USA \$1.5 million for a place at a top university

A lawsuit filed last week by Ivy Coach, a university application consultant, revealed that it charged a woman in Vietnam \$1.5 million to help her daughter apply to 22 elite colleges in the US.

Such high fees are unusual, but it is common for consultants to charge between £800 and £10,000 to help students apply to top institutions.

Ivy Coach is part of a small group of admissions consultants that charge extremely high fees. It has been criticised for favouring those who are more financially stable and privileged and, therefore, depriving low and middle-income students.

Ivy Coach has denied the charge that coaching the children of the super-rich through their applications denies opportunities to poorer students. They claim that top universities already do a lot to attract students from less advantaged backgrounds.

Sophie Denham

## 5 Portsmouth University Vice Chancellor under fire as university spends £800,000 on rebrand

Portsmouth University has been criticised for splashing out on a major rebrand while simultaneously cutting departmental budgets.

Several departments of Portsmouth University were asked to slash between five and seven per cent of their budgets in order to boost income.

Meanwhile, the rebrand of the university, which included the redesign of its logo, may end up costing more than £800,000.

In material obtained under the Freedom of Information Act, it has been revealed that the university set aside £515,000 to replace signs, and £280,000 to "review and invest in the future of our brand".

This includes a 10,000-person consultation on the brand, as well as a redrawn crest and new logo.

Portsmouth said it had chosen to rebrand for 2017 to mark its 25-year anniversary, claiming that "for too long" it had been a "hidden gem".

The university declined to comment on specific payments to design agencies.

Ian White



# Mixed Reception for May's Higher Education Review

Rabeeah Moeen and Ian White  
News Editor

On Monday, Theresa May announced her plans for a higher education funding review that could lead to a reduction in tuition fees.

Other plans for the review include her idea for a focus on vocational qualifications; suggesting that university should not be the sole choice, and education should instead be “flexible” to suit each individual.

The review has received a mixed reception. It has been described as an attempt from the Conservatives to try to entice young voters, who overwhelmingly voted for Labour in the last election.

May said in her announcement that the “competitive market between universities” was not working, as almost all universities charge the maximum amount. She proposed cutting fees for courses in the humanities, based on graduate salaries.

However, University of Bedfordshire vice-chancellor and former higher education minister Bill Rammell disagreed with this approach.

“You can’t judge the value of education based on the salary someone is going to earn [...] it would create a two-tier system with poorer students gravitating towards cheaper degrees,” he stated.

Writing in the Guardian, Shadow Education secretary Angela Rayner said that Theresa May should simply follow Labour’s manifesto instead of calling for a review. This would mean a total abolition of tuition fees. May has argued, however, that those benefiting from education should contribute towards the cost of their tuition.

Although May admitted in her announcement that the UK has “one of the most expensive systems of university tuition in the world,” she failed to acknowledge that it was her party, the Conservatives, who decided to scrap maintenance grants and increase tuition fees to £9,000. May voted in favour of both these measures.

Instead of lowering tuition fees, many have focused instead on the high

living costs in university. A maintenance grant is no longer offered to students beginning university, increasing levels of graduate debt by forcing everyone to rely on loans. When asked, May refused to confirm if maintenance grants were going to be discussed in the review.

The review will be conducted by an independent panel chaired by Philip Augar, a financial writer and former non-executive director of the Department of Education. It will focus on choices within education, value for money, access to further education, and ensuring the system provides the skills needed for the future economy.



## UCU Strike Action Begins

Story Continued From Front Page

“economic changes which could not have been predicted at the last valuation in 2014.” They state that to maintain the current level of benefits, it would require “overall contributions to increase by approximately £1 billion a year”. With the deficit stood at £7.5 billion at the last valuation, they expect the proposed reform to reduce it to £6.1 billion.

UCU assert, however, that these fears are unfounded, citing that the pension scheme currently receives more money than it spends, and that this surplus is growing each year.

Vicky Blake, UCU branch president, has stated that it is “really hard for us to do this”, telling *The Gryphon*:

“No-one cares about our students more than we do. But we hope students will understand we can’t simply let universities senior managers take yet more money away from us. University staff work hard, and have endured years of pay restraint and casualised, insecure contracts while watching many at the top in our universities enjoy great rewards.”

Much of the scrutiny surrounding the strikes is focused upon Vice-Chancellors. The reason for this is twofold. Firstly, as noted by Vicky Blake, “many Vice-Chancellors and very senior managers of universities have separate arrangements for their pensions, in cash, so they will be unaffected by the changes to the USS scheme.” Secondly, Vice-Chancellors are members of UUK, so it is believed that they can pressure the group into tabling a deal more favourable to UCU.

This pressure has manifested in numerous different ways. The Vice-Chancellor’s recent Question and Answer event was populated by questions regarding the strike, whilst templates for writing to him requesting action have circulated around the student body.

We are yet to see how students will ultimately side with the strike. Many sympathise with the perspective, whilst others are frustrated at missing a sustained period of teaching. Students at Leeds University, as well as Edinburgh, Bristol, York, Manchester and others, have begun petitions requested compensation for their missed contact hours. Leeds’ petition currently has over 4000 signatures.

A university spokesperson said:

“While only a minority of our staff are members of the UCU, we are planning for every eventuality, and our priority is to minimise any disruption to students, including through asking striking staff to reschedule their teaching.

“The pension scheme’s multi-billion pound deficit needs to be tackled so that we can provide all staff with a scheme which is sustainable, stable and fair – particularly to younger colleagues who would suffer the consequences of short-term fixes. The University’s standard contribution of 18% of salary to the scheme will continue under the proposed reforms, but we could not support directing more money away from our core academic activity – including teaching – into staff pensions. Five members each of UCU and UUK have been at the negotiating table for more than 30 meetings on this issue. The University has not been directly involved in those discussions and we are encouraging staff to take part in the official consultation that starts next month.

It’s too early to assess the impact although many teaching activities went ahead today, but for those students affected, we know this is a real concern and we’re doing everything we can to ensure they get the right support.”





# #LeadLUU

We meet the candidates vying to be the next Editor-in-Chief of *The Gryphon*



Gillen for Gryphon



Vote Rob for the Job



Nobody Does it Like Juliette

## Nancy Gillen

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

I have been involved with *The Gryphon* for four years now and have progressed from a writer to an editor, and then onto associate editor. I'd really love to take the next step up, take on even more responsibility, and become Editor-in-Chief. *The Gryphon* has been a fundamental aspect of my university life and is one of the reasons why I have loved my time at Leeds so much. As I'm nearing the end of my time as a student, I'd love to give something back and help make other student's university experiences enjoyable. Finally, I think I have some great ideas which will build on the good work carried out by those who have previously held the position, and develop *The Gryphon* into a paper which really acts as a mouthpiece for students.

*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 an editorial agenda. I believe that the paper should foster debate, and always attempt to provide both sides of an argument so that students can be sufficiently educated on the issue and then come to a decision themselves. I don't think *The Gryphon* should ever dictate to students what they should be thinking. If I, as Editor-in-Chief, have a certain opinion on an issue, I would only express it on my platform in the paper – the editorial letter.

*You state that you want to 'ensure diversity,' how will you go about this?*

First, I will make sure that every editor, myself included, is aware of the privilege they have, and that if an issue affecting a minority group is being tackled, editors and writers know it is essential that minority voices are given priority when discussing it. I will also work hard to ensure that *The Gryphon's* content is diverse week in week out, even if it is just making sure that 50% of Sport content covers women's sport. I will always prioritise support and coverage for campaigns which aim to tackle diversity issues on campus, whether that be the 'Why is my Curriculum White?' campaign, the BME Leadership Conference, or the focus on trans issues during LUU's LGBTQ+ month. If possible, I would also like to provide diversity training for the editorial team, so that the importance of these ideas are understood and can be implemented as effortlessly as possible.

*You mention in your manifesto that you wish to include more interaction with students through polls and tweets which will be included in stories. How will you seek to ensure that you get responses from across the student body?*

The wonderful thing about this policy is that it uses social media to obtain student opinions, a platform which, if used correctly, can reach out to a vast range of students. To ensure that polls and hashtags used by *The Gryphon* get responses from across the student

body, I will ask for the union's social media accounts to help share them. This would be beneficial for both, as we each share the same aim of providing a voice for students and allowing them to express opinions. In addition, if the story involved featured a particular issue, I would contact relevant societies and get them to share the poll or hashtag on their social media.

*Editing and running a newspaper is a job which will occupy a substantial amount of time per week. How will you manage to give 'more for members' through journalism training and workshops with this in mind?*

I think that I would make my 'more for members' policy a priority during summer before students return to Leeds. I will start to lay the groundwork then by creating a training schedule for editors, getting in touch with people who could provide talks or networking events, and planning the year ahead to see when such events could take place. If this is done before September, hopefully it will only take a couple of hours per week to keep this policy on track.

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

I am extremely passionate about transforming *The Gryphon* into a paper that truly represents the student body, and into a society that will add to as many student's university experiences as possible.



# Robbie Cairns

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

To prove to myself that I can do the job. I tend to doubt my abilities, but I'm confident that, if elected, I can continue the successes Reece has instigated this year. I love reading other people's written thoughts, and I want to help shape them into something bigger than myself or any individual: a newspaper that represents its students. In the process, if I can give back to students by promoting societies, properly reporting controversial issues on campus, and advertising local businesses. That is something I would be ridiculously proud of.

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

Yes, but not in the sense of an overarching and limiting prescriptive ideology. The agenda should be, above all, to represent the entirety of the student body. This means we should be critiquing the Union and the University in order to make them better, more accessible and representative for ALL students. I do not believe in censoring or 'no-platforming' certain voices. However, if a proposed article is seeking, whether intentionally or unintentionally, to suppress someone else's voice, I will not promote these views.

*One of your key goals is to engage more with societies. At the moment, our society section is only one page of the paper, with just two sub-editors. Do you feel*

*that growing this section will lead you to cutting time effort and space from elsewhere?*

It would be worthwhile employing another Society Editor to increase the speed and depth of our communication with societies, but it wouldn't be necessary to expand the section by cutting pages elsewhere. The focus will instead centre around increasing our interaction and engagement with societies online in an effort that benefits mutually. *The Gryphon* will promote societies and, in turn, those societies promote *The Gryphon*. It may require more effort and organisation, but the benefit this will have to societies across campus, and their prospective members, will be well worth the extra effort.

*You would like to 'facelift The Gryphon' suggesting a redesign and printing on better value paper. Do you feel like this is something you will be able to devote time towards, and something that is economically sustainable?*

I will certainly be able to devote time to it (I wouldn't be running for this position otherwise!), but the costs are an issue. A redesigned or reskinned website would be a large cost up-front for something of genuine quality. However, even if we cannot afford to do so right now, we should be laying the groundwork for a smooth transition by fixing consistent online issues, improving the website's Search Engine Optimisation, and using free plug-ins to improve interactivity. On the other hand, printing *In The Middle* on higher-quality 90gsm paper will be a more consistent cost,

but it would provide a fresh product that we can distribute to venues like the Brudenell Social Club or Hyde Park Book Club.

*When covering student issues, quick turnaround of stories is essential. Do you feel that your aims for in-depth spreads are at odds with this?*

No. Of course, certain immediate issues, such as axe-wielding fugitives or police investigations, require a quick turnaround to immediately inform the student body. But articles which investigate LUU issues can feel rushed and surface-level if not given the adequate space to form an editorial line of argument. If we don't properly hold the Union to account, then it doesn't matter if we have fast turnaround rates. Speed should not outweigh journalistic depth. Staying ahead of events on campus, and allowing ourselves more space to discuss them, means we can give more weight to one side of the argument, and give more space to critical and diverse voices across the University.

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

Because I care way too much about what people think of me and I will therefore do anything to ensure *The Gryphon* looks, reads and feels amazing. I will genuinely work my arse off if given the opportunity. And because I never follow the rules of the question.

# Juliette Rowsell

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

I want to be Editor-In-Chief first and foremost, because I love journalism. I have wanted to be a journalist since I was 15, and have written and edited for a number of sites ever since. After working on *The Gryphon* for two years, I believe that I know certain key areas where we can improve, and believe that I have identified clear policies on how to tackle these issues. I want to be able to help to make *The Gryphon* the best it can be, and to help create a paper that we are all proud of.

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

I think it is naïve to believe that a paper can be apolitical. In previous years, there have been articles printed which have claimed that certain forms of discrimination do not exist. These have been printed in the name of 'giving everyone a voice' and 'diversity of opinions', however, when things like this are printed, it is taking away the voice of many. As student voting patterns in last year's election showed, our students support progressive and liberal attitudes, and our paper should reflect this. When only 90 people voted in the union referendums recently, we should not be scared of engaging in highly-charged political discourse.

*A key goal outlined in your manifesto is to improve diversity within our team of writers. How will you seek to actively attract writers from different communities?*

I think that we should work alongside the Equality and Diversity Officer, or even introduce our own Diversity Officer, to ensure greater diversity of writers. Our Features editors this year are organising a BME writers' workshop, and we should be committed to holding such events every year. Furthermore, I think that when it is approaching global events like LGBTQ+ History Month, we should be approaching LGBTQ+ society and asking them if they have any members who might have something they might want to talk about in *The Gryphon*. Too often we expect writers to come to us, but, as journalists, we should be approaching people to find hard-hitting stories. I also believe that by introducing workshops, we will attract a greater pool of writers who do not necessarily have the 'traditional' journalist background, making *The Gryphon* more accessible.

*When responding to newsworthy events, rapid turnaround is integral to good journalism. Do you see your aim to include the work of designers, photographers and illustrators in stories at odds with this?*

Not at all: after all, a photograph can be a quicker way to report a story than an article can. When I talk about designers, photographers and illustrators, I am not only talking about for the paper, but for

online, too. Ultimately, I want the paper to create the most amount of opportunities for the most amount of people, which is what I believe this policy helps enable. Plus, I think we should have a more attractive paper, which looks as good as it reads.

*With your aim to 'uncover Leeds' how would you integrate this into the current paper format?*

I think we should change the current 'Society' section from one that focuses purely on university societies, to one that focuses on the greater Leeds community. In renaming this section 'Community', it would allow the section to still focus on such societies, but broaden it to feature the fantastic work of local Leeds charities and organisations. Also, I believe that the arts' sections could include more pre-emptive event round-ups rather than just reviews, so that you know about all the fantastic events going on in Leeds before it's too late.

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

I believe that I have identified clearly points where we could improve *The Gryphon*, and clear policies on how to tackle these issues. With my prior experience in journalism and passion for making the paper the best it can be, I believe that I am the right person to bring the best change to *The Gryphon* to make it a more engaging and exciting paper that truly covers issues that matter to you. Nobody does it like Juliette!



# ‘B’ Stands for Bisexual

As part of our LGBTQ+ series, Emma Hooker discusses the lack of positive bisexual representation and how this can lead to people struggling to find acceptance of their sexuality.



Image: RedBubble

Emma Hooker

It's 2018 and LGBTQ+ History Month is upon us once again. There is so much history worth celebrating within our community, including this year being the forty-year anniversary of our beloved rainbow pride flag. However, when we look at history or even our contemporary culture, a strange and fascinating phenomenon occurs: bisexuality (and other multiple gender attraction) is too often belittled, skirted around, omitted and dismissed completely.

Anne Frank, known for her infamous diary, is a prime example of someone who has had her history omitted. When originally published, it was edited to remove the accounts which affirm her attraction to women. Annelise in the popular series, *How To Get Away With Murder*, is referred to as 'complicated' rather than 'bisexual'. Piper of *Orange Is The New Black* is repeatedly referred to as 'straight' or 'a lesbian' depending on who she is currently involved with. Countless bisexual and pansexual comic book characters such as Deadpool, Harley Quinn, Poison Ivy, Mystique, Spider-Man and Catwoman have appeared on film, but they have all only explicitly engaged in heterosexual relationships.

*“it feels like bisexuality isn't a valid response.”*

As a pansexual woman, I am perhaps more likely to notice bisexual erasure than some of my heterosexual and homosexual counterparts, but being attracted to multiple genders is increasingly commonplace. According to recent surveys, within the demographic group aged 18-34, more than a quarter of people identify as LGBTQ+, with half of that community

experiencing attraction to more than one gender. This corresponds to one in eight people of the general population, approximately eight million people across the UK. Out of curiosity, I surveyed 14 men and 26 women to see whether these statistics were reflected. 17 identified as something other than heterosexual, but more pertinently, seven women and five men explicitly identified themselves as bisexual or pansexual. For my focus group, at least one in four experienced attraction to multiple genders.

With these statistics, you would hope to be bombarded with positive bisexual representation. However, according to GLAAD (the Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation), less than 5% of regular and recurring characters in television and Netflix series are LGBTQ+, with less than 1.5% of characters being bisexual. Even worse, less than a third of these bisexual characters are male. To put that into perspective, there are approximately 5,800 regular and recurring characters in total where just 83 are bisexual and only 19 are bisexual men.

The lack of positive representation for bisexuals leads to a second phenomenon: biphobia. Many people are aware of the classic stigmas and stereotypes against the bisexual community, but one stereotype is more harmful and present than others: that we do not exist at all. Many, if not most, people will say that they know a bisexual person or that they acknowledge bisexuality does exist. However, bisexual people are routinely discriminated against and attacked for their sexuality, so often forced to try and explain themselves, to pick a side, or reveal 'what percentage' heterosexual or homosexual they are, that it feels like bisexuality isn't a valid response. This results in internalised biphobia; bisexuals themselves are made to feel so uncomfortable with their identity that they try and force themselves into mono-sexual moulds.

When I was a teenager, I identified as a lesbian for a period because, if I didn't, my attraction to women was not taken seriously. Men assumed that my bisexuality was for their benefit, a turn-on for them, whilst women assumed I just couldn't get a boyfriend. I am not the only one to have experienced this. Of the twelve bisexuals I

*“Piper of Orange is the New Black is repeatedly referred to as ‘straight’ or ‘a lesbian’ depending on who she is currently involved with.”*

spoke to before writing this piece, five expressed that at some point they thought they must be gay, and one assumed that she must be straight and 'faking' her own attraction to women since she was also attracted to men. Seven expressed they wish or wished they could alter their sexuality to be straight as it would be 'simpler' and three wished they were either straight or gay, but not bisexual. Another three actually went so far as to temporarily identify as gay. Five otherwise questioned their bisexuality in ways different to those above, marking 'internal debate and struggle', 'trying to hide part of [themselves]', and feeling 'pressure to choose'.

Bisexual is still a word rarely spoken, and it is time for that to change. Slowly, we are making progress. Television shows like *Brooklyn Nine-Nine* made headlines with Rosa Diaz's announcement that she is 'bisexual', and *Crazy Ex-Girlfriend* features a middle-aged man's coming out story in a musical number called 'Getting Bi', but there is still a long way to go. We need the world to stop invalidating our sexuality by making it a word we cannot see, hear or say. We are not 50% gay and 50% straight, we are 100% bisexual.



# Black Panther: the Film Shaking the Foundations of Colonialism

The Gryphon explores the importance of Black Panther and how its celebration of diverse black culture has the power to influence.

Victoria Beyai

*Black Panther* is saturated with colour and that really matters. From the technicolour world, constructed by cinematographer Rachel Morrison, to the cast who are, to borrow from an popular black hair line, 'dark(-skinned) and lovely', the film's politics are woven into its very fabric paralleling the Wakandan's depositing of vibranium into their clothes. Over the course of 135 minutes, both subtly and boldly, the film's co-writers, Joe Robert Cole and Ryan Coogler, pull at the threads of colonialism that underpin global hierarchies. Whilst they are never wholly toppled, and perhaps never could be in blockbuster with a budget of \$200 million that is itself implicated in such hierarchies, these moments destabilise their foundations.

When cinemas globally fill with laughter at Shuri calling white, C.I.A agent Everett Ross 'coloniser', the laughter it invites is powerful. Unlike Elon Musk and his SpaceX company who hope to land humans on Mars in the not too distant future, Shuri has no interest in using her technological genius to colonise foreign lands. Wakanda's most talented inventor is not pale, male (and stale) like James Bonds' Q, instead she's a sixteen-year-old girl who cites memes and whose sleek white outfits only further highlight her brilliant blackness.

Shuri's zinging lines, often revolving around white men, expose the historic truths and persistent patterns of of power that haunt us today. Wakanda may not exist but it is still potent as a what if? Wakanda's fictional present represents what the African continent may have looked like before its people were stolen, its lands sliced up at Berlin Conference, resources plundered and it was saddled with debt. It's a country that exists outside of the constellation of colonial time but not without an awareness of its devastating effects and the danger of visibility. To be seen leaves you vulnerable. And if you are black in the West the spectre of hyper- visibility, it can leave you drained or even dead.

Wakanda hides so it isn't pillaged like the countries

that surround it have been. Killmonger's pointed questions in the provocatively named "Museum of Great Britain" are spoken not just to the white, female curator with a plummy accent, which may also describe the majority in university art history courses, but to the world. Our Great British Museums are stuffed with artefacts that were stolen or unfairly traded. Her stupefied response to his rhetorical questions of "How do you think your ancestors got these? Do you think they paid a fair price? Or did they take it, like they took everything else?" is as powerful as the edge of the artefact he steals and the fact that she is ignorant to the item's history despite her being the 'expert'. Wakandan artefacts may be fictional but there are 'Great' British Museums stuffed with African artefacts, such as the Benin bronze heads, that were plundered or unfairly traded and now sit on shelves that seek to dislocate them from their bloody past.

*"The refusal to assimilate is one of the most powerful ways in which the film shows its revolutionary bent."*

The refusal to assimilate is one of the most powerful ways in which the film shows its revolutionary bent. Although crafting a fictional world the production designer, Hannah Beachler, drew on real African places and people. The things you see in the film have roots on the continent and provide routes into it. When the camera sweeps into its streets, Wakanda's urban landscape thrums like Lagos. The blanket Daniel Kaluuya's W'kabi is ensconced in for much of the film is a Basotho blanket. T'Challa speaks to his father in Xhosa and the viewer is reminded of our Otherness as it is subtitled. In all of these little ways the film attests to the importance and value of black creativity in all of its endless expressions. Even Killmonger, who was raised in the US, seeks to circumvent Western rules and rulers, in his own way, by toppling white supremacy that wreaks havoc

of communities of colour globally. The film may allow a C.I.A agent to end this plan but it still gives the space for different iterations of blackness and their revolutionary power. The film holds all these moments of liberation together at once ricocheting off one another to resist dominant confining models of blackness that are often rooted in trauma. The film's showcasing of black culture in all its diverse forms has inspired black people globally to don their traditional clothes in their own refusal to assimilate. Seeing characters being black and proud is inviting viewers to be black and proud themselves.

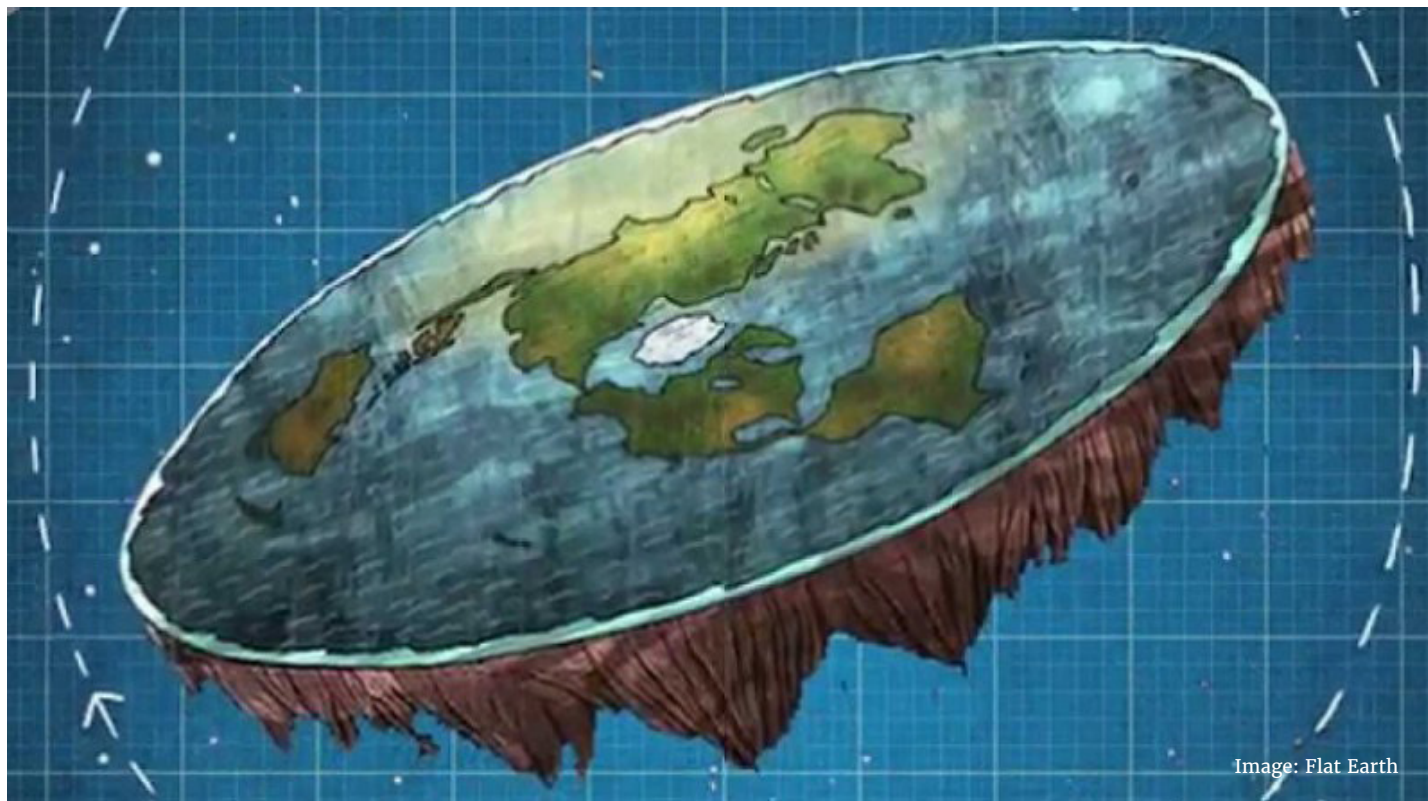
Whilst representation matters so does cold, hard cash. The film's \$169 million opening weekend box office demonstrates that black-helmed stories matter and make money. As much as the film is steeped in imagining an alternate African present outside of the numerous horrors that have visited the diaspora, we live in what academic bell hooks terms the "imperialist white-supremacist capitalist patriarchy". That the film smashed through records and eventually became the fifth largest opening weekend in the US ever, taking \$169 million, really means something. Recent successes such as *Girl's Trip*, *Moonlight* and *Black Panther* are making it harder and harder to argue that projects helmed by black directors and populated by black casts do not and will not make money. However, that box-office money is still largely lining the pockets of white-owned corporations and pales in comparison to the £20 million (over £2 billion adjusted for inflation) the British government pledged to reimburse slave-owners for the abolition of slavery.

Gill Scott-Heron ends his poem 'The Revolution Will Not Be Televised' (1970) with the following pronouncement: "The revolution will not be televised [...] The revolution will be live". Maybe the revolution comes via the voter registration being done by Movement for Black Lives at screening throughout the US. Or maybe it will arrive from revolutionaries inspired by watching *Black Panther* and seeing people who look like them fifty feet high unapologetically black, loving each other and shushing white men.





# Society Spotlight: Flat Earth



**Lara Groves**  
Society Editor

In a postmodern society underscored by cutting-edge science and technology, you may be forgiven for feeling like we know everything there possibly is to know about life as it stands. Where do we go from here?

'Flat Earthers', however, urge us to rethink what many have always known to be true: that the Earth is round. Society editor, Lara Groves, sat down with Leeds University *Flat Earth Society* co-founder, Tom Birchy, to find out how and why they're going against the curve.

**Hi guys. For the purposes of introduction please provide a bit of background on Leeds Flat Earth for our readers. What is Leeds Flat Earth Society, in a nutshell?**

The Leeds University *Flat Earth Society* was founded in Bluebird Coffeeshop, Amsterdam. This was after a long weekend on a trip led by the University Law Society. We realised that there was no *Flat Earth Society* in Leeds, and so we left at the opportunity to start one. We advocate Flat Earth theories, attempting to spread our ideas to open-minded individuals. We understand that this society is not for everyone, and we respect the ideas and beliefs of those who believe Earth is round.

**Could you please explain the rationale behind the Flat Earth theory for those who have tended to take a more rounded perspective up until now?**

A brilliant pun, one of my favourites. The main explanations behind the theory of Flat Earth Societies around the world are, as follows. It is impossible to observe curvature of the earth with the human eye from any point on earth. That includes the top of Mount Everest. Surely one should be able to see some evidence of curvature from 8,848m above sea level? Secondly, water is always level. It is impossible for water to maintain a curvature in any container, as a result we conclude that the oceans must therefore be level. There are many other experiments which show the earth to be flat, however you may research

these for yourself. Be careful what you read however, as some who relate to Flat Earth theories put little research into their material and can share misleading information.

**Are you any different to other 'Flat Earthers?' Are you the upper crust of Flat Earth Societies?**

What makes the Leeds University sports teams different from other sports teams? We are merely a vessel for which other like-minded individuals can gather and discuss topics which we enjoy. We don't think there is anything to separate us from other Flat Earthers as we are all essentially trying to achieve the same goal.

**What kind of people would you like to see joining Leeds Flat Earth? Are scientists allowed?**

We welcome anyone with an open mind and a question to ask. Scientists are allowed to join the *Flat Earth Society*, however those who attempt to explain unknown things with vague, unintelligible answers such as 'gravity does it' (without explaining how they know this for sure, when after all gravity is still just a theory) are treated with the same disdain as those who believe that Father Christmas delivers presents on Christmas. Numerous Flat Earth believers are scientists and of course they are welcomed into our group.

**I reckon it's a brilliant concept for a night: Flat Earth Society hosts: 'The Edge of Leeds: Fall off with me'. Regular events are hugely important for a society, have you got anything exciting on the horizon?**

One of our founders is involved with planning nightclub events, so we feel that we should use that experience to bring a host of fun Flat Earth themed nights. After all, you're not much of a society if you don't have boozy nights patrolling the dancefloor of The Warehouse on a Wednesday night wearing a shirt (possibly blue) and a tie (possibly pink).

**What is at the edge of the world?**

The light soaks the soul Taken beyond physical Earth, sky become one. To put it bluntly, we don't know. It could just be space as the general population believes it to be, after all, many Flat Earthers believe that space exists in an identical way to how you believe space to work. However, they believe that earth is unique and that we are the product of intelligent design. We could be alone in the universe, with only our creator for company. This could explain why earth is flat yet no other planets are. However, other Flat Earthers consider the edge of the earth to lead to a point of nothingness. This may be what you consider the typical Flat Earth believer to think. As we have tried to express, there are numerous theories behind this.

**And what do you think is on the other side of the earth?**

This answer is impossible to give as nobody is able to provide the correct one. The deepest that has ever been dug into the earth is the Kola Superdeep Borehole at 12.2km. As this is some distance (we think) from the 'other side' it is impossible to say for sure what is there.

**In recent months there has been increased visibility to the Flat Earth theory thanks to a number of celebrity endorsers, including such stalwart names as B.O.B, Freddie Flintoff and Shaquille O'Neal. Do you think this has been beneficial?**

Yes, any publicity is good publicity (just look at our interview in The Tab). We feel that celebrity publicity of Flat Earth theories can only increase the awareness of the matter.

**Is there anyone or anything you would like to see pushed off the edge of the earth (thinking Pandora's Box.. its not that deep)?**

I speak for both of the founders of Leeds University *Flat Earth Society* when I write that we would only like for one thing to be 'pushed off the edge' - and that is Jeremy Corbyn.



# In the Middle



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

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Image: Meshe11 Ndegeocello

# LGBTQ+ Music Icons: Then and Now

The world of music would be both very different and much less interesting without the numerous contributions from members of the LGBTQ+ community. Coinciding with LGBTQ+ history month, here are some highly celebrated artists, both old and new.

## Freddie Mercury

A talented musician and performer, Freddie Mercury will always be remembered for his flamboyant stage presence and powerful voice. As the frontman of a band that rose to stratospheric fame, Mercury's voice is firmly imprinted in the mind of all music lovers. Mercury's unabashed engagement with femininity onstage paved the way for many more queer artists experimenting with their performances. His tragic passing in 1991 as a result of HIV is far from the defining part of his legacy: people will always appreciate Freddie, a true queer icon.

## David Bowie

Another outrageous and experimental performer, David Bowie is an inspiration for many. His onstage personas bent the rules and overturned gender norms, and he was a trailblazer of glam rock. As well as being a talented musician, he was a huge influence and help for other musicians and their careers. Publicly declaring his bisexuality and experimenting with gender expression makes Bowie a favourite among many, and nobody can deny that he changed the face of music.

## Sylvester

An openly gay black singer, Sylvester was an important part of the disco music scene and even earned the moniker "Queen of Disco", rivalling the likes of Donna Summer. Sylvester embraced the support of the gay community and acted as a spokesman, although he wasn't without his criticisms of some of the trends within the community at the time. After his death in 1988, all future royalties of his music was dedicated to two AIDS charities.

## Joan Jett

Jett was the queer woman that rock needed, in a genre filled with straight white men. Plucky and defiant, and a talented guitarist, she never wanted her sexuality to define her or her work. Reacting against the belief that 'girls can't play rock', she led a pioneering all-female band in her teens, and then became the frontwoman to Joan Jett and the Blackhearts. Opening up about her sexuality in more recent years has identified her as an important queer rock-star.



Meshell Ndegeocello

As singer-songwriter, rapper, bassist and vocalist whose work incorporates many different genres, Meshell is a verified musical legend. With ten Grammy nominations under her belt, and wide critical acclaim, she is another member of the LGBT community who has contributed strongly to the music scene, and left a great legacy. As an out bisexual and participant in activism, Meshell is an inspiration for many people all over the world.

Frank Ocean

Frank Ocean exploded onto the scene with Channel Orange in 2012, being recieved to great commercial and critical acclaim. Alongside this he wrote an open letter, detailing his first and unrequited love for another man, and coming out as queer. This move attracted great amounts of support from the rest of the music community, and Ocean is lauded as one of the most talented musical voices of this generation.

Young M.A

As a woman and a lesbian, Young M.A is somewhat of an anomaly in the world of rap. She includes this aspect of her identity in her music, and says that it is a welcome release after years of hiding her sexuality. In the saturated world of hip hop, it's refreshing to see an out queer woman like Young M.A enjoying success.

Tegan and Sara

These identical twin sisters are both openly gay, and take part in activism for the LGBT community. They have created a visible queer presence on the music scene, and have been honoured with a GLAAD media award for their hard work and contributions to representation and activism, and have had a long career in the music scene.

Skylar Kergil

Kergil is a trans singer-songwriter and activist, who has been documenting his transition on YouTube since 2009. This has given viewers valuable education about gender identity and different aspects of the experience of being transgender. He has a large internet following, and has released both an EP and an album, funded by Kickstarter.

Ella Durant

... and Future



Image: Frank Ocean



Image: Syd



Image: Hayley Kiyoko



Image: MUNA

MUNA

'I know a place we can go/ Where everyone gonna lay down their weapon' MUNA sing on 'I Know A Place' – a song in tribute to victims of the Orlando nightclub shooting in 2016. Three piece LA band MUNA want to create a safe haven in their brooding but heartfelt pop. With a synth heavy

sound akin to Haim but with a gothier aesthetic, MUNA surprisingly supported Harry Styles on his North American tour this year. Defining themselves as ambiguously 'queer', they have decided to ditch all gender pronouns from their lyrics and instead focus on making their music as inclusive and unifying as it can be.

Syd

You may know Syd from Kaytranada's 'You're the One' or maybe you recognise her name from when she was part of the hip hop collective Odd Future. However you know Syd, you may know that she is an artist of many talents; a DJ, producer, singer, rapper and sound engineer, it's astonishing that she is only twenty five yet has so much to put her name to. Although she has had her fair share of controversy, she has reconnected with the queer community since and reviewed her past associations. Check out sultry number 'Girl' from one of her many projects, The Internet, for some killer beats and a surprisingly hard to find gay female perspective on today's R&B scene.

ANOHNI

Not one to shy away from the political or pressing issues of our generation, ANOHNI is a trans pop star in her own right. With her uniquely compelling voice, and often sombre tinged pop, ANOHNI has already received an Academy Award nomination for Best Original Song for her dark electronic track 'Manta Ray' which appeared in 2015 documentary *Racing Extinction*.

Hayley Kiyoko

It's a great year for Hayley Kiyoko so far. She's come into her own since her first internet break with 'Girls Like Girls' back in 2015. Now she's the star of her own videos and she completely owns every queer second of it. Hayley's electro pop hits are drenched in feeling: she writes about the trials and tribulations of relationships, unrequited desire and complicated love triangles. Besides self-directing her own beautifully aesthetic music videos, Kiyoko is famously candid about the same-sex romances she sings about, and aims to inspire confidence in those who have ever felt unsure about being open about their sexuality for fear of judgement or rejection. Her debut album can't come soon enough.

The Magic Fountain

Fronted by openly queer Tom Lizo, The Magic Fountain has its roots in the indie DIY world when it was formed back in 2014, and describes their music as 'queer rage that doesn't alienate people.' While they cite Jeff Rosenstock and Bomb The Music industry! as their musical influences, their lyrics deal with issues of self-exploration, personal expression, and negotiating experiences of abusive relationships. As singer and guitarist Tom Lizo wants to get across through the band's punchy punk rock: 'People should just be allowed to be who they are and like what they like and not be so worried about keeping up appearances'.

Tash Lyons

# Rap's Future is Female. Get Used to it.

It's no question that women have played a vital part in the evolution of rap and hip hop. So why are female rappers so often overshadowed by their male counterparts?



Lady Leshurr

It seems reductive to brand 2018 as the year of female rap, seeing as the likes of Lauryn Hill, Lil' Kim and Missy Elliot - to name but a few - have been killing it for decades. Nevertheless, it's impossible not to feel as though we are on the brink of a renaissance of utter girl power in the world of hip-hop, with talent rising up the ranks to match, and often surpass, the exposure of their male counterparts. In an industry fresh from the sudden and unprecedented success of bona fide Bronx boss Cardi B, who brazenly scored the first US No. 1 from a female rapper in two decades with her smash-hit 'Bodak Yellow', it looks like a new chapter is beginning for the women of rap. So, who are the stars of the genre's new generation?

What is most striking about the canon of up-and-coming female rappers is the variety of personalities and styles taking hip-hop by storm. Take the larger-than-life Chicago viral sensation CupcakKe for example. Her raunchy one-liners and sexually explicit lyrics give her tracks an

absurdly bold attitude; yet under her superficial layer of outrageousness lies a worthy message of love and acceptance, for instance her gay anthem 'LGBT'. Alternatively, you could go for the masked magic of Leikeli47, the balaclava-donning Brooklyn MC who effortlessly mixes high-energy productions with masterful lyricism to create some of the most pumping, twerk-inducing tracks you are likely to ever hear, as evidenced by her two critically acclaimed EPs, *LK-47* and its follow-up *LK-47 PT.II*. Female rap icons are everywhere; take a look at the fearlessly fly Princess Nokia, whose feminist podcasts and politically-driven music make her the perfect icon for the socially-conscious audiences of 2018. Apart from appearing under the same umbrella of musical genre, the aforementioned artists share very few similarities. Clearly, rap has never seen such diversity and consequently the scene has never been so rich.

Things are faring well on this side of the pond as well. The breakthrough of



Nadia Rose

Croydon rapper Nadia Rose is one of both commercial and critical success, with her cheeky lyrical punchlines leading to her meteoric rise. From mulling over bars during shifts in a betting shop, to a spot on the BBC's prestigious annual 'Sound Of...' poll and a killer set at Glastonbury, Nadia Rose is spitting in the face of

**"With such an array of talent on offer, how can you resist the women of rap?"**

patriarchal dominance within rap. By fusing together the look of glamour and luxury with the grit of grime, Stefflon Don too has been tipped for stardom as she has been branded "the UK's great hip-hop hope". Similarly, who can ignore the popularity of Solihull showstopper Lady Leshurr, who can now be found on *Forbes*' "30 under 30" list, and whose series of Queen's Speeches - all delivered with a thick and slick Brummy

brogue - became viral.

Although the current triumphs of female rappers are certainly cause to celebrate, it is important to remember the deep-rooted misogyny that plagues hip-hop. As Leshurr herself has said: "The only way to promote female rappers is to pit them against each other. It pushes the gaps between us - girl rappers are afraid to work together because we get fixed in these imaginary competitions. The industry just doesn't know what to do with women."

Still, the genre may have a long way to go before its women are treated as true equals, but what is needed is a canon of bold and daring females to drag the industry out of its antiquated sexism into the present day. With such an array of talent on offer, how can you resist the women of rap?

**Alex Gibbon**

## Making Music Herstory Vol VI: Syd

Syd, having dropped 'Tha Kyd' for her solo venture, is hardly unknown. In fact, she's been making waves with her music for years. She was the only founding female member of hip hop collective Odd Future, and helped their rise to fame by setting up a fake PR firm to get the music press to recognise their outlandish and profane music.

As the lead singer for The Internet, she creates wonderfully chilled-out, hip hop. Her recent solo album *Fin* is entirely self-produced and shows her to really be the true master of vibes.

Having joined Odd Future when she was just 16 years old, Syd stood out from an early age. It was her wile and cunning in her behind-the-scenes role as producer that put the group into the public eye for the first time. Her creation of The Internet, however, was a huge leap for Syd: she had never sung professionally before.

From novice to lead singer, she has mastered her instrument, developing stylistically into clever electro hip hop, producing music that seduces you, draws you into her world and refuses to let

you leave. Particularly on *Fin*, Syd writes beautiful love songs about women. This is so refreshing in terms of perspective, because it has given us some accurate and beautiful representations of lesbians in music. 'Body' is sensual and intimate; it puts you in the moment and makes you never want to leave.

But woe betide any music journalist who thinks that they can class Syd's music as 'queer hip hop'. Syd, in an interview with *Faster Louder*, said: "I'm not interested in just being seen as a gay singer. I didn't ever want people to listen

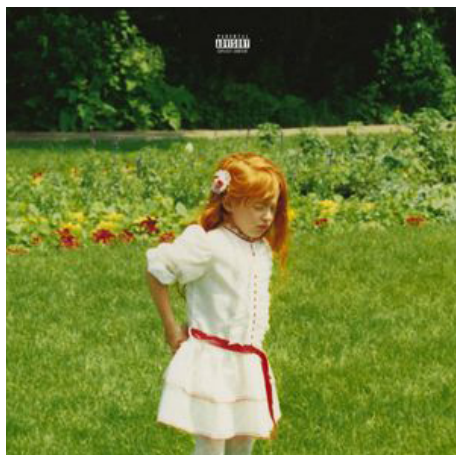
to me [...] because I'm gay. I wanted people to listen to my music because they were feeling it."

Part of the new generation of modern women carving out spaces for themselves all over the music industry, Syd's odd future will be anything but boring.

**Jemima Skala**



# Best of the Rest



## Rejjie Snow

*Dear Annie*

Rejjie Snow is not your quintessential rapper. Hailing from Dublin, an area hardly synonymous with hip-hop, and already one of Ireland's most successful exports, Snow is an anomaly who is both refreshing and intriguing. *Dear Annie* has finally been released into a world that has been craving more from the rapper, with Snow having teased his debut album for years while his career generated a modest buzz with several accomplished mixtapes. Preceded by a pair of corresponding EPs, the ambitious album has a sprawling track-list of 20 songs that travel between numerous musical styles and influences. *Dear Annie* moves fluidly between jazz, soul, funk, hip-hop and RnB and this eclectic mix is only to be expected from the guy who has supported both Kendrick Lamar and Madonna.

Romance is the theme of Snow's debut as he embarks on a complex journey through the highs and lows of love. Giving the well-worn topic a fresh twist with his lyrical dexterity, the emotional complexity of *Dear Annie* matches its genre-bending ambition. Snow, who now resides in Brooklyn and belongs to stateside label 300 Entertainment, has adopted a smooth American croon. However, his Irish accent shines through on a series of intermissions where a late-night radio host invites Snow to discuss the stories behind his sound. Sensual slow-jams 'Mon Amour' and 'Desole' see Snow rapping in French while 'Spaceships,' 'Charlie Brown' and single 'Egyptian Luvr' are funky feel-good hits. The album includes collaborations with strong female voices including Anna of the North, Dana Williams and Caroline Smith.

*Dear Annie* simultaneously looks forwards and backwards - it is inspired by the funk and soul of the past while challenging what it means to drop a debut hip-hop album today. It may be early in 2018 but Snow's album promises to be one of the most innovative and defining records of the year.

Alex Coogan

Lucy Milburn



Image: Meg Firth

## Ezra Furman

*At Brudenell Social Club, 3/2*

Ezra Furman basks in the weird and beautiful realm of bluesy punk in an epic show at the Brudenell. With no support and an almost two-hour set, Furman pulls off this ambitious task and proves his place as one of music's most theatrical and captivating live performers.

Furman is an enchanting presence; wide-eyed and gasping over every word, he seems fraught with restless energy and a desire to please. It's exactly that which he achieves in a set that meanders through a versatile range of twists and turns. He seamlessly shifts between the dark and contemplative ('No Place') and tongue in cheek jaunty bops ('Suck The Blood From My Wound'). One of the fascinations of Furman's work lies in its abstract and complex tendencies; while crafting many a catchy tune, Furman also manages to address and question issues of religion, sexuality, disassociation, and gender in his lyrics.

Furman's wry humour doesn't go amiss either. He smirks coyly as he begins the first few chords of the suggestively titled, 'Peel My Orange Every Morning'. "These are all classics, you just don't know it yet", he offers as an introduction to the material off the new album, *Transangelic Exodus*. It's an evening of firsts as Furman admits to having never played some of the songs on the album to a live audience. There's some unusual choices as Furman shreds through a Bruce Springsteen cover and later an impassioned version of Kate Bush's stomping 'Hounds of Love', but it's the nostalgic 'My Zero' that wins the highlight of the night. We've seen the many faces of Ezra Furman this evening; you can't help but think of how exhausted he must be.

Tash Lyons

## The Lovely Eggs

*At Brudenell Social Club, 9/2*

"I don't want to see any folded arms" lead singer and guitarist Holly Ross commands to the rows of people stood awkwardly at the front. This sets the tone of the whole concert, as Lancaster-based band The Lovely Eggs are all about making people have a good time, encouraging people to dance and "have a party". The psychedelic punk rock band succeed in creating an energetic atmosphere at their sold-out gig at Brudenell Social Club, with all 'arm-folders' giving in to the fast-paced, catchy music.

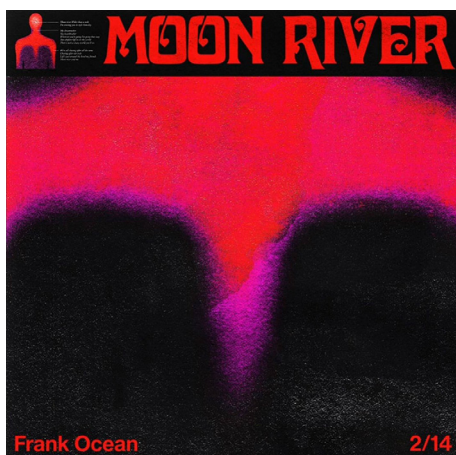
The band are promoting their new album, *This is Eggland*, which included songs like 'Wiggy Giggy' and 'I Shouldn't Have Said That'. Their two support acts were successful in drawing a large crowd, with the first act being four-piece folk-pop band Mr. Ben & the Bens followed by the hilarious Porky the Poet (a.k.a Phill Jupitus).

Despite being a two-piece band, The Lovely Eggs took command of the stage and gave off arguably more energy than that of larger bands. Holly showed her impressive skills as she thrashed around the stage with her guitar despite being very hungover (the first thing she admitted to the audience after walking on stage). This is no surprise considering they are only two gigs into their tour, yet their solid performance suggests that every gig will be a 'party'.

As their name suggests, The Lovely Eggs were quirky from start to finish, as both Holly and drummer David Blackwell wore matching capes and colourful tights. The audience was very diverse in age, showing how their eccentric aesthetic appeals across the board. The band encouraged audience participation and asked hecklers to speak up so they could hear them, often resulting in embarrassment for the hecklers. Their set included the songs 'Magic Onion' and 'Would You F\*\*k!', both receiving enthusiastic audience reactions.

They ended the night on a more serious note as they asked the audience to take a leaflet about anti-fracking, showing the band to be multi-dimensional and using their platform for a good cause. The Lovely Eggs certainly have more to them than their name might suggest, as their potentially esoteric music turned out to be incredibly appealing and overall an extremely likable, talented band.

Lucy Ingram





# Pearson Sound Plays it Safe



Credit: Wire

It was a typical Friday night at Wire, with a queue stretching out of the door and onto the ever-buzzing Call Lane. I spoke to an overly enthused club-goer, off his head with excitement for the, “unpredictability of Pearson Sound’s sets.” Having not been to a Pearson Sound set before, my education has been developed on Youtube, with tracks such as ‘Glut’ and ‘Work Them’ from his Ramadanman days, alongside countless Boiler Room sessions. I came expecting a strong dose of left-of-centre garage,

breakbeat and house, and was very much intrigued by the talk of an absolute curve-ball set.

However, I was sadly mistaken. Disco-house prevailed as I set foot in the Wire basement: a classic Leeds ‘sound’ and one which I am very much an advocate for at the right moments. But personally, Friday was not the night. Perhaps he felt an urge to cultivate his set around a homage to his old stomping ground of the Hessle’s, of which his record label is named after. Combined, maybe,

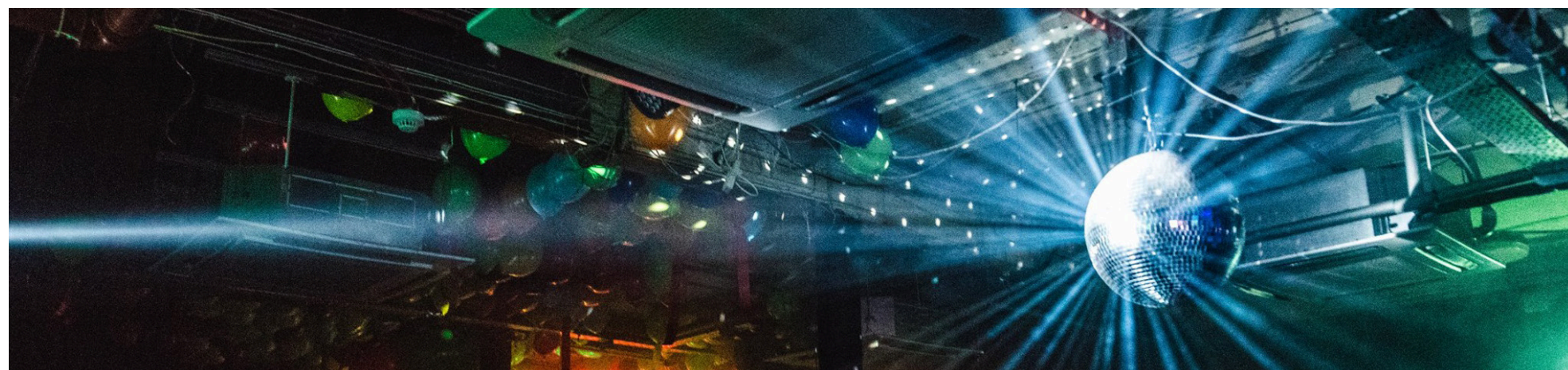
with returning to play Acetate’s 25th installment, a popular all-vinyl event which he has cultivated. However, there were nods to his signature garage tendencies, interspersed with evolving emphasis on techno and acid beats as the night wore on.

Unfortunately, I was left feeling flat. I came to his set to be challenged with what I heard but it felt like I was enclosed in a safety net of much which I have listened to before. I never reached the scale of euphoria of last week’s Butter

Side Up with Vera and Jane Fitz. What did save the night however was the crowd. Being arguably the only female in an all-male crowd can be daunting, especially when your 5’ 2”. So I want to take this opportunity to thank the guys who asked if I would like to stand in front of them so I could see better. The view was great.

**Tori Clarkson**

## An Exercise in Eclecticism



Young Marco’s unconventional party-starting abilities have been captivating audiences for years, and his consequent reputation as an erudite, creative DJ has been fully deserved.

On the grounds of that; he’s the kind of guy to just about get away with finishing a set at a mid-July festival with Wham’s ‘Last Christmas’, and even his name seems to disguise just how serious and committed he is.

In a scene that overuses the word eclectic, he stands out as deeply and genuinely so; something which extends across all his other projects. What his solo productions lack in club friendliness, they make up for in a distinct, layered loopiness and a signature synth heavy dreamy sound, which also typifies his previous work in the acclaimed ambient

trio, Gaussian Curve. He was the second curator in the reputable ‘Selectors’ series on Dekmantel, and also independently curated and released a hugely popular Italian dream house album.

Ossia have been a welcome addition to the cities clubbing landscape, and thanks to their excellent bookings, a popular one. Tickets were sold out and Hifi was lively and expectant, if somewhat impersonal due to the DJ being on the stage.

Young Marco’s three hour set lived up to his reputation, duly zipping between various corners of dance (and non-dance) music and blending them together with razor edge mixing.

Following the formidable groove of the Ossia residents, Young Marco started with the funky ‘Make Me

Wonder’ by Tom of Brooklyn but before long was building the intensity through punchy tracks like the Acid Arab remix of ‘Le Gaz qui fait rire’; think hypnotising female vocal meets trippy acid line. He also included other heavily percussive tracks which were layered under and beatless single instrument ones.

The glittery and utterly seminal ‘Computer Incantations for World Peace’ simultaneously worked as a mid-set climax and as a crowd soother before he, again, began venturing further into the left field with Aphex Twin’s grubby, noisy ‘180db\_[130]’. Soon after came the nights defining and most absurd moment.

I can’t say I’ve ever heard a Neil Young song being played in a club, but as a grinning Young Marco swung a high

pass filter out and then back in as the harmonica solo in ‘Hey, Hey, My, My’ started, not only did it not feel too far out of place but it plunged Hifi into a bizarre kind of transcendental state. The surprises didn’t stop there as he continued to blend anything weird or wild.

However, the final moments of his set that summed up his genius succinctly, and the sound of one trippy sitar suddenly absurdly dropped into Underworld’s ‘Born Slippy’; a final reminder of Young Marco’s endless combination of pure creativity and thorough technical ability.

**James Gwyther**





Image: Apple Music

# Going Viral

**Clubs Editor, Dan King, talks you through the inner workings of the musical meme, exploring its ties with it's electronic music subculture.**

If you were to ask people what a meme was five years ago, I expect that few people could have told you. How times have changed. Today, the word meme is now firmly established within the vocabulary of our generation. On the internet, memes are ubiquitous, and our ever-shortening attention spans condemn dank memes to the dishonour of being called dead memes as quickly as we can say Man's Not Hot.

But the very fact that we have developed an appetite for newer, funnier, and sometimes edgier memes indicates the status they have within youth culture. The world of music promotion has cottoned on to this. It has been argued that a key part of pushing a successful single in today's market is by ensuring that it has a certain virality to it – where Soulja Boy's Crank. That once stood out as an example of early success propelled by internet obsession, DJ Khaled's bizarre, catchphrase-laden snapchats piqued interest for his 2016 album Major Key. Drake's Hotline Bling is better remembered for memes of the rapper playing Wii Sports and twirling lightsabers than for the video itself. The aforementioned Man's Not Hot has won comedian Michael Dapaah festival bookings around the world, and unquestionable celebrity status (for the time being at least).

Whilst the most notable examples

of memedom can generally be found amongst hip-hop, electronic music has also had its fair share. Remember the Harlem Shake? The Oceanas, Pryzms, and Gatecrashers of this world were awash with jagerbomb-fuelled teenagers flailing around to the track's massive EDM-style drop in 2013. Cringe. But this only came about due to the thousands of homemade videos uploaded to Facebook and Youtube that featured the track. The Mannequin Challenge had similar notoriety. Snapchat filled with videos of teens and adults alike attempting to stand still for the duration of the intro to Rae Sremmurd's Black Beatles in various poses, as the iPhone camera shakily panned across the scene. One for the history books.

Later, Bristolian house duo Blonde jumped aboard the Will Grigg's on Fire bandwagon in June 2016, releasing a club-friendly version of the football chant-stroke-meme that rung around the terraces that summer. Sandstorm by Darude needs no further discussion. And if you think these examples didn't pack enough novelty, cast your mind back to May 2005, when the Eurodance

hit Axel F by Crazy Frog sold millions worldwide. This was a meme before we knew what a meme was.

All of the aforementioned tracks have all sold well, and are backed by labels, strategists, and writers that belie the seemingly accidental nature of their successes. But the very nature of internet culture, which affords niche communities space to grow and collaborate, has brought about a series of tracks that blend genres like hardcore, donk, and bassline with all manner of

meme references, no matter how niche or tasteless. Soundcloud plays host to songs such as 'She Shit Down My Arm', a DnB track which can probably lay claim to being the only song in the

world that samples dialogue from *The Inbetweeners*. There are at least ten tracks, spanning dubstep, house, and DnB, that feature the dulcet tones of Hull's most famous road rager Ronnie Pickering. The Wealdstone Raider and Gordon Ramsay are both commonly sampled, too, as heavyweights of the British meme scene over the last few years.

I'm being kind if I say that it's unlikely that these tracks are to be celebrated for

their contributions to their respective genres. Whilst some songs have a touch of genuine appeal to them, often the songs offer little apart from an initial laugh. But this doesn't matter. Despite the widespread popularity of techno, the genre is conspicuous by its absence in the weird world of meme-infused music. If commercial tech house is seen as unpalatable, one cannot help but feel that the uber-cool, chin-scratching online community surrounding Techno would struggle to enjoy these tracks in the lighthearted manner in which they were intended.

Recently, there has been something of a backlash against those within the electronic music community that just take the whole thing too seriously. Young Marco gained some notoriety last summer for playing Wham's 'Last Christmas' at Farr Festival, as did Moodymann for playing Kings of Leon's 'Sex on Fire'. Just last weekend Four Tet played 'Bippity Boppity Boo' (from Cinderella) in Glasgow, whilst closer to home Mumdance and Happa closed their set at Hifi with some Kelly Clarkson. If the tastelessness of meme-infused DnB isn't something for the world of 'serious' electronic music to follow, maybe its sense of humour is something to learn from.

Dan King

# Is Depop the Future of Fashion?

Founded in 2011, Depop has risen from a niche start up to a common name in fashion circles. Four years ago, I was intrigued to hear a friend explain the concept to the eBay-Instagram hybrid that allows pretty much anyone to sell pretty much anything (although predominately fashion) as well as interact with sellers and buyers alike. Now, I don't even bat an eyelid when my friends inform me of their latest Depop bargains, and it's my first point of call in a crisis. The question is, what's next for the fashion giant? And how is it changing fashion?

Sustainability, it seems, is the current buzzword in fashion, with consumers and designers thinking beyond cute outfits, considering real issues like ethical labour and renewable energy resources. Many of us are thinking twice before impulsively buying a high street item and it seems that Depop provides an eco-friendly alternative. Waste clothes can be given a second life. Bought a top that you've never been able to pull off? Sell it on. Bought some jeans in the wrong size? Post them too. Re-using garments has never been easier, and making profit from your old clothes is as simple as two of three photos, one short description and a healthy WiFi connection.

One man's loss is another man's gain, as they say, and Depop thrives off this principle. Take, for example, a ball dress I found a few months back. Brand new, with tags, worth £60. Off Depop, it cost £17. An absolute bargain! A complete win. The only question is, does the super cheap price encourage consumers to purchase clothes they don't need, don't particularly like, and will probably throw away anyway? And does the possibility of convenient, fast reselling encourage us to make rash buying decisions?

It's ridiculous to think that we're always going to make the best buying decisions, and there'll be times when even the most savvy of us invest in a pair of trousers that, to be frank, are three sizes too small. By filtering searches based on keywords or item categories, Depop encourages hunting for specific products – in fact, most buyers rarely simply 'browse'. Of course, buying online always leads to a few fit issues. And occasionally sellers are a little generous in their descriptions. But, overall, the online car boot sale vibe gets a thumbs up from me.

Let's not forget the professional side of Depop, though. By professional, what I really mean is, sellers that have made a hobby into a full-time job. There's numerous accounts dedicated to selling items such as funky vintage pieces, or handmade bandeau tops. These Depop entrepreneurs are changing the fashion industry one glittering halterneck at a time. With Topshop, you bought a fancy top and saw at least seven other people wearing it on a night out. On Depop, you can buy something totally unique, or so rare it may as well be. I love that vintage shopping can be done from the comfort of my bedroom, and it amazes me how these accounts manage to find so many cute retro jumpers. But it's the etsy-style handmade clothes that really excite me. It is so encouraging to see people buying and selling their own unique designs, promoting individuality and creativity. Depop has evolved to become more than just an online second-hand sale, and has instead become the home of unique, start-up brands. What's not to love?

Good question. The answer, unfortunately, is fairly obvious. Depop takes 10% of sellers money, including that spent on postage. Well, we knew there'd be a catch. It doesn't seem like a lot until you factor in the actual fees associated with shipping your old jeans across the country, and the time and energy spent negotiating price, packaging the garment and trekking to your local post office. Suddenly, it's less appealing to sell old tops that'll probably cost more to post than they're even worth.

That said, I don't think Depop is on it's way out. In fact, I think (and hope) it's here to stay. Yes, I'd like to see reduced fees on low price items. And of course, Depop, for all its joys, cannot replace the joy of hunting in a vintage market, or stumbling across a bargain pair of jeans in the perfect size. But it does provide a low-risk platform for up-and-coming designers. And it's got more than it's fair share of bargains. And, best of all, it also encourages a re-use and re-cycle philosophy. Depop, I'm sold.

Lydia Varney

Love it, hate it, or simply can't be bothered with it – there's no denying that Depop is a key player in the fashion world, and not an app to be overlooked. But does Depop have an expiry date? And is it building a sustainable community, or simply encouraging unnecessary purchases?

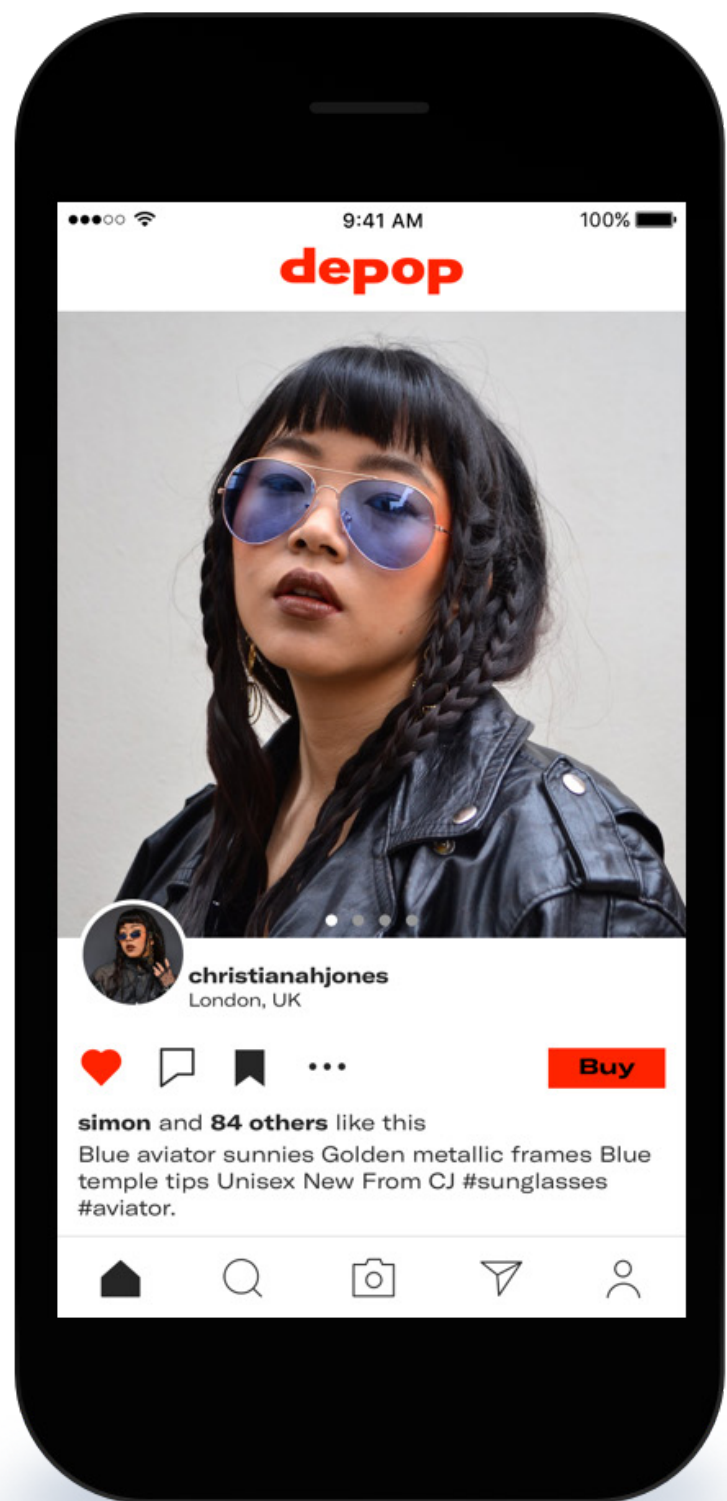






Image: The Basement



Image: The Basement

# Introducing: The Basement

Formed only a few years ago, The Basement has quickly garnered an active community on a mass scale. It began as a streetwear group, both as a place for discussion around clothing, but also to facilitate the buying and selling of such items. Fast forward to now, and the group is 75,000 members strong, and is now a linchpin of the scene, fostering a burgeoning, friendly community.

New forms of media have altered and revise the way in which we buy and sell clothes. Ebay and Depop are the most obvious examples of this, streamlining business worldwide, enabling individuals access to whatever items they wish for in a matter of days. What is given less attention is how these forms of new media have actually change the relationships which form around clothes. Facebook groups have created international communities, brought together purely by a shared interest in apparel.

The most striking example of this is The Basement. The group began as an offshoot from 'suptalk', a group which aimed to facilitate the trading of Supreme items. When many users were posting items which were not supreme, The Basement was spawned to deal with such entries. It quickly became not just a marketplace and discussion board for general streetwear, but ultimately a community of users who supported and gave advice to each other in all aspects of their lives. The group now hosts members across the whole spectrum of human life, be it in terms of fashion tastes, interests or geographical location.

The Basement is not the only group which was created with similar target audiences. Wavey Garms sells vintage clothing, whilst BTNK Fit Battles focuses on competition between its members in regards to their fashion sense. This is where the basement is different. Their ethos is spelled out in the lengthy pinned post at the top of the group, which states that the group is "popular as it is because of the rules and the community spirit that we share." Moreover, it states that "if you show complete disrespect to the page or any of its members, you will be instantly banned. These rules MUST be followed if you want to stay within the family." The post then goes on to classify this disrespect as "foul language, rude comments or flaming of any kind, no racial slurs, homophobic or transphobic comments, using rape to refer to high prices, offensive/provocative photos or baseless legit checks".

The standard that the basement holds

its members to, and its commitment to always assuring that members are courteous and friendly with each other, has fertilized an incredibly positive atmosphere. This is reflected in countless anecdotal stories which have touched many members in different ways. Many members have selflessly lent money to other members to help them secure an item they highly desired, whilst mental health threads encouraging members to be open with each other are frequent. Moreover, "basement love stories" are common, and an annual secret santa pairs strangers who send anonymous gifts. These gifts are often niche and coveted items, chosen depending on what could be gleaned of their interests through Facebook. Outside of this, I have personally seen regular progress checks on one member's disabled son which chart his learning to walk, whilst many who are going through chemotherapy are sent free hats from other members to cover up hair loss.

This growth within the group has been reflected in its credence outside. The clothing brand SCRT, who have a small yet passionate following, have created a shirt with a cartoon version of 'Brando', who has become a cult figure in the group for offering a trustworthy and prompt middle-man service. Elsewhere, the group has a number of spin-offs, be it "the bathroom", a meme and shitposting group, "the cabinet", which focuses on political issues, or "the waiting room", for those who have been banned from the group. The group have recently released a shoe in collaboration with Nike, such is their power. It has even launched many of its members into the public eye, namely Leo Mandella, the 15 year old who can boast 570,000 followers, a successful clothing line, and a social sphere which includes global superstars such as Kendall Jenner.

The Basement is now intrinsically woven into the seams of a culture which they formed only to represent. All is left now is to see how far their growth can continue. With their own website which covers news on the scene and a coveted clothing line, they are fast becoming a cultural behemoth. This is one basement which doesn't seem to have a ceiling.

Reece Parker



# Trend Alert

Keeping up with the trends in such a rapidly changing fashion world can be near impossible, however fashion writer Jemima Ward is here to help. As winter draws to a close, there's more than a couple of trends that are worth trying out, whilst there's also plenty of inspiration for the 'sunny' days ahead.



**Weird and wonderful:** As society is becoming more open and dynamic, the fashion world is faced with the challenge of keeping up with consumers diverse demands. People are coming out of their shells with what they purchase, everyone has a lust to be different and express their individuality through clothing. Quirky ideas include a futuristic look that was previously only seen in Sci-fi films taking the stage,. Already, at London fashion week, Prada men's 2018 shows this prediction taking place.



**The bigger the better:** Oversized clothes are warm, comfortable and flattering. This is a trend that has been around a while,

however it will continue to get bigger as the days remain chilly. What's more comforting, after all than that massive jersey you found in your grans attic or that hoodie you scraped off your boyfriend's floor? Watch out particularly for huge roll necks, ideally worn with a messy bun for a lazy, laidback look.



**Charity shops 24/7:** A few years back, many were scared of charity shop items! All around, people were sceptical, claiming "It smells weird", "Someone could've died in that" and "I'd rather buy something new". But no more! Charity shops are becoming increasingly popular with young people. Going charity shopping is an exciting

experience in itself, it can be described as a form of treasure hunting, as you never know what you're going to find... but let's just avoid looking at that sad wedding dress they always put in the shop window.



**Clashing is cool:** Many have dreaded putting spots with stripes and animal print on animal print. But what's better than looking like a zoo threw up on you? In 2017 print was in, with many purchasing striped trousers, checked shirts and cheetah print coats, but never worn together. But why not? Surely an outfit is more exciting with multiple things going on. Like double denim became cool, clashing patterns will too, and we'll be all the better for it.

**The urban gentleman:** Blazers and tailored trousers started to make an appearance more towards the end of 2017, with both male and female wearing tailored trousers as casual clothing. Mixing classy with laidback clothing is in. And you'll never have to worry about looking too dressy ever again! At the beginning on 2018 on the 12th of January we were blessed with the beauty which was Dua Lipa 'idgaf' music video, which not only one but TWO Dua Lipa's appear wearing suits. And not only does the beautiful choice of clothing make this video, but the message of self love (As Lipa kisses herself on the forehead)... self love is, after all, the most important trend of 2018!

Jemima Ward

# Outfit of the Week

1 . eBay // 2. Asos // 3. Topman // 4. Nike

This week's outfit is all the inspiration you need if you've been looking to try a more experimental style this coming year, incorporating colour and slogans into one quirky, unique and yet totally on-trend look. As the cold weather continues in Leeds, brighten your days with a statement coat. This pastel pink, fur-trimmed option is warm as well as stylish, whilst the unusual colour means it's unlikely you'll see a matching one on campus (let's not get started on that puffa). Watch out this season for androgynous style– yes, it's totally fashionable to steal your boyfriend or best mate's jumper and wear it as a dress – or even browse the men's section

for some inspiration. Think super sized, retro garments with boyish charm. Sarah keeps the look feminine with a pair of over-the-knee socks, however mom jeans also work well for a more laidback outfit. Finally, think carefully about accessories and contrast. A pair of white trainers can add an edgy finish to almost any outfit, whilst some unusual headgear upgrades any style (ideal also for those mornings when washing your hair is too much to ask). Think baseball caps, beanies, and best yet... berets!



Model and Photo: Sarah





When it comes to fashion, boundaries are being broken everyday. Gender neutral clothing has started popping up throughout some of our favourite shops, with skirts no longer being exclusively for women and trouser suits no longer exclusive to men. Despite still having a long way to go, fashion is moving forward and we can certainly see the lines between what are labelled 'men's' and 'women's' clothing starting to cross. One place that hasn't seemed, for the most part, to have taken the leap across to the idea of unisex fashion is workwear. There are many ways work environments can be seen to be unfair towards women, however, fashion isn't really one of them, and it needs to be asked if it's really fair that women get so much more flexibility in what they are able to wear compared to men?

In most work place environments, everyone is told to 'dress smart'. Yes, it's only work and it's a dress code that everyone has to stick too, not just men - but for women, this could mean wearing anything from a blouse with a skirt to a dress to a trouser suit. For men however, the term 'smart dress' usually only boils down to one choice of outfit; shirt, suiting up. Is it really fair, in this day and age, that men only have one real choice when it comes to what they can wear Monday-Friday?

I suppose you could argue that this is, in fact, the fashion industries fault in itself - the workplace states 'smart dress' most of the time, yes, occasionally they may specify that men must 'wear a suit', but for the most part it is generalised that all employees must stick to 'office wear'. If the only smart dress or office

wear that is actually on offer for men to buy is some sort of suit and trouser combo then obviously this is what they are going to have to wear to work, whether they want to or not. Compare that to women, who have a whole range of things available to them to wear, in a range of different colours and styles also. Now, I am in no way saying that men aren't allowed to wear a bright pink polka dot shirt under their suit jacket, but how often is it that you see that available in the shops? And even so, there is no denying it definitely would turn some heads in the office, become a potential cause of mockery, and possibly even be frowned upon by employers.

Weighing up the argument of men having less flexibility when it comes to fashion in the workplace. I can see how, if you were the type of person who wanted to express themselves with flamboyant workwear, it would potentially be much easier for a woman to get away with than a man. Having said this, I personally feel there is probably a bigger problem with actual retailers and their restrictions on men's workwear ranges, rather than the restrictions employers set on men's workwear clothing. If I'm being totally honest, I do think this is one of the more minor issues when it comes to gender inequality in the work place. Considering women can't even get equal pay this is just something men will have to deal with until someone decides to do something about it, but it's 2018 and if men want to wear a skirt, blouse and blazer combination to the office, why the heck shouldn't they?

Kemer Aydin

## Fashion in the Work Place

**Is it fair that men have to suit up while women have more flexibility?**

# Every Third Minute Launches with 'Still Alice'



**Every Third Minute. a festival at West Yorkshire Playhouse charting resilience against dementia, was launched with the warming 'Still Alice'. Arts writer Catherine Corcoran gives us the rundown.**

First performed in 2013 by Chicago's Lookingglass Theatre Company, Christine Mary Dunford's touching work *Still Alice* has now arrived at the West Yorkshire Playhouse. The play opens the gates for the playhouse's *Every Third Minute* programme, a festival taking place until March 31st which champions powerful narratives of resilience in dementia. The true pleasure of *Still Alice* lies in its warming narrative and ability to explore Alzheimer's with such familiar nuance.

The play tells the story of Alice (Sharon Small), a professor of neuroscience at Harvard University. After being diagnosed with early-onset dementia, Alice, her husband John (Dominic Mafham) and their children Thomas and Lydia (Andrew Rothney and Alais Lawson) must rethink how their lives can work around this bewildering disease. Whilst we witness the family negotiate care and responsibility, Alice's world is crumbling apart. As her memories fade, Jonathan Fensom's set progressively deconstructs until we are left with an almost blank stage, providing a beautifully gradual representation of Alice's loss.

Theatricising an illness as complex and misunderstood as dementia is a mammoth task, and what's most striking about *Still Alice* is the huge amount of effort put in by director, David Grindley, to truly understand the disease throughout the theatre-making process. Not being a sufferer himself, it would have been easy for Grindley to fall into the realms of the abstract to vaguely portray this confusing disease, giving the play little

voice on the everyday realities of Alzheimer's. Instead, he and the cast worked with Wendy Mitchell, a sufferer of young-onset dementia and author of *Somebody I Used to Know*, whose first-hand experience and input on the play has enhanced its ability to paint a truthful image of what it's like to live with Alzheimer's: 'She can look at what we've done and say: "Well, in my experience, that decision is wrong."'

The result of this attention to detail is unprecedented. *Still Alice* is homely, familiar and down-to-earth, emphasising the everyday pressures that arise from dementia over the big questions about what it means to

**"Theatricising an illness as complex and misunderstood as dementia is a mammoth task"**

lose our sense of self. We see Alice forget how many eggs go into her signature dessert, miss her lunch date with her son and become incredibly frustrated when she can't find the words to ask her daughter to pass the cream cheese. These menial cases of memory loss establish the simplistic familiarity of the play, welcoming us into the world of Alice and her family before that world starts to crumble away.

Nonetheless, Dunford's intriguing use of Herself (Ruth Gemmell) as a dualistic partner to Alice throughout much of the play interweaves more complex themes of identity

within the main plot. Whilst Alice is relatively healthy, she and Herself maintain close proximity, chatting and bickering when others are out of the room. As Alice's dementia intensifies, the pair put their heads together to try and work out what's going on in Alice's confusing life; there's a heartwarming moment where they work as a team to locate the 'Butterfly' document on Alice's computer, a file she wrote when healthy minded to give her future self instructions in the event of forgetting key details about her life. Distressing yet painfully understandable, the contents of this file provide Alice with a brutal reminder of how she can make a quick escape from her heartbreaking demise.

Whilst Alice's grand speech at Harvard University towards the end of the play provides some break from the distressing scenes where she is childish and totally confused, it unfortunately taints the realism of her story. *Still Alice*'s true charm lies in its light comedy and portrayal of a family brought closer by dementia, and this fantastical display of publicised resilience feels out of place and a diversion from the play's key ideas. Nevertheless, *Still Alice* is a fantastic piece of theatre that has opened *Every Third Minute* with a bang. I'm looking forward to seeing how the festival progresses as the month goes on.

**Katherine Corcoran**



# Hollywood's Binary Sexuality Problem

**While the film industry has made strides in lesbian & gay representation, Lucy Carr argues that the way it handles bisexuality is still problematic.**



Credit: Peter Saïanski

In an industry where LGBTQ+ characters have historically been treated as tropes, plot devices and stereotypes, it seems as though an effort has been made to change the way LGBTQ+ characters are presented on our screens. In recent years particularly, with television programmes such as *Orange is the New Black* and films like *Call Me By Your Name*, lesbian and gay relationships have been represented on screen explicitly and poignantly, but without having the characters purely defined by their sexuality. However, whilst this push for representation is

**"... there still seems to be an absence of bisexual characters on both the small and big screen."**

encouraging, there still seems to be an absence of bisexual characters on both the small and big screen.

In 2016, sitcom *Brooklyn Nine-Nine* released its ninety-ninth episode, where one of the leading characters, Rosa Diaz, explicitly states "I'm dating a woman. I'm bi," and this is one of the only instances I can think of where a character directly references their bisexuality. This isn't to say that there aren't bisexual characters on television. On the contrary, programmes like *Glee*, *Game of Thrones*, *How to Get Away with Murder* and *Jane the Virgin* are just some which feature bisexual characters. However, there still seems to be a disparity between bisexual representation



Credit: Bisexual.org

and gay/lesbian representation, a confounding absence which hinders the push for better representation of different sexualities. Furthermore, the use of bisexual characters as plot devices, or representation of bisexuals as promiscuous villains, is a harmful trend that has featured on programmes throughout the years, treating bisexual characters as drivers of plot, rather

**"Bisexuality on the big screen often feels like it has to be explained, is presented in a negative way or is brought about under negative circumstances."**

than genuine characters. This not only undermines the potential for character depth, but also diminishes the positivity of increasing bisexual representation, which is sparse already and hindered further by such negative depictions.

While characters shouldn't be defined by sexuality, it seems as though there is a stigma around the word bisexual itself, one which probably isn't helped by the lack of explicit representation of it on our screens. What further emphasises this absence is the lack of bisexual characters we see in film. Although the statistics for the exposure of lesbian and gay relationships on screen are improving, in film, there is even less bisexual representation than on television, and even less characters who explicitly call themselves bisexual. While it certainly isn't necessary for

characters to state their sexuality, the lack of bisexual representation on our screens, and the stigma surrounding bisexuality, is one that is important to draw attention to.

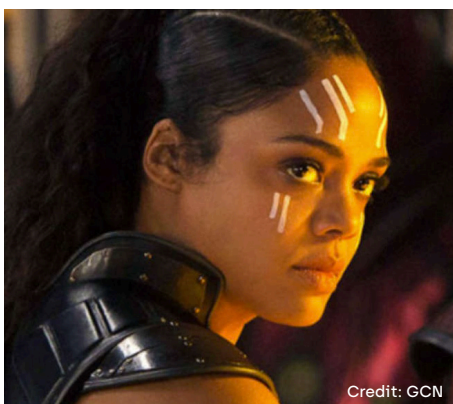
Similarly to on television, bisexuality on the big screen often feels like it has to be explained, is presented in a negative way or is brought about under negative circumstances. For example: the character justifying bisexuality by having a midlife crisis or is seen to be going through "a phase." This negative and ignorant kind of representation is one that can also be linked to gender, as female bisexuals



Credit: Kiss Me

are portrayed much more than male bisexuals on our screens. This suggests a wider, harmful problem, as it infers that female bisexuality sells more because it is perceived as sexier than male bisexuality, and thus highlights an intolerance towards male bisexuality in our society and yet another justification for the objectification of women. It is important to draw attention to this distinct lack of bisexual representation, as it shows an unwillingness to present

**"This suggests a wider, harmful problem, as it infers that female bisexuality sells more because it is perceived as sexier than male bisexuality."**



Credit: GCN

Lucy Carr

# We've Still Got Jafar To Go: The Queer-coding of Disney's Villains

Lecia Weatherby-Blythe questions whether Disney's famous family classics are really as progressive as they appear



Image: Vice

Everyone has probably experienced Queer-coding in the media without even realising they have; it has played a prominent role in some of our favourite films that depict iconic and memorable villains. By definition, the term Queer-coding describes a character in a film, TV series, game or book that plays the antagonist or villain and is given traits typically associated with queer people, without being explicitly stated to be so. This is most commonly demonstrated through the characters' physical appearance; speech patterns and persona and it is through animated films by Disney where these features are intensified in their hauntingly unforgettable villains. Here, queer-coding is not only clearly experienced but, arguably, has the most harmful impact; from the feminine mannerisms of Jafar (*Aladdin*) and Ursula (*The Little Mermaid*) reflecting the 'butch-lesbian' stereotype in the media.

Following the release of the live-action *Beauty and the Beast* last year, Disney was seen to be making leaps and bounds in the representation of homosexuality in film, with actor Josh Gad described as "setting a milestone for Disney" by playing their first openly gay character. However, despite this improvement, queer-coding has become so entrenched in the Disney industry that it can be seen far back as the classics up to modern day animations. Even the recent animation *Wreck-it-Ralph*, released in 2013, had a definitively queer-coded villain, King Candy/Turbo, with a feminine speech pattern, colour scheme and body language all-encompassing a stereotyped 'sissy-villain'. Also, since it is crucial that we both enjoy and criticise our media so it can be improved, we must analyse examples of Queer-coding in some of Disney's villains and why it has harmful impacts on the LGBTQ+ community and media industry.

In a study released in 2003 entitled: 'Gender transgression and villainy in Animated film', researchers Meredith Li-Vollmer and Mark. E LaPointe emphasised their concern on what children may learn about gender norms and identity from animated films, explaining that children are more susceptible to the social messages inherent in media. In analysing gender transgression, they note the feminine design of Disney villains in contrast to their protagonists and focus on their physicalities: faces, hair, bodies and hands and how these contribute to a stereotyped queer character or characteristics.

Disney villains have a finer bone structure; more specifically a narrow jaw, high cheekbones and deep eye sockets highlighted through the use of colour also giving the appearance of cosmetics. This can be seen in villains such as Jafar (*Aladdin*), Hades (*Hercules*) and Claude Frollo (*The Hunchback of Notre-Dame*). Most noticeably, Scar's (*The Lion King*) slim pointed face and purple eyelids directly contrast the huge, heavy jaw of his brother Mufasa; creating the feminine contrast to the ideal masculine, encapsulating the bias in our heads of queer characteristics. Similarly, the queer-coding of villains is also shown through hands and hair. Long, slender hands on thin wrists resembling fingernails can be seen in almost all of Disney's animated villains, notably Captain Hook (*Peter Pan*) and Scar's claws always being exposed (*The Lion King*). Other examples include the juxtaposition of flowing, 'girly' hair seen in the pigtails and bows of Governor Radcliffe (*Pocahontas*) and the flowing mane of Scar (*The Lion King*), in contrast to Mufasa and Simba's helmet-like equivalent, we again make the association between femininity and queerness in relation to these antagonists. There are many other features discussed in this study including body structure resembling current

fashion standards of female beauty and cosmetic forms, but the overall message is that these characters are specifically designed to be feminine and show children a stereotyped image of a queer person.

Queer-coding has a number of harmful impacts across the media but, in reference to Disney in particular, the main problem is the message given to children that queerness or femininity in males directly corresponds to evil. Disney holds a privileged position in children's culture and some of us, as adults, cannot deny we still watch their timeless and new released films with the same religious conviction as if we were bright-eyed children. According to gender schema theory, children form learned expectations about sexuality and sex roles from their accumulated experience, both real and mediated, further stressing the need for Disney to be wary about its use of queer-coding.

With some of Disney's villains being strongly queer-coded, negative associations are implanted with such characteristics from a young age, making the stereotype easier to demonize. Even though the characteristics previously discussed are just stereotypes, it doesn't mean that viewers will not read them as potentially queer. The reality is that we live with these biases unconsciously and even when we are aware of the stereotype, we know what is being hinted at. Therefore, queer-coding is creating a negative image of LGBTQ+ for children and the entertainment industry as we only see them as bad people to be feared, avoided or defeated. Instead, similar to the *Beauty and the Beast* live action, we should be diversifying the protagonists and characters in relation to sexuality and gender transgression so as to normalise and encourage acceptance, equality and diversity from a young age.

Lecia Weatherby-Blythe



# "The Master-Mistress of my Passion"

## Shakespeare's Work Through an LGBTQ+ Lens

**Ananya Sriram examines to what extent Shakespeare represents LGBTQ+ characters within his plays**

If you ask anyone to name an iconic straight love story, the first one that springs to mind is usually *Romeo and Juliet*. Last week saw Valentine's Day and as a result, the same overused quotes on every card: "Shall I compare thee to a summer's day", "If music be the food of love, play on" and so on. Shakespeare occupies such a prestigious position in our literary canon that his work has undeniably influenced the way in which we see love stories; from the star-crossed lovers trope of *Romeo and Juliet* to the sexual confusion in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and *Twelfth Night*, all laying the groundwork for so many of our favourite romantic comedies today (think *She's the Man*, *Ten Things I Hate About You*, etc.). However, mainstream media's tendency to view Shakespeare as the epitome of heterosexual romance is both dangerous and limiting. There is plenty of evidence within Shakespeare's plays to point to LGBTQ+ readings of certain characters, and the possibilities for reimagining the plays with LGBTQ+ leads are endless. There is so much left to be explored within Shakespeare that setting these plays within a heteronormative context simply limits their potential.

Many critical responses to Shakespeare have suggested that he himself may be gay, and when you consider the context

in which he was writing, LGBTQ+ readings of Shakespeare gain credence. Among a cycle of 154 sonnets, 126 were addressed to a man, 'Mr WH', who many believe to be the 'Fair Youth' to whom some of the most celebrated dedications of love in the English language are addressed. These sonnets underwent a 'process of heterosexualisation in the Victorian period' with the pronouns being changed. This reflection of how Victorian sensibilities have concealed many of the more overt elements of homosexuality in Shakespeare's texts show how much of our understanding of Shakespeare has been influenced by academics and elites of the past. Gregory Doran, artistic director of the RSC, remarked in 2017 that "in the 21st century it's no longer acceptable to play that as anything other than a homosexual." With such an influential director holding these progressive views, it is evident that things are changing in the theatre industry, and there will be less and less room for directors to ignore the queer subtext in many of Shakespeare's plays.

It is also worth remembering that Shakespeare's plays at the time were all performed by men, with young boys playing the women's parts, and there is much to suggest that Shakespeare was writing some of his most iconic

romantic roles, such as Juliet, for a man. There is much speculation surrounding Shakespeare's relationship with one of the actors playing Juliet, and it is this which inspired the production of Nick Bagnall's *Romeo and Julius* at the Liverpool Everyman. Having the story centre around two men from warring families who fall in love adds a whole new dimension to the play, lending it the opportunity to make a powerful commentary on homophobia within society, and the destructive power of masculinity.

Although several productions have made significant steps forward in reimagining Shakespeare's iconic plays with LGBTQ+ protagonists, it seems that there are still certain obstacles that stop them from fully engaging with the implications of doing so. The National Theatre's production of *Twelfth Night*, for example, was criticised for simply playing around with gender and not really making any significant point about why it was doing it. This production's biggest success was undoubtedly the choice to genderswap Malvolio for Malvolia, performed with a captivating sharpness and vulnerability by Tamsin Greig. The decision to portray Malvolia as a closeted, repressed lesbian in love with her employer, Olivia, allows for an

exploration of sexual liberty; Malvolia's complete turnaround from a Puritanical figure in all-black, sensible culottes into a yellow-stockinged, nipple-tasselled burlesque performer reflects the freedom and joy she feels at the hope that Olivia might return her feelings. Other additions, however, such as the drag club frequented by Antonio and Doon Mackichan's Feste, seem superfluous. Despite being vibrant, fun additions to the production, the audience is never really quite sure what some scenes are doing there, and it doesn't seem to be any real message in them beyond the obvious: gender and sexuality are fluid.

Theatre has made enormous strides in LGBTQ+ representation in recent years, and with more and more mainstream theatres acknowledging the importance of telling LGBTQ+ stories, it seems that the future is bright. The beauty of Shakespeare lies in its humanity: these are stories that tap into the heart and soul, and evoke emotions that everyone can understand. The importance of being able to identify with such iconic love stories as *Romeo and Juliet* can never be underestimated, and the potential layers and complexity that LGBTQ+ can bring to these stories is a gold mine, yet to be fully explored.

**Ananya Sriram**



Credit: National Portrait Gallery





# Orthorexia – the Eating Disorder you Didn't Know Existed

**Caitlin Tilley examines the consequences of living in a health obsessed world and how this can lead to an often overlooked eating disorder.**

Like many, I have always had a keen interest in healthy eating. Whilst I have always assumed this was a positive quality, I have recently learnt that for some this interest can become overpowering. Orthorexia is defined as an 'obsession' with eating foods that one considers to be healthy. Naively, I was first shocked that this could be considered as a mental health issue. A fixation with eating healthily? How on earth can that be a bad thing, let alone an eating disorder? Surely it's better to be obsessed with healthy eating than to not care at all?

With Eating Disorders Awareness Week coming up, raising awareness about all types of eating disorders is vital; anorexia, bulimia and binge eating are probably some of the most commonly known eating disorders. Less widely known, orthorexia is often seen as a combination of characteristics from some of those disorders. In contrast to other disorders however, people with orthorexia focus on eating 'correct' food rather than losing weight. Still not a clinically recognised eating disorder, the term itself was only defined in 1997.

So, what actually constitutes this disorder? What it definitely doesn't mean, is that everyone who follows a healthy diet is orthorexic. This is because what one person considers to be a healthy diet may be very different to someone else. In addition, many people struggle with symptoms that are associated with the term 'orthorexia' but don't necessarily have the illness. The word that should ring alarm bells is 'obsession'. When your desire to eat a 'pure' diet is interfering with your daily life by negatively affecting your work and relationships, it becomes a problem. When your self-worth has become entangled with the purity of your diet, that's when it might have gone too far.

Quite often, it has been the raw, no-meat, no-dairy, gluten-free, totally non-processed and refined sugar free diet which has been hailed as the answer to good health: a pretty high standard to uphold. But if engaging with this vision is negatively affecting your mental health, then there is nothing healthy about that at all. As with any disorder, there is a spectrum, and just because you may not qualify for a diagnosis doesn't mean you're not still at risk.

Food choices can eventually become so restrictive, both qualitatively and quantitatively, that begin to health suffer. With symptoms manifesting themselves behaviourally, psychologically and physically, the toll on an individual can be massive. Naturally, this is a bitter irony for someone who potentially set out with good intentions. Psychological symptoms may include emotional wellbeing being overly dependent on eating the "right" food, and physical signs might be tiredness or feeling weaker.

The rising media attention to our diets and resulting hyper-awareness of what we're eating can be dangerous and it can feel like this mantra is inescapable. I think the most important preventative measure to take is just to be aware. Look out for your friends, family, as well as yourself. Web Pages such as Beat, the UK's leading eating disorder charity, contain a breakdown of the different symptoms. If you recognise any of them in either yourself or someone you know, you should seek advice. Regardless of not being officially diagnosed with orthorexia, specialists can help you find suitable treatment options.

We all know that eating healthily is a good thing. The rise in orthorexia does not mean that it is unhealthy to follow a healthy diet. Just be sure that your healthy eating isn't taking up an excessive amount of time and stress within your life, or that deviation from your diet is coming with a side order of self-loathing.

Caitlin Tilley



# Battle of the Beverages

Ever wondered where best to take refuge when you simply cannot face a two-hour lecture in a windowless lecture theatre in Roger Stevens? Wonder no more; we explore the best spots to fulfil your campus caffeine cravings.

## Balcony

Balcony is the first and only student-led enterprise on campus. They proudly state that the venture was 'conceived, designed and managed by Leeds students for Leeds students' and indeed, the café has a friendly atmosphere because of it. With scenic views over the refectory, Balcony does slightly lack in ambience but, with plenty of plug sockets dotted about, it is a great place to combine a snack with some uni work. If you are an early bird and can make it in before 10am, they do an excellent deal offering to add a pastry to any hot drink for an extra 50p.

## Opposite

This is not strictly speaking 'on-campus' but if you're feeling adventurous enough to cross the busy Woodhouse lane then make you sure you check out Opposite Cafe. Situated (you guessed it) opposite the university, this cosy café serves up delicious brownies, salads, soups and some of the tastiest coffee in the vicinity.

## Laidlaw Café Nero

Conveniently located for those who wish to take a break from their studies in the Laidlaw library, this outlet of Café Nero is a reliable option. Their drinks are slightly pricier than some of the other campus outlets, but if you are looking for a late night beverage Nero also holds the accolade of being the latest open café on campus. Open until an impressive 9pm, if you're gearing up for an all-nighter it's the perfect place.



## The Edit Room

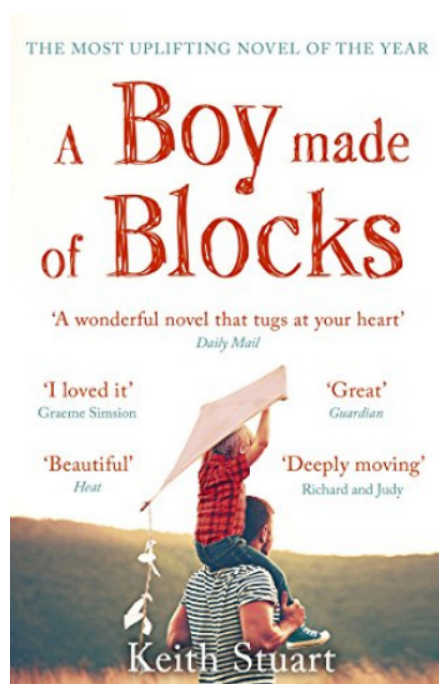
This café had a rocky start: originally conceived as 'The Book Club', it changed its name following a dispute with Hyde Park Book Club. It has since relaunched as 'The Edit Room' and has experienced plain sailing ever since. Its delicious selection of cakes, the stylish décor and the comfy chairs make it a top choice, while the location at the bottom of the Edward Boyle Library is its biggest selling point. A small Americano will set you back £1.80, while soup and a roll will cost you £2.

## Common Ground

Lurking within the depths of the union is this pastel-hued hangout. Previously known as Hidden Cafe, the primary colours of this radical rebrand give you the nostalgic feeling of being back in primary school. Although it is underground it doesn't lack brightness, it has an abundance of comfy sofas and serves its beverages in proper mugs rather than plastic cups: environmentally friendly and classy. They have a selection of toasties and bagels from £1.50 as well as croissants, brioche, soups and stews all around the £2.00 mark. Plus, they always have vegan and gluten-free cake on offer.

Martha Sanders

# Treat Your Shelf



This month, add an uplifting novel to your bookshelf with Keith Stuart's *A Boy Made of Blocks*. This debut novel is sure to tug at your heartstrings, making you laugh, cry and everything in between.

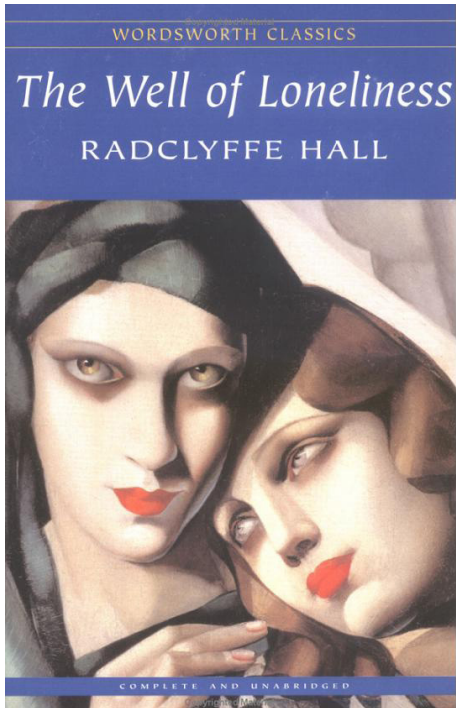
Drawing inspiration from Stuart's own son, who was diagnosed as on the autism spectrum in 2012, *A Boy Made of Blocks* follows the story of Alex, a father facing an uncertain separation from his wife, Jody, the loss of his job as well as trying to learn how to father Sam, his eight-year-old autistic son. In many ways this novel starts like any other fiction with family relationship struggles. However, it quickly surprises the reader with a new perspective towards struggles we don't often see.

Alex and Sam's relationship is transformed by their shared adventures in the lego-like world of Minecraft, a hugely popular game. Through the gaming world, the pair's communication totally changes, showcasing a positive side to an industry which has been labelled as anti-social. Ultimately, this novel is a warm and tender look at the tropes often associated with people on the autism spectrum with self-discovery, acceptance and love at the forefront.

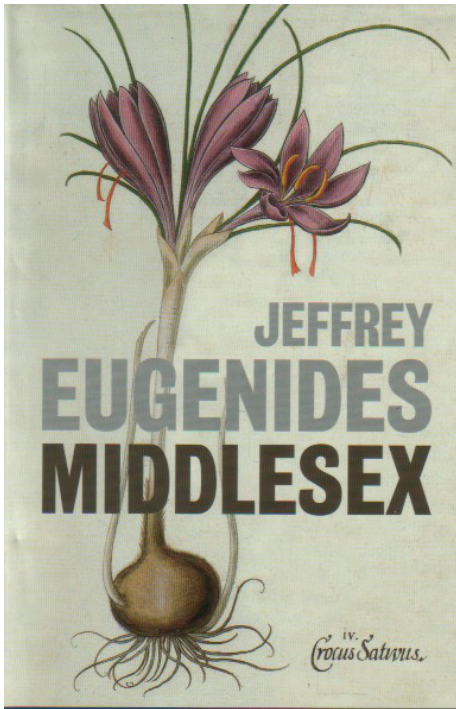
Bella Davis

# Piercing the Canon: LGBTQ+ Representation in Literature

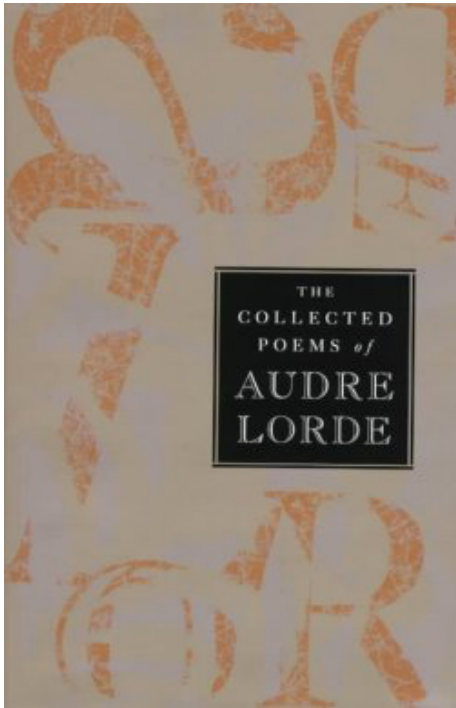
As Miss Puddleton advises Stephen in *The Well of Loneliness*, ‘books are good friends’. Here are some classics to add to your book shelf.



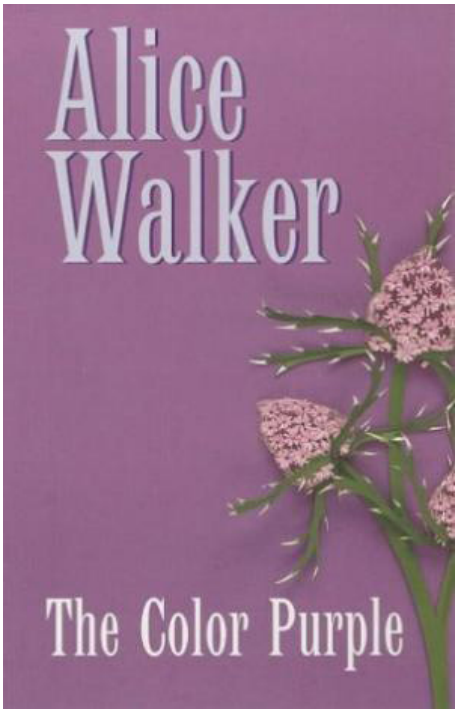
● The Well of Loneliness-  
Radclyffe Hall



●● Middlesex-  
Jeffrey Eugenides



●●● The Collected Poems of  
Audrey Lorde



●●●● The Color Purple-  
Alice Walker

Stephen Gordon always had an inkling that something was different about her. *The Well of Loneliness* follows her venture into adulthood from her conservative provincial upbringing to the lesbian subculture of 1920s Parisian salons. Due to its frank representation of homosexuality, the novel was tried for obscenity, attracting the attentions and support of T.S Eliot and D.H Lawrence, and it was banned in England until 1959. It's a longer read, but well worth persevering with to reap the reward of burgeoning pride as Stephen becomes comfortable in her own skin and learns to live completely without apology. Touchingly sincere - you may cry - and easily one of the most significant contributions to queer literature of its

●● Centred around the life of intersex Cal Stephanides, *Middlesex* is a sharp yet profound novel about coming of age and the intricacies of family histories. Also known as Calliope, Cal was born with 5-alpha reductase deficiency which results in him having typically female characteristics. This Pulitzer Prize winning novel explores Cal's formative experiences as an immigrant and intersex individual from his first relationship to considering sex reassignment surgery - all against the backdrop of a rich political

scenery that comments on historical events such as the 1967 Detroit Riot and the Balkan Wars.

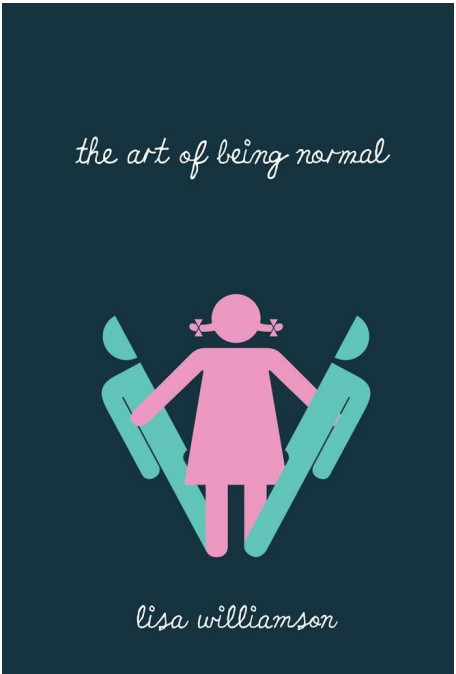
●●● Born in New York City, Audre Lorde described herself as 'black, lesbian, mother, warrior, poet'. Lorde was a prolific writer and ardent activist; she wrote speeches and essays on challenging gender binaries, championed intersectional feminism, and played a pivotal role in the Afro-German civil rights movement of the 1980s and 90s. Unsurprisingly then, her poetry blends the personal with the political and speaks for the women who were silenced, oppressed and scrutinised, and her voice is still as pertinent today. For a solid starting point, look at 'Echoes' (1993) which captures perfectly Lorde's sensual poetics with her cutting political edge.

●●●● Set in Georgia in the 1930s, *The Color Purple* tells the story of fourteen year old Celie and her experiences with love, religion, and growing up as black and queer. Another classic, this poignant novel can be a difficult and intense read due to some of the more explicit scenes and the brutality of the violent oppression of female characters. However, much of the book is about

empowerment and endurance as Celie continues to grow and respond to her situation as an oppressed individual in a prejudiced and dogmatist society. If you don't have time to read the book, the film is also worth a watch, starring critically acclaimed Oprah Winfrey and Whoopi Goldberg.

●●●●● Inspired by her personal experience working at the Gender Identity Development Service in London, Lisa Williamson's book is a fresh and original love story. The novel revolves around friends David and Leo who are both at different stages of coming to terms with their trans identities. Their supportive relationship is moving and helps them both negotiate potentially stressful events such as David's coming out to his parents. Lisa Williamson commented on her novel: 'There is no universal experience and I wanted to communicate this'. Humorous and fast-paced, Williamson proves exactly why we need more queer stories like this to demonstrate and celebrate the multiplicity of trans experiences.

Natasha Lyons



●●●●● The Art of  
Being Yourself-  
Lisa Williamson



# Did Star Trek: Discovery Fall Short or Prosper?

**Star Trek: Discovery is the beloved franchise's return to the small screen after 12 years.**



Set ten years before the original series, *Discovery* follows Federation officer Michael Burnham (Sonequa Martin-Green) who unexpectedly finds herself at the forefront of a war between the United Federation of Planets and the Klingon Empire.

Though its updated visuals add a layer of polish reminiscent of the series' recent blockbuster outings, *Discovery's* biggest accomplishment is how it manages to capture the feel of classic *Trek*. For example: the new series' first episode finds its main cast debating the ethics of firing their weapons first. It's the central conflict of the episode and one that drives much of the narrative of the first half of the series. It has its fair share of flashy action scenes—the ethical dilemma takes place over a backdrop of 24 Klingon ships on the verge of attacking—but, like its precursor, the show takes steps to weave in bigger philosophical questions throughout its episodes.

The original *Star Trek* was also very progressive, with the most diverse cast on television at the time, two of whom shared television's first broadcasted interracial kiss. It tackled issues like racism and the Vietnam war through thinly-veiled metaphors, examining social issues by fictionalising them. *Discovery* continues in this tradition, with a cast more diverse than most other television shows, though like the original series, it treats this diversity as a given; there isn't any racial tension or sexual discrimination on the USS *Discovery*, because *Discovery* takes place in a future where humanity has progressed past that. It's this hopeful vision of our future—one characterised by its commitment to justice and fairness, and its unquenchable curiosity for planets and adventures unknown—which cemented the original as a classic. The television market is saturated with bleak, dark visions of the future; that's exactly why *Discovery's* classic hopefulness stands out.

When it works, it works. The show is fun, engaging, and consistently watchable. Even at its weakest moments, its pace allows for the show to quickly move the story along. Its overarching plot is grand and epic in scale; similar shows, like *Battlestar Galactica* or Syfy's *The Expanse*, might take multiple seasons to go through the same plot points, but *Discovery* plows through them at a breakneck speed. This makes for exciting television, and lets a lot of things happen in each episode, allowing for quicker-arrived, more dramatic character moments.

Unfortunately, *Discovery* falters far too often to earn more than a passing grade. Most noticeable is the writing, which crumbles underneath the plot's enormous weight. Too often, otherwise-engaging characters suffer from awkwardly-written, stilted, robotic dialogue, and plot points are rushed and underdeveloped. It's telling that the best episodes are the most self-contained ones; while the writers can pull off outstanding episodes—episode 7's time loop stands out—their output just isn't strong enough to sustain season-long story arcs.

*Star Trek* tried to give viewers a bright, thoughtful, at times clumsy, and ultimately inspiring universe. *Discovery* manages to capture that magic in fits and bursts, but falls short of being genuinely good. It's a show that's very easy to like in spite of itself, because although it's deeply flawed, it still manages to be more interesting, engaging and charming than it has any right to be.

Mikhail Hanafi

# Cry Me a River: The Decline of Riverdale

**Popular Netflix show *Riverdale* has never been particularly well-written or well-acted.**



Despite the avid attention it garnered from its audience, it's unlikely that anyone believed it possible that it could get any worse. But somehow, impossibly, the second season is even worse than the first. From dreaded beginning to glorious end, the plot becomes further twisted until the original storyline is beyond recognition for even the most dedicated audience. Wincing at the ridiculous lines was part of the show, but now any meagre fondness has deteriorated alongside any potential character development and interesting storyline.

While a convoluted plot often provides an intriguing touch to a series, *Riverdale* completely misses the mark. Within one episode alone there is likely to be enough plot-holes to swallow Earth itself. There are countless issues with season two, but perhaps the most significant is that people just don't speak and behave like they're portrayed. Combined with the fact that the characters are supposed to be fifteen, certain plotlines are somewhat problematic. Some scenes were uncomfortable to watch before this information came to light, and now this sense of unease has only been exacerbated. Some sections of the script are more egregious than others, but the dislocated construction in its entirety remains difficult to fix. It seems that the writers have never met another human, let alone a teenager from the snippets of stunted dialogue interspersed between random, and, quite frankly, bizarre, sex scenes.

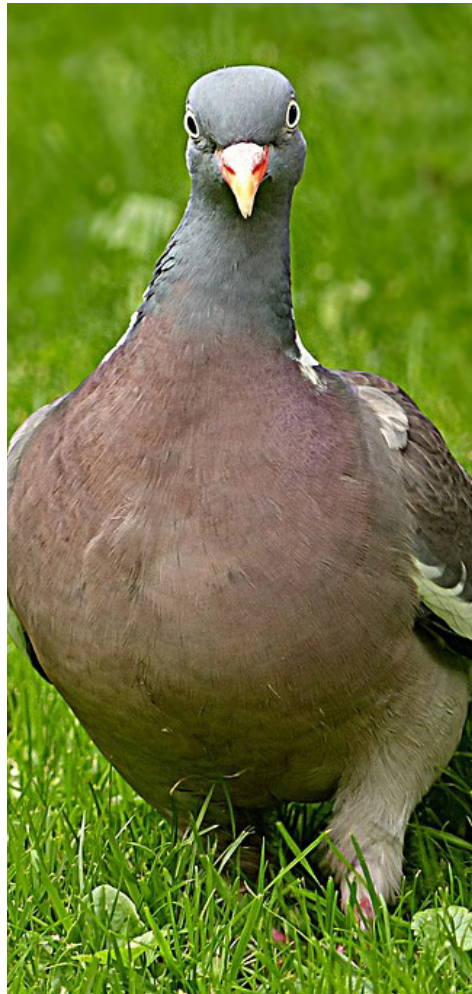
Moreover, the repeated instances of forcing utterly terrible music scenes and singing must be stopped, it's a disaster. The show is supposed to be some sort of mystery drama, but the only real mystery is how it managed to secure a second season at all.

*Riverdale's* characters are shallow, unsatisfying and unflattering stereotypes that shouldn't be allowed to exist. With every passing episode of the season, everyone becomes more infuriating as problems aren't solved and their blatant misadventures come to light. It's baffling, almost unfathomable, that Jughead is now not only a member of the serpent's gang but championing their rights at school. His passion for writing was a nice touch in season one, but now it seems to have drowned amongst his animosity for anyone other than the serpents. His once cliché but tolerable character has been one of the worst character developments to watch because it's only spiralled further into the gutter alongside Veronica, of course. Once so dedicated to righting her father's injustices and proving herself to be more than just a Lodge, she has been gutted, along with any sense of her character. Now, she's just the girl who plays to her parents' expectations as they break the law and sings terrible reprises of songs for no apparent reason.

To conclude, the entire show is a complete travesty. It's a shame that *Riverdale* is as flawed as it is; it could be a useful platform to raise some serious issues that run rampant in society today. And when something important does arise, it's skirted around until it can hardly be justified as television. *Riverdale* has always been contrived to the highest extent, but Season One was somewhat entertaining. For now, Season Two foretells to be a hideous malformation of what could and should be a decent mystery drama but instead falls pitifully short of anything and everything that makes it bearable to watch.

Stephanie Bennett

# Properties, Penny-Pinching and Pigeons: One Man's Plight



Landlords can be cruel. Especially those puppeteering the lucrative student property business in Leeds. Pulling all the strings from their position of power, tweaking penniless undergrad underlings; a few years in student housing will teach you that anything goes. When it comes to maintenance, there's a general rule: If you don't ask, you don't get. If you do ask, you'll probably get the world's worst handyman coming around to your house and smashing the slates off your roof at eight in the morning. If you're lucky, said roof slates will add to the fly-tip in your garden. That'll teach you.

Many landlords seem happy to exploit student desperation, fully aware of the fact that their properties will be filled in time for September. There's definitely something to be said for getting a feel for what kind of person your landlord is – or, if it's a company, how honourably they conduct themselves. If your experience of Leeds properties has, thus far, been rather uniform, then please allow me to put you in the shoes of my second-year self.

When you're slogging your way through a muddle of second year French philosophy texts, you want to leave the existentialist heartache to Sartre.

You want a nice relaxing sleep. As luck would have it, however, you're not the only creature in the attic. On the other side of the sad, sauna-esque wooden slats which line your ceiling are a gaggle of incensed pigeons. They've made the loft their home, enjoying the freedom afforded by the sizeable hole the landlord kindly left in the roof. They come and go, through this nasty pigeon cat flap, flitting through willy-nilly. Adopting the student 'laissez-faire' attitude – having learnt from the last time you were treated to a visit from the 'handyman' – you had decided that the noise made by the pigeons every morning at around 4am, 5am and 7am would be something you could ignore. It might even become a funny quirk of living on Brudenell Avenue. You were wrong.

You email the landlord. You explain that their negligence birthed a pigeon infestation. The pigeon infestation, shockingly, birthed more pigeons. This process gave birth to a sad and tired you. Weeks go by without response. No one seems to care about the plight of the poor soppy student and his sleep problems. Eventually, a passive aggressive email slides into your inbox. According to the wealthy landlord, it would be a good idea

for you to phone pest control. Lovely! Sadly, the guys at pest control don't seem to be free for another six weeks. The orgy of pigeon babble shows no sign of stopping.

When pest control do eventually waltz in – and cut a pigeon poop hole in the ceiling above your housemate's pillow – the burly Yorkshireman comes back down the hatch, shaking his traumatised head. He says there were at least 30 up there and that your landlord's been very negligent of the problem. You agree. He also says there's a risk of infestation by microscopic pigeon mites in the attic bedrooms. This mere appendix to the problem combines potently with work stress, turning you loopy for a few days as you sleep on the living room floor, convinced that the war on pigeon mites has progressed to a full-scale epidemic.

Whether it's mice, rats or pigeons, this situation is enough to make any student feel rubbish. The stress festers when you add uni work to the mix. So, make sure you suss out your landlord before you sign a pigeon poop trap, even if you're more resilient than some of us.

Rory Haworth-Galt

# The Ugly Face of the Beauty Industry

## Charlotte Loughlin discusses Tarte Cosmetics' newest foundation and its "embarrassing" shade range which fails to be inclusive to POC.

In January, Tarte Cosmetics came under fire from the beauty community after the release of its much-anticipated Shape Tape Foundation in both matte and hydrating formulas. The Foundation, inspired by Tarte's cult-favourite concealer, which is sold every 20 seconds and is unsurprisingly America's bestselling concealer, was produced in what can only be described as an embarrassingly limited shade range.

Tarte introduced the Foundation by providing swatches of it in 15 colours, which immediately caught the attention of beauty gurus, makeup artists (MUA's) and consumers alike. Many were left questioning how a cosmetics company, in 2018, can launch such an inadequate product. With many variants for paler skin, including 'fair neutral, fair light neutral and light neutral', and only a couple for

darker skin, it is unsurprising that the company has received intense backlash.

Some have argued that Tarte's shade range was a marketing ploy to gain more media coverage to boost sales. However, considering the Shape Tape release was after Fenty Beauty launched a foundation in 40 shades and was highly praised for its acknowledgement of the vast spectrum of skin colours, it is questionable whether Tarte would want to risk their relatively unscathed reputation for an already highly sought-after product.

Although the formulas of the Tarte foundations have been praised by MUA's and beauty gurus, many have decided to utilise their platforms and followings to bring awareness to the lack of diversity in the makeup industry by refusing to endorse the Shape Tape Foundation until the company provides a full, inclusive

shade range. Nyma Tang, a popular Youtuber and MUA, took to her channel to condemn the shade range, calling the darker shades "ashy" and guilty of a blatant erasure of a whole spectrum of people.

Despite these developments, it is important to note that many of the MUA's criticising Tarte are also those attending Benefit Cosmetics' all inclusive holidays. Benefit Cosmetics have a poor shade range as well, with almost no inclusion or representation in their measly 9 shade 'hello flawless! Oxygen wow' foundation range for POC. Nevertheless, it is a turning point that MUA's are recognising the errors made by Tarte at least and using their platforms to bring awareness to the issues of representation and inclusion in the makeup industry.

Talking to POPSUGAR, a Tarte representative said that "even when

Shape Tape Foundation was revealed, new colours were already in the works," adding that "additional shades are added seasonally" since "your complexion tends to be paler in the winter and darker in the summer months". Tarte Cosmetics have since released an apology, in the form of an Instagram story, stating that ten more shades will be revealed soon but this has left many questioning why men and women of colour are an afterthought.

It is fair to say that all companies, not just Tarte Cosmetics, need to take a leaf out of Fenty Beauty's book and seriously reevaluate their white-washed shade ranges. There are not just 11 different skin colours in the world and everyone deserves representation.

Charlotte Loughlin



# Basis' Battle Against Child Sexual Exploitation

It is undeniable that attitudes to child sexual exploitation need to be changed. Up until 2015, the term 'child prostitute' was used to describe a young person under the age of 18 "selling sex", language which clearly criminalises the child. Victims of the Rotherham paedophile gang were first identified in the early 1990s and their abusers were not convicted until 2012 and 2016. A young woman who recently shared her experiences of exploitation and abuse was told by police that if she was older he would "get her for wasting police time." All these young women were victims of childhood sexual exploitation and for various reasons they were not believed and were let down by the people and services who were meant to protect them.

CSE (Childhood Sexual Exploitation) can be defined as a form of child abuse which occurs when an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance in power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a young person under the age of 18 into sexual activity in exchange for something the victim needs or wants. Despite there being an increased dialogue about CSE amongst professionals and in the mainstream media, the extent of coercion and manipulation involved is massively misunderstood and there still exists a culture of victim blaming.

Professionals, the public, parents and even peers dismiss victims of sexual exploitation as making "poor life decisions" and use labels such as "slag"

"whore" and "tramp" so frequently that the incredibly harmful impact of these words is forgotten. For some young people exploitation has become their norm, and attitudes are such that the perpetrator is often absolved from any blame or responsibility.

*Basis Yorkshire* is a local charity which provides support to young women in Leeds who are at risk of or are experiencing CSE. As well as offering individual one to one support, *Basis* runs a campaign, "It's Not Your Fault", leading up to the 18th of March which marks National CSE Awareness Day. Change starts

**"Up until 2015, the term 'child prostitute' was used to describe a young person under the age of 18 "selling sex", language which clearly criminalises the child."**

with education and *Basis* aim to reach as many people as possible to educate them about the process and impact of CSE as well as counteracting negative victim blaming messages.

From the 5th – 18th of March, *Basis Yorkshire* is holding an art exhibition, "In Our Own Words", at the Shine Building in Harehills which is co-produced with our service users exploring the process and impact of CSE. On the 14th of March they are holding an

additional awareness raising event presenting other work created by service users and holding a panel discussion where young people will have the opportunity to give advice to professionals about best practice.

Links to buy tickets for this event will be available on *Basis'* website and through their twitter and facebook accounts. You can also support the campaign by using #ItsNotYourFault or sharing an image of a hand on your social media with a message of support written on it. If you would like donate to *Basis* then you can do so by texting BYYP18 £5 to 70070. Help us to challenge and resilience to win over exploitation and abuse.

Ruth Shepherd

## Has the Commercialisation of Sport Gone Too Far?

Sport can be incredibly powerful. Indeed, so can advertising. But does this mean the two are incompatible? Has sport been so infused with the commercial that it has lost its meaning and its authenticity? I'm on the fence.

Let's think back to last week's Super Bowl in the US, the 52nd of its kind. The annual event's commercial nature was initiated in the early 70s and remains a cornerstone feature of the nationally-hyped phenomenon. Nowadays, the sometimes controversial, often creative and increasingly expensive commercials are what bring in a large chunk of the event's viewership. I don't suggest this is important in and of itself, but I know I am not turning off the TV when Peter Dinklage and Morgan Freeman have it out in a rap battle during stoppages. Or when Justin Timberlake brings sexy back at half time. One of sport's main functions is to entertain, and for this it should perhaps look to the modern-day Super Bowl for inspiration.

Moreover, this palaver is not necessarily obstructive to the quality of sport on show. In fact, it highlights the immense mental focus of the players in question. With cheerleaders being thrown and chicken wings

being demolished every which way, it is anyone's guess how the players are still able to perform at their very best, which serves as testament to the mettle of those who do.

Nick Foles, the Philadelphia Eagle's fill-in quarterback and man-of-the-match, was a telling example. His demonstration of how to rise to an occasion was nothing short of outstanding. He cannoned throws of pin-point accuracy and pulled off one of the most inventive and playful touchdowns in the history of the Super Bowl. Not only do we look to sport for entertainment, but also for inspiration and displays of courage and determination.

Having said all this, I understand where commercial-haters are coming from. The Olympics, for example, are perhaps one of the few sporting occasions which can survive without a total concession to the consumerist spirit; and are for it, rather refreshing. People tune in to see emotion, grit and patriotism. Indeed, anyone who watched the men's luge finals this week would have seen German favourite and front-runner Felix Loch inconsolable as he fluffed his lines and wept nobly into the arms of his father. Flying down an icy track with little protection at 100 miles

per hour can mean so much more than just sport, as Jon Turteltaub's 'Cool Runnings' (1993) taught us years ago.

Undeniably, the Olympics transcends sport. It delves into the realms of love, compassion and even politics. Right now, for instance, the world awaits an ice-hockey match involving women of both South and North Korea in one unified Korean side - the first time the two nations have fought competitively whilst on the same team.

This begs the question, should sport move beyond superficial fizzy drink commercials and sleazy shaving campaigns and focus on the important stuff, like unifying deeply divided territories? Is one vision compatible without the other, or even more desirable? This is for you to decide; however it is fair to assume that we have become utterly inculcated by the commercialisation which embeds itself in most sporting events. People even had to flock to Twitter in order to verify whether or not Pepsi had managed to hijack the Olympics' entire Opening Ceremony. Coca-Cola, the Games' Official Sponsor, could not have been best pleased.

Mikey Kaye

# In the Middle



“ My greatest role model...I think it differs depending on the different attributes you want to have. So, when it comes to my career – like, David Tennant is the one. But then, my Nana was the funniest woman ever – she had no money – absolutely nothing – and she just lived her life, everyday, on kidney pudding and chips from the chip shop that she worked at and she was happy as lary. So, to be able to put up with anything, to be as resolute as my nana, but with the career and success of David Tennant.

”





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# Valentine's Day and Heteronormativity: LGBTQ+ Love Needs To Be Represented

Eleanor Noyce

The link between Valentine's Day and capitalism has become heightened in recent years. Love and materialism are increasingly intertwined in this modern age and the argument that Valentine's Day has been hijacked by capitalists is a common one. It is one which I shall reinforce, but not repeat. The argument that Valentine's Day merely reinforces heteronormativity, however, is one which needs to be elevated.

To begin with, some terminology. Heteronormativity is the prevailing cultural dominance of opposite-sex, "conventional" relationships. It encompasses the direct marginalisation of those who identify as LGBTQ+, their culture and their representation. It is an integral part of capitalist society, and is increasingly heightened around Valentine's Day. It allows for LGBTQ+ individuals to be marginalised, ignored, and demonised. It allows for Valentine's Day to become symbolic of everything that society expects and advocates: opposite-sex relationships between two cis-gendered individuals.

Valentine's Day furthers the marginalisation which exists every other day of the year. Those who

identify as LGBTQ+ are marginalised to begin with. This is no secret. Nearly half of LGBTQ+ pupils are bullied in school for their identities. Around 25% of those who are homeless identify as LGBTQ+.

Indeed, companies such as *Lush* and *The Body Shop* have, in the past, centred their Valentine's Day advertisements around same-sex relationships, and were applauded for doing so. However, this overt acceptance of LGBTQ+ relationships should have been conveyed long ago. This acceptance comes after centuries of LGBTQ+ marginalisation. It comes

*"Valentine's Day embodies everything a heteronormative society advocates...it furthers the marginalisation which exists every other day of the year."*

after fifteen years of Section 28, the criminalisation of male homosexuality as well as the inaction of the Thatcher administration during the height of the AIDS crisis, and perpetual demonization of the LGBTQ+ community for millennia. It should not be seen as "radical" to include overt portrayals of same-sex desire in advertising campaigns.

I am not suggesting that people are not allowed

to be in love. Love is a wonderful thing. It is all-consuming, beautiful, intense, and deserves to be celebrated. I adore the idea that two people can love each other with every fibre of their being: so much so, that they commit to a lifetime of devotion to one another. However, love is too often represented as something felt by two people of the opposite sex.

For the LGBTQ+ community, love is futile. LGBTQ+ love is intangible. LGBTQ+ love is a series of hook-ups. LGBTQ+ love is dominated by sexual desire. Love is not defined by gender or sexuality. LGBTQ+ love is not about who one wants to have sex with, it is about who one wants to fall in love with. LGBTQ+ love is beautiful, and deserves to be celebrated on Valentine's Day. Next year, leave behind the heteronormativity and promote LGBTQ+ equality and acceptance.

## Oxfam: Such a Charitable Organisation After All?



Photo: IBTimes UK

Lyle Broom

The former director of Oxfam, Roland Van Hauwermeiren, has been accused of hiring sex workers in Haiti in the wake of the devastating Haitian earthquake of 2010. While providing aid to the people of Haiti, Mr. Van Hauwermeiren was meant to be alleviating the country of the poverty which the earthquake had created. Instead, he was contributing to the poverty by directly participating in the illegal sex trade.

The disgraced former Oxfam director is yet to release a formal statement on the controversy, however, in an interview with a Belgian news outlet, he stated that there were some truths to the accusations but also

much exaggeration. He denied the use of the charity's money to pay for the sex workers and even made the startling comment that he was tricked into engaging with them. He claimed to have only discovered the women were sex workers after he had sex with them. It is worth noting, however, that this is not the first time Hauwermeiren has been accused of hiring sex workers while working for a charity. Back in 2002-2004, Hauwermeiren worked for Merlin, a British charity in Liberia, where he was accused of doing exactly the same thing as in Haiti.

*"Oxfam now faces losing funding from both UK and EU governments, meaning they could potentially lose tens of millions of pounds."*

In 2010, the earthquake killed 200,000 people, injured 300,000 and left 1.5 million people homeless; affecting 20% of the 10.4 million Haitian population. Haiti is the poorest country of the Americas with a GDP per capita of \$1,800 and has been for many years since the earthquake hit. The people of Haiti desperately needed money and it is forgivable that these women were willing to be hired as sex workers.

Hauwermeiren was in a position of authority and power and had a duty to provide relief and combat the growing poverty in Haiti. Instead, he abused his position and, therefore, deserved to be dismissed from his post.

Oxfam now faces losing funding from both UK and EU governments, meaning they could potentially lose tens of millions of pounds in funding. As the United Kingdom's fourth largest charity in terms of donations, Oxfam achieves a lot of good in the world: they're involved in anti-poverty projects all over the world from Syria to Yemen to Myanmar; they've helped 2 million people access clean water facilities; and around 350,000 people have benefitted from Oxfam's support to improve their crops, goods or services.

The question arises: would a UK and EU government's decision to pull funding from an incredibly influential and successful charity punish the wrong people? Removing funding would not do anything to punish the perpetrator and only serve to diminish the efforts of the many legitimate charity workers from Oxfam. Aim the retribution at Roland Van Hauwermeiren, not the masses of people Oxfam help every year.



# The Ultimate Aim of Russia's War on Women



Photo: Lacuna Magazine

Edward Barnes

Last year in February the Russian government decriminalised most forms of domestic violence – all cases except when severe physical injury is caused but with no mention of mental and emotional abuse. The terms are: if you beat your wife up but they don't need to be hospitalised and it is your first offence that year, you only have to pay a small fine or spend 15 days in prison. Oh, and you only have to pay the fine if your partner presses charges.

Under the USSR, it was the mission of the new

Communist party to elevate women as part of its ideological system of equality between every citizen. Women were seen by Lenin as an untapped labour force and pushes to get women to work meant they got benefits they didn't previously receive such as welfare and education. In 1920 and 1917 respectively it was one of the first countries to legalise abortion and female suffrage. They even did extensive research into how to give women better orgasms as it was believed to result in more productive workers.

After the collapse of the Soviet Union, things didn't improve. In 1994, there were 300,000 cases of crimes against women and 13,000 rapes. While in 1996, the state Duma did draft a law against domestic violence, there are still 36,000 girls are abused every single day and it is estimated that one woman is killed every 40 minutes from domestic abuse.

The 2017 domestic violence law was passed in defence of family values pushed by the Russian Orthodox Church arguing that "the reasonable and loving use of physical punishment [is] an essential part of the rights given to parents by God himself". As a saying goes in Russia, "if he beats you, it means he loves you." These attitudes extend all the way to Russia's top leadership. Putin has been known to make sexist remarks and is rumoured to have abused his own wife repeatedly. He also has antagonistic relationships with prominent female

*"As a saying goes in Russia, 'if he beats you, it means he loves you.' These attitudes extend all the way to Russia's top leadership"*

leaders where he seeks to intimidate and dominate them. For example: when he let his Labrador into a meeting with Angela Merkel knowing full well she is afraid of dogs.

In the election this year Putin has allowed a line-up of women to challenge him; Ksenia Sobchak, Yekaterina Gordon and Anai Gamzatova. The first two women are both campaigning on feminist issues and Gamzatova is Muslim. None of these women have any chance of winning the Presidency with Putin certainly having a lock on a fourth term. No, the fact that three women are attempting to run against Putin in a period where Russia is embracing traditionalism suggests this seems to be serving a larger narrative – Sobchak is even suspected to have been picked by the Kremlin given her close ties to Putin. These women with their silly feminist issues will inevitably lose to Putin, who with his shirtless bear-hunting photos, views himself as the pinnacle of Russian masculinity. It will send a message to Russian women: know your place.

## Do You Control Your [Online] Privacy?

Hamzah Bharwani

A German court recently ruled that Facebook has been illegally sharing your data; five of the application's default settings did not meet the proper boundaries of informed consent when it came to sharing information. Outraged? Probably not. Over the past few years, social media platforms have been slowly unravelling our lives, pushing the boundaries of consent one small update at a time. Multiple allegations from privacy rights advocacy groups have been launched, attacking many different platforms to no avail. The simplest explanation for this is, out of the millions that use these apps, not enough care that their privacy is being violated. Edward Snowden's actions five years ago sparked mass uproar amongst Americans against government surveillance. And though that reaction was ephemeral, why has the ongoing assault on our everyday privacy by the likes of Facebook, WhatsApp and Instagram received virtually no backlash?

The best way to understand this phenomenon, is

*"Likes and comments have become more important than the right to privacy – a feature of the modern day that many refuse to accept."*

to highlight the dichotomy between the role these two identities play in our lives. Government will always be looked at as powerful, authoritative and more importantly, something to rebel against. On the other hand, it's a lot harder to find someone who isn't obsessed with their presence on social media. Whether to keep in touch with friends, further our careers or attract attention, people who use social media do so because they like being connected. And it's that feeling which translates to the interactions that make us feel this way, almost as if we trust the faceless giants.

Privacy is, and always will be important, but consent isn't the issue here. When you carelessly skip over the terms and conditions before downloading the app or creating an account, you are giving your consent, which includes consenting to the default version of the application you are using. This consent also includes the right to turn off data sharing if you please. But the fact of the matter is, users are far too keen to get on to their profiles and post to give a fraction of a thought as to where their data goes. Likes and comments have become more important than the right to privacy – a feature of the modern day that many refuse to accept.

The case of Facebook and all other social media platforms that allegedly violate our privacy is a cry of revolt by a few members of older generations who want to impose on younger generations how they

should feel as opposed to caring about how they really feel, creating an issue when there isn't one. As university students in 2018, we've grown up and accustomed to social media being a big part of our lives to the extent it's considered normal to have your life on display, and information out there from a young age. That's why we don't kick up a fuss when we learn that people, mainly our friends, are able to locate us physically via an app on their smartphone. And those of us who do are technologically aware enough to disable the features that they don't want to use. The truth is, our privacy is in our control but most of us don't really care about it anymore.



Photo: B&T



# The Crime Behind the Bitcoin Craze

Grace Ennis

A common and prolific criticism of cryptocurrencies is their vulnerability and susceptibility to cyber corruption. There is good reason behind this concern, too; just this week, Europol director Rob Wainwright announced that there has been a significant increase in cybercrime of this nature. He estimated that around 4% of all criminal proceeds are now being turned into cryptocurrencies because they aid the obscuring of evidence. Money that has been converted into currencies which governments already find difficult to regulate is naturally easier to keep under wraps for criminals. Once criminal money is used in untraceable transactions involving cryptocurrencies, the means of locating and retrieving the stolen goods becomes highly complicated and protracted.

Take this everyday example as a warning: if you were to have money stolen from your bank account, your bank would take steps to help you retrieve the money. As stressful as the realisation of your losses may be at first, the police have the technology to track such crimes and banks are often more than willing to refund the money and even freeze your bank account in extreme circumstances. If this money were to be transferred into cryptocurrencies however, the

solution may not be so simple. Wainwright observed that “police cannot monitor those transactions” in the same way they survey regular ones, as “they have no way to freeze the assets unlike in the regular banking system.” The lack of a central regulatory authority is the fundamental flaw in this system. When it comes to regulation and consumer protection, external authorities can do little to resolve security issues when there are no internal officials at the core.

These figures reported by Europol are from Europe alone. With an estimated £100 billion of illegal money being circulated in and around the continent, it is likely that around £4 billion of that is in cryptocurrencies. This, of course, does not account for the global impact of this new crime wave. With countries such as South Korea and Japan taking steps to impose regulations on transacting with cryptocurrencies, the global impact of laundering of this nature is clearly anticipated.

The issue going forward, and the question becoming increasingly urgent for legal authorities, is how to come to a workable compromise with cryptocurrencies. Clearly they are here to stay, and in an age where consumers are depending on the internet for more commercial transactions than ever, it would be impractical to try and override the progression of cryptocurrencies into our economy. It is not unreasonable to predict that, with the

right regulation, cryptocurrencies could be a feature of our daily commercial landscape in the near future. The task of finding a feasible and legal way to integrate them into our current financial systems though, will be the biggest barrier to bitcoin and its lesser known siblings making their way onto our regular stock markets.



## Leeds Women in Leadership Launch Empower Conference

Chloe Sainsbury

This month saw the Empower Conference being hosted by the Leeds Women in Leadership Society, an event which pleasantly surprised me. We live in a time of women’s marches and a growing outcry from the female population asking to be heard, both in society and business.

In 2017, women held 5.2% of CEO positions in the S&P 500 list of companies. In the same year in the UK, the Office for National Statistics (ONS) reported that men earned 18.4% more than women. Yet, it sometimes feels like there is little we as individuals can do to make a change. A conference like this is a great place to start. Not only do companies get to showcase how they are pushing an equality agenda, but women also get the chance to be inspired to take control of their career.

The conference held on Friday 9th February, ran from 8:30am to 5:30pm and students were encouraged to attend when they could around other academic commitments they may have had. The conference included a wide range of speeches, a networking lunch, workshops and an entrepreneurship panel.

Speeches were given on topics ranging from women in a digital world to, how companies benefit from gender diversity. Stephanie Burras CBE, gave the sort of speech empower was all about. She spoke about the social enterprise she founded and runs, Ahead Partnership, which aims to get more businesses and school children working together on projects as well as giving children exposure to business from an early age in order to challenge gender norms and school completion rates. Inspiring, real and thought-provoking, Stephanie was able to tap into the imagination of many aspiring men and women in the crowd, no doubt.

Lunch was followed by the most anticipated part of the day, the workshops. Five workshops on topics such as ‘3 ways to empower yourself’ and ‘Communicating with impact: getting heard in a noisy world’ were

run simultaneously. Chris Miles, who ran a practical workshop for interview success, with Sandy Miles, said of his workshop: “Interviews are no different from anything else – preparation and practice are key and help build confidence which is critical for success.” The workshop gave tips about preparing for an interview through research of the sector, the organisation and people; the interview itself and, how to follow-up for a job you really want. Two post-graduate students who attended the interview skills workshop, Rachel Dodds and Lois Gardner, both felt that its practical elements were very useful and were inspired by the conference as a whole.

The Leeds Women in Leadership Society did a fantastic job with the day’s events and here’s hoping that all its attendees left feeling somewhat more inspired and empowered. If you didn’t get the chance to attend, be on the lookout for any other events the society organises and perhaps the conference will return for a second year in 2019!

*“It sometimes feels like there is little we as individuals can do to make a change. A conference like this is a great place to start.”*



# Brexit To Threaten Small and Medium Businesses

India Daniel

As the Prime Minister hopes to cinch a EU deal next month, more and more businesses are demanding clarity on what Brexit will look like to allow them to plan for the scenario. Chair of the EEF group, Judith Hackett, has said that most businesses are underprepared, particularly small and medium sized companies ('SMEs').

This news comes on the back of the UK Trade Policy Observatory ('UTPO') publishing its report on Brexit, in which it considers five scenarios to determine which manufacturing industries would be worst hit

by Brexit. It concluded that under all five scenarios, from soft to hard, the manufacturing industry would be negatively affected.

The manufacturing sector in the UK accounts for a total of 5% of businesses, 10% of employment, and 15% of turnover demonstrating that it is an important and profitable sector. Manufacturing accounts for 44% of the UK's total exports meaning that it is one of the most affected sectors by the result of Brexit.

The UTPO compared five scenarios which ranged from a soft EEA scenario to a very hard Brexit where no trade agreement is reached and tariffs are applied to all goods. Under all scenarios the UTPO concluded

that the manufacturing industry would be hit badly by Brexit. In a statement on Tuesday, the head of a body representing the manufacturing industry will call for urgent clarity on whether there will be a transition period as manufacturers grow more and more nervous about the impact of Brexit on their businesses.

Similarly, the Environment, food and rural affairs committee ('EFRA') has warned of the potentially 'significant' impact of Brexit on the agricultural sector which it argues will impact consumers. EFRA argued that in order to offer consumers the best choice and most competitive prices the sector relies heavily on frictionless imports. As nearly two thirds of British foods come from the EU, the British Retail Consortium ('BRC') argued that the impact on consumers 'is clear' suggesting that a tariff of 22% would drive up prices for the consumers dramatically resulting in a decrease in standards of living.

Hackett stated, "We must avoid new trade barriers, complex customs arrangements, or vastly different regulatory environments". As we can see, the impact of a soft Brexit will be hard enough for companies to ride out. Theresa May needs to ensure that businesses are protected in the negotiations; their success will be the thing which drives our economy offsetting any difficulties arising from leaving the EU.



Image: bloomberg.com

# Oxfam In Crisis: Will The Charity Survive?

Kate Mikhaylenko

Oxfam was plunged into crisis earlier this month, with the publication of a 2011 inquiry which alleged that its senior staff paid for sex with Haitian earthquake victims in the aftermath of a crisis that left 200,000 people dead. The man at the centre of this scandal, Haiti programme chief Roland van Hauwermeiren, has been accused of encouraging local earthquake victims into sex work, which is against Haitian law as well as the UN code of ethics for aid workers. He has since issued a statement denying the allegations, but admitting to some "mistakes" during his time in Haiti, as well as saying: "I should have known better, I'm made of flesh and blood, nobody's perfect, but I'm not a pig".

In response, the UK deputy chief executive Penny Mordaunt has resigned, and Haitian president Jovenel Moise condemned "sexual predator" staff for exploiting "needy people in their moment of greatest vulnerability". Actress Minnie Driver, most famous for her role in *Good Will Hunting*, has quit her position as charity ambassador.

These revelations have shone a spotlight on sexual abuse within the aid sector generally, with Nobel Peace

Prize-winning charity, Médecins Sans Frontières, issuing a statement on February 14th confirming that they have investigated 24 cases of sexual harassment last year, and fired 19 employees as a result during the same period. It has also emerged that Roland van Hauwermeiren has been involved in similar scandals before; first in Liberia in 2004, where he was forced to leave a role with charity Merlin following an investigation into the use of sex workers by him and his colleagues, and later in Chad in 2006, where it has been alleged that prostitutes were repeatedly invited to the Oxfam team house by senior members of staff.

Nearly half a million people in the UK donate to Oxfam every year, but there has already been significant damage to the charity's reputation as a direct result of this scandal, with Oxfam confirming that 1270 regular donations were cancelled between February 9th and February 11th (far above the usual rate of 600 cancellations per month). Additionally, Penny Mordaunt, the Secretary of State for International Development, has said that she will meet with the National Crime Agency regarding these allegations, and threatened to pull government funding worth £32m unless Oxfam provide "robust management" and comply with authorities. Nigel Evans, a

Conservative member of the Commons International Development Select Committee, has said that Oxfam is "facing obliteration". The Charity Commission for England and Wales has launched an inquiry.



Image: environmental-watch.com



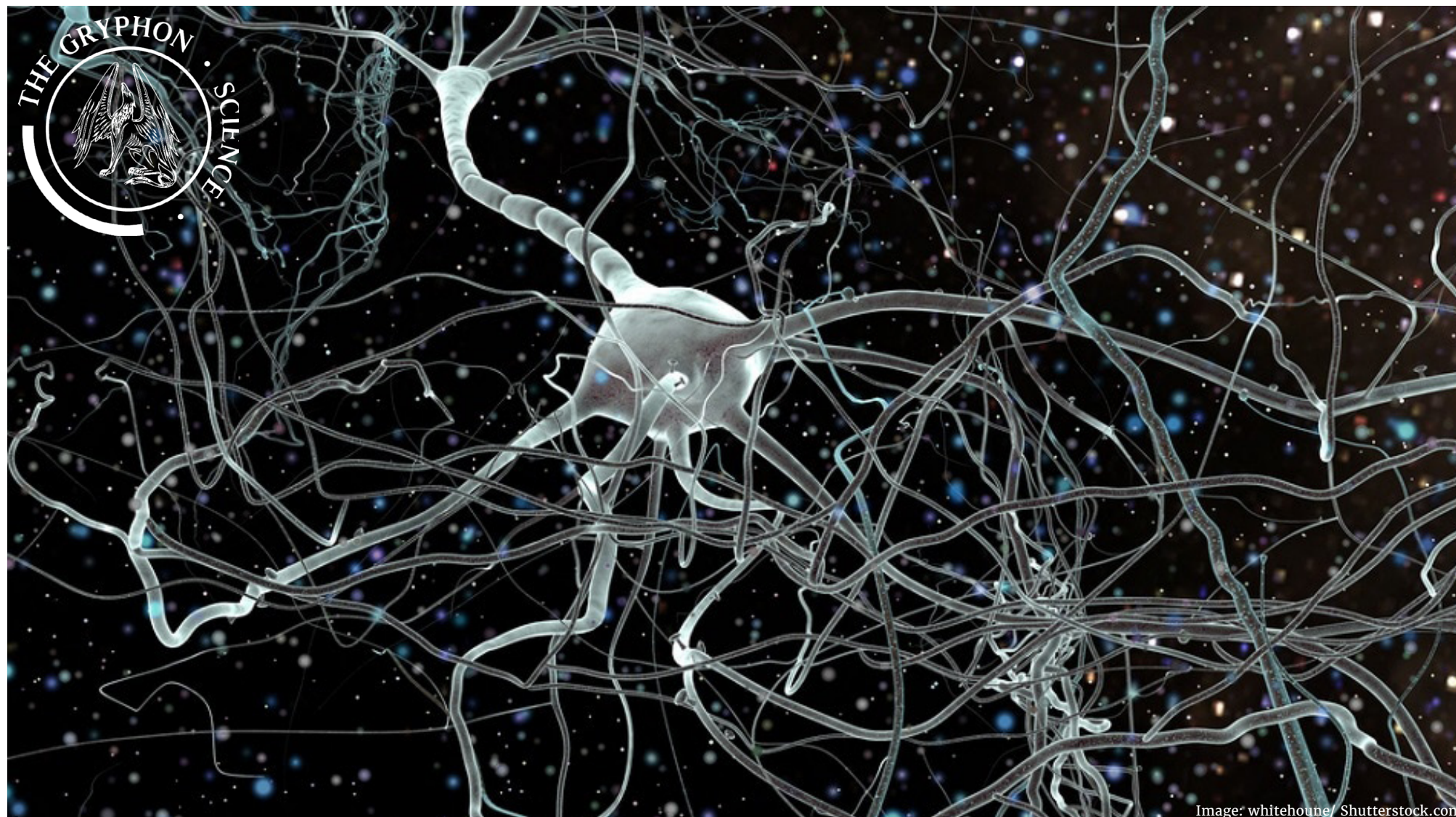


Image: whitehouse/Shutterstock.com

# Total Recall: What If You Could Remember Everything?

Michelle Heinrich

Since many of us find it rather difficult to remember what we did or what clothes we wore a week or two ago, it might be hard to believe that there are individuals that can recall memories for most, if not every day, of their lives starting from their childhood.

Officially, there are only 60 individuals in the world who have hyperthymesia. Hyperthymesia is a condition that is also known as Highly Superior Autobiographical Memory (HSAM) and causes individuals to clearly remember what they did on a specific date, what events took place, and details like the weather and what day of the week it was. This may be true for the occasional day for all of us, but people with HSAM can recall this detailed information for most days of their entire life. After a full decade of research on HSAM, it still remains unclear what is causing people to have this extraordinary memory ability.

The first case of hyperthymesia was documented in 2000 when Jill Price, now known to the world as “the woman who can’t forget”, contacted Dr. James McGaugh at UC Irvine to seek help for her, what she called, “memory problem”. Interestingly, Price’s brain scans were found to be normal, and McGaugh and his research team confirmed that her performance on standard memory tests was equal to that of the average person. For instance, when asked to recall words from a list shown to her earlier, she was not immune to memory distortions; i.e. she, like most people, gave words that had, in fact, not been on the list but were closely related in meaning to words that

were. Despite all that, she could perfectly recall what took place on any given date when prompted.

The memory capabilities of most people are somewhat similar to that of individuals with HSAM. Most people can recall what they did a day or two ago, it just happens that individuals with HSAM can recall memories beyond a few days. This raises the question as to whether we all have the capability to store information about every day of our lives in our brain, but it is only people with HSAM that can access them in a way that everyone else cannot.

Psychologist Gary Marcus doesn’t think that people with HSAM have an extraordinary memory. According to him, individuals with HSAM have a strong interest in their own lives and spend an excessive amount of time studying and rehearsing details of their daily experiences. In fact, brain scans of individuals with HSAM look very similar to scans of individuals with OCD.

However, obsessively rehearsing memories can in fact lead to distorted memories. Cognitive neuroscientist Maria Wimber and her team have found that remembering a past experience can cause forgetting, or at least partial forgetting, of that recalled memory. This could mean that individuals with HSAM are either immune to these effects or, contrary to Marcus’ explanation, do in fact not obsessively rehearse their life experiences.

Time-Space synaesthesia has also been proposed as a possible explanation. Psychologist Julia Simner and her team argue that time-space synaesthesia might be a contributing factor in HSAM. Synaesthesia is a neurological condition which causes the crossing of

the senses where words can be associated with taste, or music with colours. Time-space synaesthesia specifically means that months or years can be perceived spatially, such as a circle around the body, where months and years might be found in different places similar to numbers on a clock.

As it stands, hyperthymesia is still a fairly new condition but research in this area continues as we learn more about how our memory works. In the future, when we know more about why and how we forget memories, it should become easier to find an explanation as to why most people forget their autobiographical memories but individuals with HSAM don’t.







Image: Brett Monroe Garner, National Geographic

# Reptile Dysfunction: Rising Temperatures Turn Turtles Female

Morwenna Davies

Rising temperatures are leading to an increase in the proportion of female Green Sea Turtles (*Chelonia mydas*), recent studies show. Studies carried out on beaches of the Great Barrier Reef in Australia show that a striking 99% of a total 200,000 infant turtles on northern beaches are female. This is compared to females making up 87% of the total Green Sea Turtle population in Australia, which indicates that temperatures are having a generational impact. A similar study concluded that 97% of infant turtles in Palm Beach County, Florida, are also female. The Green Sea Turtle species is already highly endangered, with continuously decreasing populations threatening the survival of the species.

Green Sea Turtles are one of few reptiles that display temperature-dependent sex determination. Hence, these trends are due to influences of temperature and moisture on turtle eggs during the incubation period. Research shows that increasing temperatures and decreasing moisture availability, ultimately linked back to climate change, are causing a greater proportion of embryos to develop as female. Identification of Green Sea Turtles is not as simple as you might think, with no morphologically defining features between the sexes. Scientists therefore used the presence of a male-specific protein, Sox9, to distinguish infant male turtles from the females.

Northern Australia has a warmer tropical climate than the temperate south, and the absence of the polar air experienced in the Northern hemisphere

means north Australian winter temperatures are also particularly mild. As a result, the female bias is not balanced by cooler temperatures in winter months, leading to further increased proportions of females in the population.

A 50:50 ratio of males to females is expected at 29°C. Increased greenhouse gases in the atmosphere are causing a global warming effect, which has led to a temperature increase of 0.7°C in Australia in the last 100 years. Although this may seem quite low, the current trend of exponential increase predicts a further rise of 2.5°C by 2100. Australia is also very dry in comparison to other countries; with an average rainfall of 419 mm per year (compared to a 1,100 mm per year average in Britain). Together, these factors are detrimental to the survival of the male Green Sea Turtle population.

Populations are already threatened by human activity, including fishing and habitat destruction from an abundance of tourism around the Great Barrier Reef. Now the added threat of global warming is endangering the population even further, which could have devastating consequences for the species and associated ecology in the future. So, what can we do to protect this fragile species? Some solutions have been proposed which utilise tents or artificial rain to cool the sands so that male embryos can develop under cooler temperatures. However, if trends continue as they are, Green Sea Turtles will soon be a beauty of the past.

## What's New in Science This Week

Sam McMaster  
Science Editor

1

### Physicists Create New Form of Light

Scientists at MIT have shown that when a weak laser beam is shone through a dense cloud of rubidium atoms the photons (particles of light) will bind together in pairs or triplets. This is counterintuitive as photons travelling at full speed don't interact with each other and have no mass. It was found that the bound photons acquired a relatively large amount of mass and travelled 100,000 times slower than usual.

2

### Super Wood to Replace Steel?

Engineers at the University of Maryland have combined nanotechnology with wood to create a new material stronger than many titanium alloys. This had made the wood over ten times stronger and tougher, making it competitor to carbon fibre while being much less expensive.

3

### New Language Discovered in Southeast Asia

Previously unknown to linguists, Jedek, as it has been dubbed, has been found in the Malay peninsula. The community in which it is spoken is more gender-equal than Western societies, children are encouraged not to compete, there is almost no interpersonal violence and no laws or court system.

4

### New CRISPR-based Diagnostic Tool Developed

The team behind the diagnostic tool SHERLOCK have enhanced the tool's power to now function with a mini paper test allowing for ease and speed of use of detection. This diagnostic technique can be used to identify viruses, specific DNA identifiers and many other targets.

5

### New Self-Healing 'Electronic Skin' Developed

Researchers from University of Colorado have developed a new malleable, self-healing and fully recyclable 'electronic skin' for uses in robotics and prosthetic development for biomedical devices.

# Christie Crashes Out Of Winter Olympics

After upset in the 500m and 1500m speed skating events, Elise Christie was disqualified in her final attempt at glory in the 1000m

**Thomas Lambton**  
Winter Olympics

One cannot help but feel the strongest sense of sympathy for the plight of short track speed skater, Elise Christie over the past fortnight. So desperate to banish the memories of Sochi, she arrived at the South Korean Winter Olympics in Pyeongchang full of hope and expectation, with three genuine medal chances.

First came the 500m, through to the final by just 4cm, the nation watched with baited breath. Just as Christie looked to make the decisive move into a medal position on the final lap, her hand came into contact with Dutchwoman, Yara van Kerkhof, and she dramatically crashed out. Christie made subsequent complaints that her fall was not her own doing but to no avail, as she ultimately finished fourth.

Next came the 1500m which, although not Christie's strongest event, undoubtedly remained a medal possibility. However, after a collision with China's Li Jinyu on the final lap of the semi-final, a similar fate befell Christie as she was subsequently disqualified. This time, the damage was more than just in psychological terms as Christie was sent to hospital for an X-ray.

Thankfully, the X-ray showed no serious damage, however the injury was clearly hampering Christie

as she lined up for her favoured event, the 1000m.

It is the ultimate testament to Christie's drive and commitment to the sport that she was prepared to compete, despite being far from fully fit. Her strength of personality would once again prove to be in vain as, after seemingly securing progression from the quarter finals, she was met with a dubious yellow card, confirming her 5th disqualification in six Olympic events.

The extent to which her Olympic record does not do justice to her talent is in many ways remarkable. The Briton's success in other competitions is plain for all to see; three gold medals at the 2017 World Championships in Rotterdam, four golds at the 2016 European Championships in Sochi, and the world record in the 500m event. These represent just three notable highlights in a very impressive career to date.

This undoubtedly raised expectations, and perhaps these expectations proved counter-productive. One certainty, however, is that Christie has captured the nations hearts. The level of support from the public, pundits and former athletes alike will undoubtedly provide further inspiration for Christie to return in Beijing and re-write the history books.

Sport does not operate according to fairy tales and Christie's Olympic experience is the ultimate reminder of this brutal fact. There is no guarantee of success in Beijing, yet nothing would be more deserved.



Image: Sky News

# First Transgender Australian Footballer Cleared After Long Struggle

Following criticism, the Australian Football League have decided to overturn their original rejection of Hannah Mouncey

**George Bains**  
Australian Football

Hannah Mouncey has become the first ever transgender Australian rules football player following the Australian Football League's decision to support her request last week. This has marked the end of a long and draining battle for Mouncey to convince the AFL to allow her to play women's Australian football at state level.

Hannah Mouncey, born Callum, was formerly a player for the Australian men's national handball team, but in November 2015, she began hormone therapy and made public her transition in May 2016. Mouncey was rebuffed in her request to play for the women's handball team in a competition that year as she was just short of the IOC's guideline of 12 months of hormone therapy, despite her testosterone levels already being below the required levels. Mouncey was then caught up in what she described as a "circus", seeing her application to play in AFLW become a long and drawn-out process.

The AFL had previously rejected Mouncey's application to play in the 2017 AFL Women's league,

but gave hope for making transgender history when the sporting authorities indicated that she would be able to compete in the 2018 season. This soon became the subject of controversy as the AFL excluded Mouncey from the draft and prompted criticism by the AFL Players Association. On February 13th the AFL finally accepted Mouncey's request to play in the AFLW league, however the player took to Twitter to express her dissatisfaction with how a saga was made out of what should only have been a formality.

Mouncey claimed it would be "highly inappropriate" to thank the AFL for eventually treating her as any other Australian, and later shared screenshots of various abusive tweets directed at the first trans player. This discrimination is not merely surface level, as Hannah also revealed that she faces many other challenges on a daily basis, which has ultimately led to mental health risks.

In 2017, Mouncey established *Transform Coaching and Speaking*, a Melbourne-based initiative to give assistance to others who are undergoing gender transformation. Hannah Mouncey is now a key figure and spokesperson for transgender issues in Australia, and with her fight now over she is looking to support others using her experience.



Image: The Brag



# The Champions League Has Returned

Convincing results for Manchester City and Liverpool boost English hopes



**James Felton**  
Football

The Champions League is back. After a break from Europe's top competition, which has seen Manchester City, Barcelona and Bayern Munich virtually conquer their domestic leagues already, clubs, such as Real Madrid and Chelsea, are glad to have this welcome distraction from dismal – by their high standards – league form.

A highlight of the first leg of last-16 matches is the genuine strength shown by the English teams; Manchester City and Liverpool, with 4-0 and 5-0 wins, away from home, against Basel and Porto, are already through, bar a Wigan-esque miracle. Tottenham's 2-2 away draw against Juventus puts Pochettino's side firmly in control, with Spurs hoping they don't repeat last season's Champions League form at Wembley for the return leg. Manchester United, albeit without scoring an away goal, drew at Sevilla. They know that any sort of win against the Spanish side is enough to go through to the quarter-finals. Mourinho is the master of such results.

And, finally, Chelsea, are the team who have it the most difficult, having been drawn against giants Barcelona, coupled with issues regarding form, Antonio Conte and Alvaro Morata, this was to be expected. Willian was unlucky to have hit the post twice with powerful shots, before scoring at the third attempt to take the lead. However,

a lapse in concentration from Christensen gave Iniesta the ball, with Messi in space. You cannot afford to give those two players such an easy opportunity. 1-1 isn't the worst result in the world, but Barcelona are favourites going into the return leg at the Nou Camp.

Elsewhere, the main story was Real Madrid's 3-1 win against PSG. The winner of the last two editions, who have had a torrid time in both cup and league, have found their gear in the Champions League, with Ronaldo scoring 11 goals in this season's competition. The tie is far from settled however, with Neymar, Mbappe and Cavani looking for revenge in Paris. Bayern Munich beat Besiktas 5-0 and, perhaps to the surprise of some, Shakhtar Donetsk managed to beat Roma 2-1.

As ever, there is plenty of football to be played, perhaps except from the two 5-0 and 4-0 results. With English teams struggling over the last few years – with no winner since 2012 – it is great to see them being competitive again. It is true that some teams have had success, such as Manchester City's 2015/16 semi-final run, but the point is that the English teams haven't reached the latter stages at the same time. Not since the real period of dominance, which saw an English team involved in every final between 2005 and 2012, apart from 2009/10. It is too early to say how the English teams will do, but, whatever the results, we are already looking at some mouth-watering quarter-final ties. The Champions League is back.



## BUCS Schedule 28th February

**Badminton Womens 2nd vs Northumbria 1st**

2pm, The Edge

**Badminton Mens 3rd vs York St Johns 1st**

2pm, The Edge

**Basketball Mens 3rd vs Leeds Trinity 1st**

1pm, Brownberrie Lane Sports Hall

**Football Womens 2nd vs Hull 1st**

2pm, Sports Park Weetwood

**Football Womens 3rd vs Leeds Trinity 1st**

2pm, Brownlee Centre

**Hockey Mens 2nd vs Sheffield 2nd**

2.30pm, Sports Park Weetwood

**Hockey Mens 4th vs Sheffield 3rd**

4pm, Sports Park Weetwood

**Lacrosse Mens 1st vs Lancaster 1st**

4.15pm, Sports Park Weetwood

**Netball Womens 5th vs Sunderland 1st**

3.30pm, Gryphon Sports Centre

**Rugby League Mens 2nd vs Sheffield 2nd**

2pm, Brownlee Centre

**Rugby Union Mens 2nd vs Beckett 3rd**

3pm, Sports Park Weetwood

**Rugby Union Mens 3rd vs Sheffield Hallam 2nd**

2pm, Sports Park Weetwood/Brownlee Centre

**Rugby Union Mens 4th vs Teesside 1st**

2.30pm, Brownlee Centre

**Squash Womens 2nd vs Chester 1st**

1.30pm, Gryphon Sports Centre

**Squash Mens 3rd vs Hull 1st**

12.45pm, Gryphon Sports Centre

**Volleyball Mens 1st vs Sheffield Hallam 2nd**

2pm, Gryphon Sports Centre

**Full Fixtures and Results at**  
**bucs.org.uk**



# Barry Bennell Sentenced to 31 Years in Prison

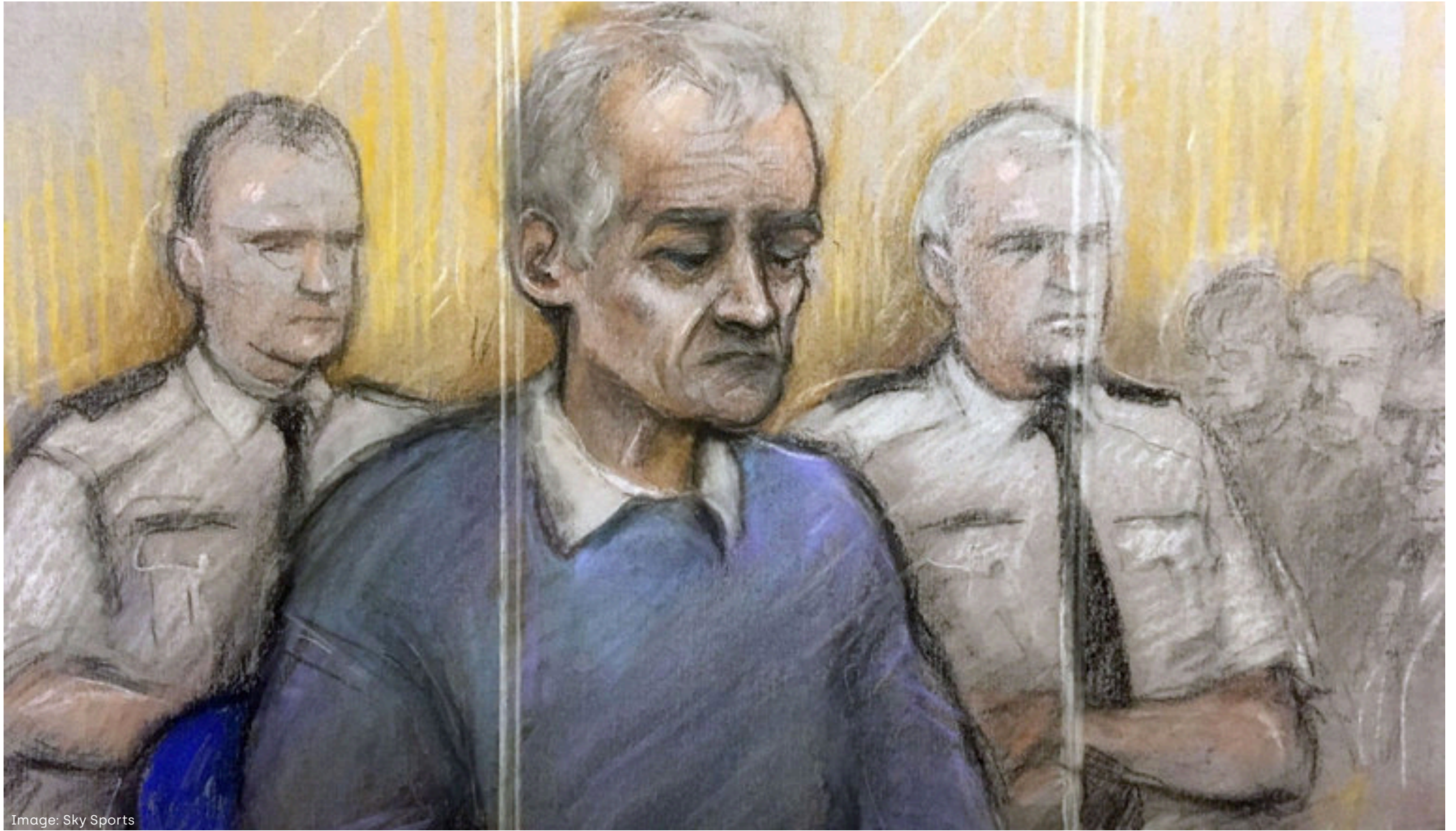


Image: Sky Sports

## The Former Coach was Found Guilty on 50 Counts of Child Sexual Abuse

Julian Bovill  
Football

Barry Bennell, the disgraced former football coach, was this week sentenced to 31 years in prison for 50 counts of child sexual abuse. Bennell, a revered coach at numerous clubs during the 1980s, most notably at Manchester City and Crewe Alexandra, was branded “sheer evil” and “manipulative” by the judge.

Micky Fallon, who was abused for the first time by Bennell when he was 13 in the 1980s at Crewe, said after the sentence was handed down that “today we (the victims) stared evil in the face and we smiled”.

Fallon is one of a number of victims who, until recently, had not been able to speak out against Bennell, telling the Guardian that “it isn’t easy admitting you were one of Barry Bennell’s boys.” However, once Andy Woodward spoke out in November last year, there has been a domino effect, with no less than 86 former players of Bennell coming forward.

Woodward, a former pro and the first of Bennell’s victims to speak out, compared it to the Jimmy Savile case, where people eventually had the

courage to challenge someone who previously had so much power and influence.

Bennell certainly had power and influence in the football world as a highly sought-after youth football coach during the 1980s. Victims have told stories of Bennell threatening their place in the team or even in the academy itself should they try to reject his advances.

Bennell was a manipulative and evil man, convincing fellow coaches and parents that he was a caring individual, when in fact he was abusing boys as young as nine. Fallon himself describes his first impressions of Bennell – when he was 12 – as being entirely positive. He saw him as “friendly, bubbly, chatty”.

Bennell would use his house to abuse the boys, with many of his victims not living anywhere near Crewe or Manchester. Fallon’s family were from Plymouth and thus whenever he went up to Crewe – usually during school holidays – he would have to be housed. The coaches property has been described as a “teenage boys dream”, with it kitted out with arcade games, televisions and, most bizarrely of all, luxury pets including a puma, which, Woodward states, would “roam the living room while you

were sitting there”. Bennell would often have more boys to stay than there were beds, forcing boys to have to sleep in the same bed as him. He would deliberately scare the boys – Fallon cites a time at Bennell’s house where he made 13 year olds watch the horror film *Nightmare on Elm Street* – forcing them to “snuggle up close to him”, making him appear as the only person that could protect them.

His attacks were calculated, cold and, perhaps most shamefully of all, obvious. Daniel Taylor, the journalist for the Guardian whose investigative work uncovered most of the abuse, tells a story of Bennell about to be employed by Manchester United. He turned up at Carrington, the club training ground, to finalise his appointment as an academy coach; however, when Alex Ferguson spotted him, he immediately called security to “get that man off this property”. There were other incidents, which led to Crewe being branded the “paedophile club” by opposition players and coaches.

Bennell’s abuse was not a secret. Unfortunately, it is another story of those in senior positions missing – or ignoring – blatant abuse at the hands of a man who thought he was all powerful.





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