



# THE GRYPHON

The official newspaper of Leeds University



Illustration by Lauren Burnett

## Black Students Awarded 1st Class Degrees Four Times Less in 2018

*Statistics published by both The Gryphon and the University reveal large disparities between White and Black students in particular at the University of Leeds*

**Megan Ardis, Ed Barnes**  
Associate Editor, Editor-In-Chief

Black Students were awarded Class 1 degrees at the University of Leeds at a rate that is four times less than White students in the academic year 2018–2019.

In the last academic year, only 7.9% of Black students got a Class 1 degree compared to 33.3% of White students. This was an awarding gap of 25.4%.

Since 2015, the statistics also revealed that the gap has widened by 8%. In 2015–16, 25.5% of White students got a Class 1 degree compared to 8.1% for Black students. When looking at other racial groups too, White students were awarded better grades than Asian students and those classed at “Other” that included mixed-race students.

For Third Class honours and Fails too, gaps between White and Black students were also present. In 2015, 18.8% of Black students were awarded Fails or Third class degrees compared to 6.4% of White students. This represents a gap of 12.4%.

In 2018, this gap has closed to 10.1% between students awarded this grade

level. However Black students were awarded Third Class degrees or Fails 2.6 times more than White students.

A University of Leeds spokesperson said:

*“We have committed to very clear targets to close the gaps in student success in our Access and Participation Plan. The gap between Black and White students’ success in particular is worrying, and as a University that absolutely values diversity and equal opportunity, we are determined to reverse this trend.”*

*“Our strategy is concentrating on the critical factors that we think will really make a difference – with staff at all levels focused on tackling the issue, data analysis and research to understand gaps, barriers and impact of work, more opportunities to talk about race, cultures and actions, as well as our on-going work to ensure the curriculum is inclusive to students from all backgrounds and improve diversity of staff.”*

In every academic year since 2015, Black students were awarded the lowest grades out of any other racial group in the University statistics while White students were awarded the highest.

Overall, there was a 28.9% gap between Black and White students at the University of Leeds who were awarded a 2:1 degree classification or above in 2017/18, according to statistics detailed in the University of Leeds’ 2019–2020 Access and Participation Plan.

Abiha Khan, the Education Officer at Leeds University Union, in a statement said:

*“The BAME awarding gap is a national issue, and a key manifesto point for me personally this year. Among the actions I am taking, I am submitting policy to Better University Forum in November around whether the University should adopt and implement a strategy to close the BAME awarding gap.”*

*“At LUU we are working on our first full report into the Leeds awarding gap and identifying the steps we can take to support our BAME members and highlight this issue at faculty and institution level, as well as disaggregating data to ensure we support those students who are disproportionately affected by these barriers.”*

Story Continued on Page 6.

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Issue 2

18/10/19

### You Better get EUed to Brexit

Inaya Folarin, ex-Features Editor at the Gryphon is now running for the Brexit Party in Leeds North East. Features ask her about her plans if she becomes MP.

Page 8–9



### Society Sits Down with ACS

An interview with society President, Kingsley Duru about their re-branding, success this year and their upcoming event *Legacy*.

Page 11



### Extincts? Has XR Passed Its Sell-By Date?

Views looks at the morality of protests in relation to Extinction Rebellion and their recent legal set-backs in London.

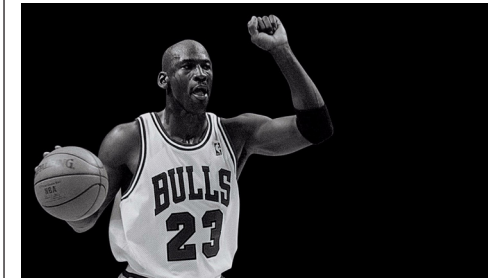
Page 14



### Black History Makers

Sport looks at the legacies of fifteen Black athletes who have broken records and made history in different sports

Page 23





Editors of the Week

Millie Warrilow, Safi Bugel, Jess McCarrick

It was a tough call this week. Going solo, Millie edited the entire Sports section this week and wrote 1000 words on 15 inspirational Black athletes. No mean feat but gunning for the honours this week as well are Safi and Jess. Editing multiple interviews and a spotlight on Black music artists, needless to say they did a pretty good job too...

Quote of the Week

*“The only source of trauma in my life is mushrooms”*

Georgie Fuhri, declaring her hatred for innocent funghi

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# Editorial Letter:



Dear readers,  
For starters, I am going to retract a bold claim made in last week’s issue. As much as I’m sure he’d still love to cling to power, Matt Port is not your Welfare Officer any more. It is in fact Amy Wells, unlike what last issues’ Exec Columns would suggest and I apologise for my excessive use of the Undo feature late on a Thursday night. We’re now three weeks into the first semester.

Freshers is a distant memory and we’re now getting stuck into the thick of it as we move through October. You’ve unfortunately had to read two of my editorial letters by this point and lucky you because here’s another one.

You might not have realised this yet but October as well as the leadup to November deadline season and Halloween is also Black History Month. For the last 32 years across the entirety of October, England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, people have celebrated the contributions that Black people have made to British society as well as to educate and raise awareness of the persecution, oppression and enslavement that Black people have experienced for centuries.

Black History Month is a celebration of Black history, Black art and Black culture. However Black history should be acknowledged throughout the year and not just in October. The fact that it needs to exist as a month in order to be celebrated at all shows us as White people need to do so much more to understand the ways race still intersects with the world today.

We always learn about White history though it’s never labelled as such – it’s just history. White literature is never relegated to its own curriculum or module, but most books written by people-of-colour are only studied within postcolonial courses. We study about White scientists, White thinkers and White politicians because they are the ones who have been placed in academic curriculums.

Looking back at what I was taught in school, you’d be forgiven for believing that the Empire wasn’t a big deal, the Atlantic Slave trade didn’t happen (I don’t even remember a single mention and I actually liked History), and that all racism in America stopped when Rosa Parks sat down on a bus, Martin Luther King marched on Washington in 1963 and the Voting Rights Act was passed in 1964. I even did History up until A-Level and not once was the Empire and the slave trade ever taught. But boy did I learn a lot about Henry VIII’s chronic wife addiction.

Such an ignorance erases the contributions that Black people and other ethnic minorities have made. However to correct this ignorance isn’t to expect Black people to educate White people about their experiences. Too often the expectation is placed on non-White people to educate those who are White about racism. If you want to educate yourself, Google is always a free resource and there are countless videos of Black speakers like Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie and bell hooks on YouTube.

You may think though you don’t need to do this because you’re “a good ally”, because you have a lot of Black friends so there’s no way you could ever be racist or even as I’ve heard some people say, “I don’t believe in such a thing as privilege”. However, to say either of these things shows a failure to acknowledge that your experience as a White person means you may not realise how at times in your life, you’ve failed in being an ally to people-of-colour. As White people, we do not know what it is like to be a person-of-colour because we will never be viewed by the colour of our skin. We come out with accusations of racism when Jon Snow makes comments about the makeup of a crowd purely we have always been the norm and therefore have never been singled out for the colour of our skin.

When people talk about privilege, it’s not a competition about who is worse off as some people frame it. It’s about acknowledging the struggles of people’s individual experiences whether you’re a person-of-colour, LGBTQ+, disabled, working class or female. As White people, we will never be judged, profiled by the police, looked over for a promotion, paid less, awarded lower grades, refused a job, given lower mortgage rates and financial support because of the colour of our skin. These things do not happen to every Black person or other people-of-colour and it’s important to acknowledge this but we as White people will never experience racism. That is a certainty

As Bob the Drag Queen on his podcast Sibling Rivalry (S2E11) once said:

**“The best way to be an ally to any maligned person and this is not just for White people to Black people, if you want to be an ally to trans people, or anyone who is maligned, then you need to learn to hear what they have to say”.**

That means listening to people-of-colour when they tell you things about their experience that challenge things you believe. This also means acknowledging that people-of-colour are not a monolith, they do not share one view and as our Features interview this week shows, they can even be candidates for the Brexit Party.

Bob goes onto say later in the podcast; **“If you get accused of being a racist, you cannot prove you’re not”**. He’s right. The best thing to do if you are accused is to listen, not argue back, and then use that experience to continually improve as an ally.

Racism isn’t always about intention either. You might not intend to do something that alienates people-of-colour or you might have unknown implicit bias that comes from growing up in a racist society. However, these things are still racist and if you don’t think they are, you do not have the authority to do so. As a White person, you don’t always know what is racist and what is not. This is because you are not at the receiving end of racism.

So if someone like Munroe Bergdorf argues that **‘Western society as a whole is a system rooted in white supremacy – designed to benefit, prioritise and protect white people before anyone of any other race’**, we should listen to her. When people cry out about Grenfell or Windrush, we should listen.

So, listen up White people. Not just in October but all-year-round.

Ed Barnes  
Editor-in-Chief  
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Contents:

4-7

8-10

11-12

13-16

17-18

19-20

21-24

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



# Exec Columns:



**Union Affairs Officer**  
**Lauren Huxley**

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It might seem like things have calmed down since Freshers' Week but behind the scenes there's still just as much going on in LUU.

My last couple of weeks have been filled with a lot of meetings with the University and internally to discuss priorities for the year ahead to make sure we're doing the best we can for all our members.

That's included chatting about the new University Strategy, how LUU can

better value its members and meeting with the lovely LSTV to talk about our joint work with the University to tackle climate change to name a few.

I'm also going to be attending the Co-op Join In Live event this Wednesday to discuss how we can work together to develop our store for the better and hear more about their community campaign plans.

We're also celebrating Black History Month throughout October which our

brilliant E&D Officer Chloé has been leading on to deliver a huge range of events.

I'd urge everyone to get involved in the history months throughout the year to better understand the experiences of our diverse student body so we can become a welcoming and inclusive community for everyone.



**Education Officer**  
**Abiha Khan**

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Hey guys! Wow everything is really picking up and we're already well on the way into the new term! The Union has quietened a bit.

Sadly I've gotten Freshers' flu over the last week - I was really hoping I would miss out on it this year now I'm no longer a student. I guess you can't really avoid it when you work in the Students Union!

This week I will be hosting my first Education Assembly with the new School Reps on Tuesday 15th where we

will hear from DVC: Student Education Tom Ward about the Higher Education landscape, discuss the Awarding Gap with the Head of Educational Engagement Louise Banahene, and provide a space for School Reps to discuss their plans for the year ahead.

I'll also be running two Black & Books decolonising workshops for Black History Month on the 18th and 21st of October. Come along to this safe space if you're tired of having reading lists which are pale, male and

stale and bring the reading list for one of your modules. We'll explore how your curriculum could be more diverse and use a toolkit to decolonise your research.

Other cool events I've been involved in and are coming up in November include BAME Creative Week from the 4th-7th November and an exciting panel event which is planned for later in November. Look out for news on this - you heard it here first!



**Community Officer**  
**Cat Fairbairn**

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This last week has been super busy (as always). I had the massive pleasure of hosting the first planning meeting for Reclaim the Night 2019, a women's march set to take place in December. It was so wonderful to sit and talk about the generations of feminist marches before ours.

I also attended a Unipol induction day with Amy, and we got to see the work that they are doing and effort

being put into improving the (often very poor) deal students get with housing from private letting agents such as Let Leeds. We're also in the process of appointing all of the Community Reps this year. These guys will represent you on all of the issues facing students when living in the local community whether that's housing, rogue landlords or student safety in Hyde Park. More from me

later!

Finally, so as to not give too much away, I am in the process of inviting charities into LUU for a big winter Leave Leeds Tidy event in the works for this November. So lots to do, but with the abundance of great causes in need of supporting out there in our community, who could expect anything else!



**Activities Officer**  
**Lydia Evans**

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Hello! It's been a rainy start to October but it's been nice to have a busy Union building again.

Now that term is full in swing I've been spending much more of my time speaking to students, listening to their experiences and learning about what they do.

I've loved in particular talking to American Football about how they can

fundraise for more kit and popping my head in on LUU Beat Soc in their collaboration with English Soc where they hosted a cake sale from the Rep Room.

Your Activities Exec also met for the first time and I had a lovely couple of hours hearing about their plans for the year. The Activities Exec represent all the different types of societies

from Welfare to Sport to Media and ensure that all societies are heard and supported in LUU.

This week I've got a couple of events on, including the Crowdfunding Launch event which is our brand new platform for societies to fundraise super quickly on - exciting stuff.



**Equality & Diversity Officer**  
**Chloé Elliott**

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I hope you're settling in well and that you've been enjoying the Black History Month celebrations. It's been a busy couple of weeks for me - I hosted the first Give & Take event of the year and the Black & Culture: Haircare Takeover workshop. It's been great meeting so many of you and I'm glad to have been able to create spaces for important conversation and of course,

socialising! I absolutely love anything afro hair related to I'm happy to have been able to share that passion with you. There are still more events to come, you can see a full list on the LUU website.

If you missed out on either workshop or are interested in getting involved in a similar event, come chat to me about it and we'll see what can be done! It

doesn't have to be one-time thing if you'd like to keep it going. You can also get involved with BAME Creative week - it will be a week of panel talks, workshops, trips and networking starting on 4th November. Sign up forms for the events are already live on the LUU website so please check it out and join in the fun! Can't wait to see you there.



**Welfare Officer**  
**Amy Wells**

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This week is Hate Crime Awareness Week. The definition of a hate crime is "any incident that is perceived by the victim (or any other person) to be motivated by hostility or prejudice based on race or ethnicity, religion or belief, disability, sexual identity or gender identity."

It's the victim's perception of the incident that matters, so if you feel you've experienced a hate crime don't

doubt yourself. Leeds University Union and the University both have zero tolerance approaches to hate crime, so if you've been a victim of/witnessed a hate crime on campus, you can report it (anonymously, if you want) through our report and support system, which is also in place for reporting sexual harassment and cyberbullying.

This'll log it on the system and let you know what ongoing support

is available to you. Find out more by going to the 'Help and Support' section on the LUU website and searching 'hate crime'. Look out for yourselves and your friends, do a little bit of research about being an active bystander, and know there's so much value and power in using any privilege you have to challenge prejudice and ignorance whenever you see it.

# Campus Watch



## 1 Suffolk University, Boston, United States University Celebrates Second Black Excellence Dinner

The University's second 'Celebration of Black Excellence Dinner', which was held on 4th October, celebrated individuals who exemplify Black excellence in the Suffolk community.

200 faculty, alumni, students and their families attended the celebratory event.

Keynote speaker, Serge Georges Jr. stated: "Black excellence is not limited to a particular category of people".

He added: "It's varied and it's vast, and it's not limited to academic performance, or your professional enhancements, or what address you live at, and whether or not you speak improper grammar".

Georges is an adjunct professor at Suffolk Law School and currently serves as an associate justice of the Boston Municipal Court.

Five honorees and other members across Suffolk's community joined Mr Georges to celebrate Black excellence and its great importance to the

university.

Suffolk Board of Trustees member Ernst Gurrier requested alumni to donate to the school in order to help provide opportunities for Suffolk students of colour. He promised he would match the first \$5,000 donated to the university during the event.

At the celebration, Georges said, "Black excellence means that we are all in this together," adding "We will walk together with each other to help us all get there".

Charly Loughlin

## 2 University of Leeds All New Campus Map for Black History Month

For this year's Black History Month, Student Liberation Coordinators from the LUU have created a new campus map with revamped building names. In collaboration, the African-Caribbean Society's Education Careers officer helped advise exactly which influential Black figures would be the right fit.

The buildings have been made to match up with appropriate figures of the same field. The Engineering Building has become the Lillian Bader Building, who was one of the first black women to join the Royal Air Force and the Business School has been named after Mary Seacole, the British-Jamaican nurse famed for her "British Hotel" behind troop lines in the Crimean War.

In more modern figures, the Careers Centre has become Stormzy Central, due to the grime artists' scholarship scheme providing access for Black students to Cambridge and the Union is now Melz Dot Union, after the decolonial theorist and Leeds alumnus.

For the full map, look around campus or check out [luu.org.uk/black-history-month](http://luu.org.uk/black-history-month).

Penelope Helbest

## 3 University of Cambridge The 'Stormzy Effect' starts to take hold

The University of Cambridge has recently announced what they have coined as the 'Stormzy effect', with institution seeing the admission of Black students rise on an unprecedented scale.

This year, 91 Black students enrolled at the university, an increase just shy of 50% from the previous year. UK grime artist Stormzy has been credited with this increase for his work towards dismantling the low levels of Black representation in higher education.

Indeed, the lack of diversity in UK universities, particularly in the top-tier institutions like Oxford and Cambridge, is no secret: this is the first year that Black students have constituted more than 3% of new undergraduates in Cambridge University, according to the institution's figures.

In response to this, Stormzy has pledged to fund the tuition fees and living costs of two students each year.

The 'Stormzy effect' is a step in the right direction to ensure that BAME (Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic) and other minority students feel represented in universities.

Safi Bugel

## 4 Harvard University University debate tournament helps Black teens find their voices

In 2018 the Harvard Debate Council Diversity Project (HDCDP) made history with their all-Black inaugural team winning the Harvard debate tournament. This diversity project is based in Atlanta, Georgia and recruits 25 teens of colour every year to learn to debate.

No experience is required and much of the fees are covered by financial aid or scholarships.

Students who make it onto this programme sacrifice their Saturdays for 10 months before studying at the Harvard debate council for two weeks during the summer.

Debate coach Brandon Fleming aims to "be intrusive in places that are not inclusive", giving students of colour the opportunity to study at elite universities.

Atlanta is one of the most unequal cities in the United States, having the worst income inequality in the entire country.

Through this project Fleming gives his students the opportunity to be social leaders of the future, something that was never thought possible in a city like Atlanta.

Lea-Sophie Montjoie

## 5 Oxford Brookes University University celebrates Black History Month

Over October, Oxford Brookes University has been hosting various professionals for talks, events and activities in support of Black History Month, benefiting staff, students and the local community.

The event itself started with a discussion by broadcaster Afus Hirsch explaining the meaning behind her novel "On Race Identity and Belonging".

Within the week, first BAME President of the Royal College of Nursing Cecilia Anim spoke of the opportunities and challenges she faced.

Dr. David Ellis, Dean of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences at Brookes, led a talk on the experiences, culture and history of Caribbean migrants.

Jamala Osman, one of the youngest bank managers in the country, also spoke of the difficulties, racism and challenges she overcame.

The event highlighted and promoted the history, challenges and achievements of the lives of BAME communities.

Nina Flaherty



# Labour MP Alex Sobel Unveils Plans for the Future of Leeds Public Transport

Jessica Heath

Labour MP Alex Sobel has released his strategic principles for transport in his Leeds North West constituency. He stated: "If a modern city region were a human body, its transport network would be its veins and arteries. A healthy city, much like a healthy body, cannot survive for long with congestion and poor circulation."

There are demands for improvements to the public transport systems that exist in Leeds currently. Leeds is the largest major city in Europe without a mass transit system. Main roads are, and have been for a while, at capacity, and trust in public transport service providers is exceedingly low in the area.

Sobel warns that without a competent strategy and proper, sustained investment in the infrastructure of Leeds: "Our transport network could easily get worse and in some cases fail altogether."

He argues that: "For some politicians it is much easier to kill ideas than it is to create or further them. But I am not that kind of politician."

The eight page document, which stresses the "urgent need to address our creaking infrastructure," outlines four strategic principles that all future transport proposals should adhere to: promoting public transport, cycling and walking, promoting environmental sustainability, improving the local

economy, and benefiting public health both physical and mental.

Among other points, Sobel notes the widely publicised Labour Policy of renationalisation. He reiterates the importance of bringing the railways back into public ownership and stresses the environmental benefits of moving towards public transport rather than private car use.

Important to note for many students is also the reference to a regular schedule sustained throughout the night to "reflect the changing demands of living in a modern city".

The document also references the impact of public transport on the Leeds economy.

It seeks to emphasise the need to improve transport infrastructure as a key move to securing more investment in the local area.

Unsurprisingly, space is given to addressing the Leeds clean air crisis and the UK's need to meet carbon reduction targets. Sobel argues for the need for sustainable transport to be achieved through cleaner vehicles, public transport, bringing assets closer (requiring fewer consumer miles), the protection of local green spaces or the furthering of pedestrian and cycle modes.

Sobel was named road safety parliamentarian of the month for September by Brake, the road safety charity, and Direct Line Group as a direct result of the

Transport Strategy.

The Director of campaigns for Brake, Joshua Harris noted the strategy as "a bold attempt to change the way transport infrastructure is discussed and focus on promoting safe and healthy forms of getting around [...] which will be of great benefit to his constituents."

The Transport Strategy was also backed by Otley councillors earlier this year.

Otley Town Council Chair Councillor Ray Georgeson welcomed the transport document as a "useful platform for debate" and was "in broad agreement" with the objectives.



Image: Parliament UK

# Uganda Announces 'Kill the Gays' Bill

James Murphy

The Ugandan government has stated its intention to pass a bill that will endanger the lives of LGBT citizens across the country.

The bill itself argues that a person should receive a life sentence for "homosexual activity" and a death sentence for "aggravated homosexuality". Under the new law, even people found helping or sheltering LGBT citizens would be subjected to seven years in jail.

Ugandans fleeing from the anti-gay violence at home could now be extradited to face either life imprisonment or execution.

The so-called 'Kill the Gays' law also has the potential to cause a greater degree of anti-LGBT rhetoric and harassment across the country. Vigilante violence, lynchings, extra-judicial torture, maimings and executions could easily become a reality should the bill pass.

In a recent statement, Ugandan Minister for Ethics and Integrity Simon Lokodo said:

"Homosexuality is not natural to Ugandans, but there has been a massive recruitment by gay people in schools, and especially among the youth, where they are promoting the falsehood that people are born like that. Our current penal law is limited.

It only criminalises the act. We want it made clear that anyone who is even involved in promotion and recruitment has to be criminalised. Those that do grave acts will be given the death sentence."

State Aid donors to Uganda including the US and EU have been analysing the matter closely. The US state department official has said "The US government firmly opposes criminalisation of LGBT individuals. We stand with Uganda's LGBT community and Ugandans of all backgrounds and beliefs to defend the dignity of all citizens."

However, when it came to cutting funding, they said: "At this point, there has been no credible information that the government of Uganda is seriously considering introducing the bill".

In 2014, the Ugandan Anti-Homosexuality Act 2014 was passed, but was ultimately made invalid over a technicality.

At the time, the bill received global criticism. Members of the EU including Denmark, the Netherlands, Sweden and Norway as well as the World Bank cut state aid or redirected it.

The US restricted their state aid as well, visa restrictions were put into place and military exercises were either cancelled or suspended. After the bill was nullified, these sanctions were removed.

However, the Ugandan government has not been

perturbed by the consequences of five years ago and have taken their anti-gay rhetoric to a new extreme.

Activist Julian Onziema has said he fears that anti-gay hate crime will only increase now that the bill is going back to the house.

According to him, four LGBT people have already been killed this year due to the government's rhetoric, with the number likely to rise in the coming months.



Image: Pink News



# Investigating The Leeds BAME Awarding Gap

*Continued from front page*

The BAME Awarding Gap is an issue at Universities across the country, with over half of Universities in England having gaps of 20% or more between Black and White students according to statistics revealed by OfS earlier in the year.

In a study by the Equality Challenge Unit, 56.4% of respondents claimed that the marginalisation of minority ethnic people was a reason for differential attainment by ethnicity. The report also stated that ‘vulnerability to racism, both past and present, of British minority ethnic students does not appear directly to be addressed by universities in an academic context’. Some respondents pointed out that BAME students might be concerned that previous marginalisation might be repeated at University.

They also stressed that an inclusive academic environment is achieved ‘by inclusive everyday practices with respect to staffing, effectiveness of harassment procedures and the extent of inter-group interactions.

The survey stated that any degree of marginalisation were “seen to affect their confidence and their perceptions that could succeed at university”.

Looking at the statistics in detail, 90% of White students were due to graduate with classified degrees achieved a classification of 2:1 or above in the 2017/2018 period.

Given the 28.9% gap between Black and White students, this would suggest that only 61.1% of Black students graduated with a First or 2:1 degree during this period. This disparity was

larger in the 2017/2018 period than in previous recent years with the University of Leeds has reported a mean average disparity of 25.9% between Black and White students.

Although there is still a significant disparity between the proportion of BAME (Black and Minority Ethnic) students as a whole awarded classifications of 2:1 or higher compared to White students, it is substantially smaller than the gap between Black and White students. The University acknowledged in the Access and Participation plan that aggregating student statistics up to the BAME level does mask worse disparities between students but continue to group these statistics together nonetheless.

The University of Leeds reported a 12.7% gap between the proportions of BAME and White students achieving a 2:1 or First in 2017/2018. Again, this gap has widened in recent years – in 2013/2014, there was an 11.6% disparity between BAME students and White students achieving First and 2:1 classifications.

LUU stopped calling the gap between BAME students and non-BAME students “the BAME Attainment gap” in September in order to place more pressure on the University to take further action to close the widening gap and take pressure off BAME students who are not being awarded the same grades.

Being awarded higher grades are not the only area where the University of Leeds reports a significant gap between Black and White students.

BAME students at the University of Leeds also have higher non-continuation rates than White students. On average, there is a gap of 2.7%

between the proportion of BAME students and White students who do not go on to complete their degree.

This gap is again more pronounced when looking particularly at Black students; there is an average gap of 4.8% in non-continuation rates between Black and White students, spiking to 5.9% in the most recently recorded year.

The University of Leeds reports that though, for almost all BAME groups, they are recruiting students in numbers representative of the general population. However, Black students are the exception with 3% of students recruited to the University of Leeds in 2017/2018 being Black, compared to 3.4% of the general population.

Breaking this statistic down into ethnic groups, in the year 2018/2019 Black Caribbean students were underrepresented by 0.4%, Black African students were overrepresented by 0.3%, and students who identified as coming from “Other Black” background were underrepresented by 0.4%.

In addition to revealing these statistics, the University of Leeds’ Action and Participation plan details the University’s proposed strategies to decrease the above disparities.

By 2024/2025 they aim to close the ‘unexplained gap between proportion of BAME & white students attaining a 2:1 or above from 12.7% to 5.5%, with the longer term aim to eliminate the gap by 2030/31’

Alongside this, work has started to review the curriculum content building on the work of our Students’ Union campaign, ‘Why is my curriculum White?’ and to make changes to the institutional approach to assessment.

# Bob Marley House Honoured with Blue Plaque For Black History Month

**Amelia Cutting**  
News Editor

Famous Reggae musician, Bob Marley, has been awarded an English Heritage blue plaque at the house he lived in when he finished recording well-known album, Exodus.

Marley has been described by historian and broadcaster David Olusoga as: “more than a brilliant musician, he became a cultural icon who blazed a trail for other black artists.”

His house, 42 Oakley Street in Chelsea, London, has been marked with the plaque after a drive to uncover more addresses of ethnic minority figures took place.

The plaque had been stuck in the planning process because Marley was not registered in phone directories or electoral registers. During an arrest for cannabis possession in 1977, he also gave a different address to prevent the police from searching the house in Oakley Street for drugs.

This house is the one that Marley lived in having been shot in 1976, yet the plaque does not tell of

the stories of drug use, or even attempted murder. It reads: ‘Bob Marley 1945–1981, Singer and Songwriter, lived here in 1977’.

In 2015 English Heritage established a working group to reinvestigate the addresses of noted ethnic minority figures. They currently manage more than 400 historic buildings and cultural sites across the country.

Blue plaques commemorate the link between a location and an individual who was regarded as “eminent” in their field. However, out of more than 900 blue plaques across London, only 4% are currently dedicated to black and Asian people.

Musicians to have received the plaque include John Lennon, Mozart and Freddie Mercury. Their achievements should have made an “exceptional impact in terms of public recognition”, and they must have been dead for at least twenty years.

Benjamin Zephaniah, Rastafarian writer and poet, unveiled the plaque at Marley’s house earlier this month.

He said: “it’s very difficult to say what Bob Marley

would have said about this plaque, but he once did say ‘live for yourself, you will live in vain, live for others, and you will live again’, so I’m quite sure he would say that this is for his people and his music.”

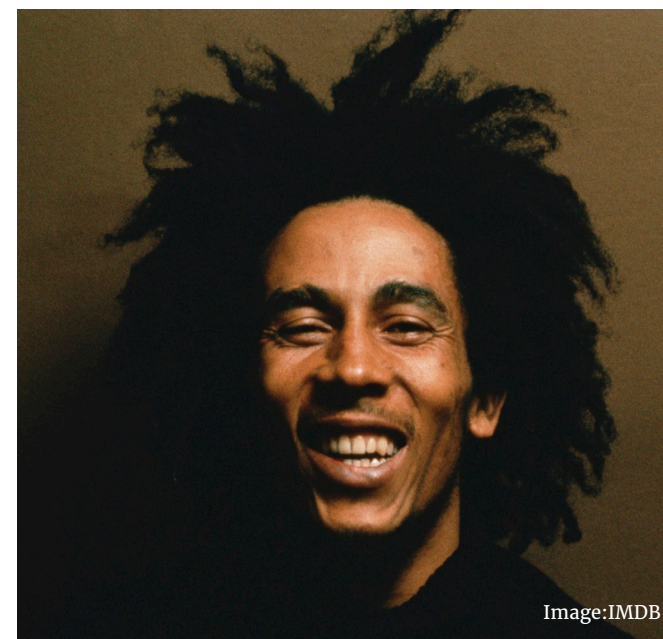


Image:IMDB



# English Football League Launch World Mental Health Day Street Art Campaign



Amy Ramswell

To celebrate this year's World Mental Health Day (10th October), the English Football League embraced their artistic flare and turned some of the country's most legendary goals into street art.

It was left to the public to vote for their favourite goals and an epic collection ensued: some of the goals selected to be brought to life included Michael Chopra's goal against Swansea United in 2010 and Kevin Phillips' goal against Wolves in May 2007.

These phenomenal episodes in football history are remembered as remarkable feats of talent and celebration; now they stand as talking points in eight regions across the country, including Leeds Holbeck Youth Centre. Here, Eddie Gray's impressive strike against Burnley (1970) can be found in mural form, created by Andy McVeigh, locally known as the 'Burley Banksy'. Just why has this creative phenomenon occurred?

In conjunction with the Football League's charity partner, 'Mind', the football league launched its 'Goals Worth Talking About' initiative in early October,

designed to increase the talk around the subject of mental health.

Each day, a new feature of street art was curated, culminating with the eighth mural on World Mental Health Day.

The chief executive of Mind, Paul Farmer, commented that "We hope that by harnessing the passion and emotion fans have about their clubs' most significant goal through these fantastic pieces of street art, we can encourage more people to start up conversations about their emotions and ultimately their mental health too."

Football in a holistic sense has been recognised as a platform with considerable potential to make a difference: the campaign highlights 'how football is often a conversation starter', which is hoped will facilitate crucial conversations about mental health too.

Joanna Appleby addressed the sentiment of the campaign, tweeting "For many talking about football is easy... talking about how we feel, less so." This is not the first time the English Football League have tried to raise awareness of mental health issues.

The #OnYourSide campaign came about as part of the union between the English Football League and 'Mind' and has publicised some of the struggles faced by footballers.

For instance, Joe Bryan shared his experiences in a video posted by Fulham FC, receiving overwhelming support from fans on Twitter.

This could not come at a better time. There has been a recent upsurge in cases of racist rhetoric being chanted in football matches, for instance Tryone Mings and Marcus Rashford being subjected to 'monkey' chants by some members of the Bulgarian crowd at the recent Euro 2020 qualifiers.

The stress which is being put on using words for good, rather than bad, in order to improve mental wellbeing is explicit, stark and indisputable.

These eight murals have immortalised some moments of communal pride in the football community but the deeper message is clear: as Charli Brunning from 'Mind' states, 'talking about your favourite goal' is hoped to start a conversation to 'help to break down the stigma' surrounding mental health.

# Hong Kong Government Bans Face Masks

Jian Feng

As the five month long protests in Hong Kong rage on, Carrie Lam, the country's chief executive, has held a special administrative meeting in order to enact the 'Prohibition of Masking Regulations'.

This ordinance, which came into effect on the 5th of October, means that protestors wearing face masks could face imprisonment for up to one year as well as a maximum fine of HK\$ 10,000.

Lam claimed that 'although the ordinance carries the title emergency, Hong Kong is not in a state of emergency, and we are not proclaiming that Hong Kong is entering a state of emergency.'

The Hong Kong and Macao Affairs Office of the State Council justified the move by saying that banning face masks will restore order to a city

convulsed in chaos. In the last four months alone there have been 2,000 arrests and 1,200 people have been injured as protestors clash with the authorities on the streets of the city.

However, critics of the emergency resolution fear that protestors will no longer be hidden from state cameras and if identified by the authorities could face arrest.

They argue that this emergency ordinance, the first in more than fifty years, is undemocratic and authoritarian.

This is the latest conflict related to protests which started in June against an extradition bill which would have allowed Hong Kong citizens to be sent to China for trial.

In between, the protests have expanded to call for greater autonomy from the Chinese government and

an investigation into police brutality.

On the 14th of October, ten days after the face mask ban, protests continued as 130,000 people took to the streets expressing their anger at the emergency ordinance and hoping to catch more attention from people around the world in order to gather international support for their demands.

A student from Hong Kong studying at the University of Leeds had this to say on the situation:

"Implementing the anti-mask law but still allowing police to smash people's faces when they are on duty is unfair and absolutely ridiculous."

What is clear is that this unprecedented move by Lam has added fuel to the growing flames calling for democracy in Hong Kong and, as the unrest continues to escalate, Beijing grows increasingly uneasy.





Image: Franks Feng

# Challenging the Establishment: A Conversation with Inaya Folarin

Recent University of Leeds alumni and last years' Features editor Inaya Folarin is a prospective parliamentary candidate for Leeds North East, representing the Brexit Party. As a 22-year-old woman of colour, she undoubtedly breaks some of the stereotypes associated with Nigel Farage's latest political venture. We sat down with her to ask about her perspective on the Brexit argument, her experience as a person of colour, the controversial content of her party leader's speeches, and for some insight into what led her to pursue politics.

**Michael Keating & Elena Sotelo**  
Features Editors

*How does someone go from being a recent Leeds University graduate to running for Parliament? Were you involved in politics while at university?*

I studied politics at university, although it's weird because I didn't get involved much. Before university, I had done a little bit of political commentary and talked about young people's involvement in politics. After the Brexit vote, I thought the conversation had become increasingly narrow. I absolutely support Brexit but I think it's fundamental that as many people as possible from a range of backgrounds have a stake in the decision-making table participating to the decisions and representing different voices. I thought this was an opportunity to do that. I graduated University and we had European Elections and I was like "No, this is my time, I've got to do it!", so I applied and got it. It wasn't a fascinating story, unfortunately.

*What kind of challenges have you found in British politics as a young woman of colour?*

It's interesting, because I've never really seen my background as something holding me back. For example, my mother was an illegal immigrant in this country. She worked three jobs to send my sister and I to really good schools. If despite all the challenges

she can wake up every morning and still have positive things to say, with the opportunities and society I have been born into the least I can do is participate to the fullest capacity and not see that as something that prevents me from achieving anything.

Life can be difficult and there are many different challenges that us as individuals and within our groups face. However it's down to us how we are going to respond to that. Being a woman of colour, so far, I haven't seen anything per se that has prevented me from succeeding other than some people questioning how I can have certain political viewpoints. I think this is one of the ideas that I am challenging. People of colour, women and other collectives are a very diverse range of people with very diverse experiences, and therefore a diverse range of views.

*We're now on Black History Month. What do you think is the biggest lesson this country and the world can learn from this celebration?*

I would say people need to get used to it. Black people are here to stay, and we're going to be here for a very long time. So either you can continue to define ourselves by the challenges and oppressions we have faced historically or we can say "Those things don't define us and we are here to stay." We are going to take up space in every organisation - scientific, intellectual, political, artistic - and people need to

deal with it.

*The Brexit Party gets a lot of media attention. There's a range of opinions regarding what they do, what they are planning on doing... What do you think is the biggest misconception the public has about the Brexit Party?*

I think it's probably that they believe it's just made up of a lot of old white guys. I think that's just completely untrue. The reality is that the Brexit Party is made up of so many different people with different backgrounds and ideas. I've been overwhelmed by just the amount of organisation and energy they have to change politics.

*You're running to represent the constituency of Leeds North East. What are your policies and challenges specific to this city and your constituency?*

For me, there's a few things. One is education and opportunities for the young. We have a failing education system. We need to educate young people in democracy and citizenship while ensuring opportunities in terms of employment. Crime is a really big problem in my particular constituency. In this internationalist, globalist system that we have, we need to remember that not everyone is benefitting from the globalised economy.

My focus is ensuring that the most vulnerable communities who haven't necessarily benefitted



continue to get the resources and support they need. Another thing that's really important to me is arts and culture. I've been working on it for the past 3 years and Leeds is one of the best cities in the UK for arts and creativity. A lot of people are concerned about losing EU funding because a lot of it actually goes to the arts sector, but I'm advocating to ensure that nobody in the arts and creative sector is left worse off.

*Nigel Farage is seen as a controversial figure. We would like to ask you whether you condone or support some of the things he said. Talking about No Deal preparations, he said "I suggest we listen to [port bosses] and not to overpaid pen-pushers in Whitehall who are not doing a neutral job, and once Brexit's done, we'll take a knife to them"*

The thing is, if we look at the 2008 economic crash – which devastated the international economy – we've had a system where we've solely relied on so-called 'experts' to tell us all of our information about the economic and political system. Unfortunately, we've seen that it has not worked. Thinking from Nigel Farage's perspective, all of these systems are important (like the civil service and so on), but we also need to question the systems and organisations that provide us with the same information that so far has consistently been unsuccessful. I believe what he's talking about is challenging the perennial structures of our political system that seem to continually reinforce the same situation.

*But do you condone his language?*

Yeah, I do. I think people should be defined by their actions, not necessarily just the words they say. I think there's been a massive oversensitivity when it comes to language. We had John McDonnell a few years ago calling the Conservatives social criminals who should be tried. We've had many politicians say

questionable things. I would rather people not use that kind of language, but politics is a very heated game. We're talking about the lives of people and their future, and unfortunately sometimes the use of language is not the most politically correct. I wouldn't use that language, but would I say he shouldn't use it? Personally, I wouldn't.

*You talked about the establishment working against normal working-class people. Do you see some hypocrisy though given Nigel Farage was a commodity and stocks trader before a politician and that's how he made his money?*

When we look at Nigel Farage, his argument is that his experience within these fields has been what has equipped him to understand the flaws within it. And so, you can flip that argument on its head, that people who are in those levels have a better insight into what the challenges and problems we face are.

I don't speak for Vote Leave or any organisation that was necessarily part of the Referendum campaign, but I think we have to focus on the arguments and not get bogged down in those things. It can be used on both sides, so it just ends up in a back and forth.

*Your party was set up with a donation from Jeremy Hosking, who also made his fortune in investment and donated £1.5 million to Vote Leave. Do you really think it is a grassroots organisation?*

I'm not one of those people that are like "Wealthy people are the problem to our issues." Wealthy people are responsible for the majority of jobs and things that happen in our society, and so they are also allowed to have political opinions and decide to invest in various organisations.

I think that it's a distraction to focus on this person did that because the exact same can be used for the other side. We need to focus on the reasons why

people voted for a range of things.

*Right now, there's a growing discourse within the global right of demonising immigration. The Brexit Party is seemingly contributing to this speech, trying to close Britain to immigrants. What's your stance on this topic?*

When we talk about demonising immigration, I think we have to look at what policies successive parties have implemented in order to entrench this kind of 'us and them' narrative. For me, when I look at that, I felt that there is a consistent track record of successive political parties contributing to this demonisation, which is one of the reasons I joined the Brexit Party. The Conservative Party trying to drastically reduce immigration, knowing this was impossible, built resentment and made people feel like they don't have control.

This is actually another thing I really challenge about the party and its public perception that everyone I've come across has talked about immigration in positive terms. The only issue is that they believe that, to be a sovereign independent nation, you need to be able to control your borders.

I think that there's been a failure to meaningfully and critically engage with the reason why people have concerns about immigration. Some people want to live in a society like London, more multicultural and diverse, and that's beautiful and people should be allowed to. But people should also be allowed to live in a close-knit community, where everybody knows their neighbours. That's a completely legitimate political consideration.

Immigration enriches our culture, but we also need to recognise that not one size fits all. We need to figure out a way to ensure immigration continues but also takes into account the needs of various communities.



Image: Franks Feng



Image: The Rake

# Sex, Drugs, and Taking Down the Patriarchy



**The Gryphon looks at Blondie frontliner Debbie Harry's new memoir and its candid discussion of her career, violent encounters, domestic abuse and her status as a sex symbol. Warning: this article contains references to rape which might be disturbing to some readers.**

Isabel Ralphs

Debbie Harry's new book 'Face It', released earlier this month, is set to be a thrilling memoir of the sex, drugs and rock'n'roll-fuelled rollercoaster ride that was the now 74-year old Blondie lead singer's illustrious career. In many ways, Harry might be the role model every young feminist dreams of: tough, tenacious and independent. She has sex with who she wants to have sex with, and spends time off from tours residing happily in New Jersey with four dogs for company.

However, being simultaneously a sex symbol and a feminist icon is no straightforward endeavour. Is it really possible to be both? The feminism of 2019 seems to say yes, but the question of how one ought to go about navigating a world where we are told every approach is the right one can be a difficult one to grapple with.

Rape, domestic abuse and violent encounters are all topics that Harry speaks about in the biography with a casualness that verges on being disconcerting. When describing the ordeal she suffered in the early 70s of being chained to her bed and raped while her then-boyfriend Chris Stein watched helplessly, she claims that "In the end, the stolen guitars hurt me more than the rape."

Harry's flippancy here treads a fine line between making her a symbol of empowerment, and normalising the atrocity that it is to suffer a rape attack.

At the end of the day, her making light of the situation is a coping mechanism – something to do with taking power back from her perpetrator – but it's a controversial approach to take nonetheless.

In Blondie's prime, Harry was very much a lone woman in a man's world.

Arguably, few women in history have been lusted after and objectified to quite the same extent. Did it

bother her? Only if it wasn't on her terms. A former Playboy bunny, Harry played into the attention she got, capitalising on it, even. Surely there is no better way to take power away from the patriarchy than from profiting off of its misogynistic tendencies?

Where Harry draws the line is the point at which this power is taken away from her. She famously got into a row with her record label after a photo was published of her in a see-through blouse – sans approval. 'Sex sells,' she admits, 'but on my terms. Not some executive's.'

Image: Rebecca Durnett  
The Times



It's a tempting position to adopt, but finding the right balance of promoting sexual liberation without fuelling the kinds of objectification and misogyny that led to 'Me Too' is no easy feat.

One might worry that Debbie Harry using the sexualisation of her image to drive record sales is still playing into the hands of the patriarchy; even if it is her own choice to do so.

The same questions around sexual freedom arise when it comes to the topic of pornography. In 2017, Pornhub found that a quarter of searches by straight women were for violence against their own sex. Is the preference for violent porn really an independent choice, or is it a consequence of internalised ideas of misogyny that we are subconsciously absorbing from the world around us? Trying to decipher the origins of our own choices is no easy feat, especially when they might be rooted in some sort of strange Stockholm Syndrome.

Today's feminism holds freedom of choice up above all else. If a woman wants to choose to watch violent porn, feminism says she should be free to do so. But the question of how getting turned on by misogyny fits in with the movement whose primary goal is putting an end to it is not an easy one to answer. These are the sort of complex questions that feminists of 2019 often have mixed views on.

Whilst Debbie Harry's method of storytelling potentially trivialises sexual violence, the carefree approach she takes when it comes to some of her other choices ought to be emulated. If you want to watch violent porn, shave all your hair off or be a Playboy bunny, then I would lean towards the side of telling you to go and do it – misogyny and toxic gender norms need addressing on a much more systemic level and it isn't our constant responsibility to use personal choices like these as the tool with which to abolish them.

Unfortunately, setting standards for feminism too high only risks fracturing a movement that ought really to be defined by support and inclusivity. Taking down the patriarchy is tiring, and sometimes you do just have to pick your battles.





# African Caribbean Society: Revitalised Powerhouse of Leeds

This week Penelope Helbest discusses the African Caribbean Society's rebranding and their early success with President Kingsley Duru.



## Penelope Helbest

The Leeds African-Caribbean Society, for those who've been keeping an eye out, has undergone a major – almost overnight – makeover. From top to bottom, the presentation and engagement have been completely revitalised, and the President, Kingsley Duru, certainly had something to do with it.

I had the chance to speak to him, and to hear exactly how he did it all.

"I have a great team" he stressed, his opponents in presidency now fellow committee members, but his platform was something incredibly ambitious – "people said it was impossible from our position" he said, alluding to their less-than-ideal standing in comparison to other 'big' societies, "We couldn't even fill a 200-person room".

*People said it was impossible from our position... we couldn't even fill a 200 person room*

Kingsley ran on a platform of national recognition, northern coalition, and sponsorship acquisition – catchy, and well thought-out. This three-pronged attack directly addressed issues he knew the society had, as well as finding ways to evolve in completely new directions. He even got invited down to other ACS societies, namely Manchester and York, to show them how it's done!

Sponsorship acquisition was one of the first, and biggest achievements he got under his belt. The society wasn't originally invited to any of the exclusive events one can find a sponsor at; in fact, he heard that practically every other ACS was invited except for them. So he got a hold of a contact, and

sent off an email, pleading their case as to why Leeds should be there. And it worked! LACS got in and got sponsors to boot.

Part of Kingsley's promise was setting up specialist workshops instead of generic ones, which would zero-in on the parts of a job application people were failing to get past, and therefore the "crème de la crème of the Russell Group students" that these firms now had access to would be all the more capable.

Now, the society has a membership card with local discounts tailored to the individual tastes of the society, including an impressive 20% off at Turtle Bay, "our home base is most important" he had added, sagely, "sponsorships keep a society going, but there still has to be a driving factor". The card also offered discount deals during freshers, and a sport variant for ACS's sports involvement.

The event he's most looking forward to is their 'Legacy' cultural showcase on the 23rd October. This Black History Month performance will bring together spoken word, musicians, and a fashion show by the East African Society – which is part of Kingsley's drive to include other smaller Black societies in the united front. "We have a list of splinter societies", he mentioned, wherein he invited the Presidents to the ACS Give It A Go, "so people don't just go to the biggest thing."

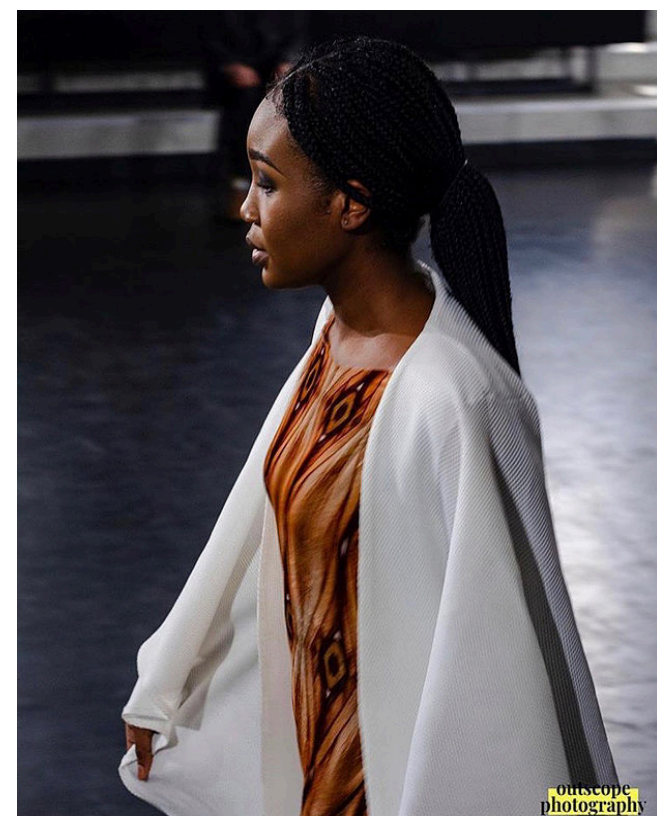
For a later date, and part of the Northern Coalition, we can look forward to the ACS Winter and Summer Games, tournaments in which Leeds will play against Beckett in games such as football and netball.

The National Recognition is a little more abstract, but they do now have respect from all the way down in London. Kingsley said that he "[has] all the ACS leaders in a group chat", and a local LUU Riley nomination can't hurt, as they've been nominated for best culture society – "We deserve it", said Kingsley, "just with the quality of rebranding and progress".

When I asked him what's next, he said, "it's an inside joke that I'm going to resign now, everything's been done. We just kept topping milestones."

The Leeds African-Caribbean society has something for everyone, whether it's help for your CV, great cuisine, game nights, fashion shows, or a casual kickabout. I'd recommend it to anyone who wants to find a community for themselves during university, and to begin to form lifelong professional and amicable networks.

Find Leeds African-Caribbean Society on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.







# Big Open Party: The Society For Everyone

BOPsoc reveals their society's origins and aims for inclusivity for all to Jody Tidswell.

Jody Tidswell

Only two years old but rapidly growing, BOPsoc are a unique inclusive society who are endeavouring to create a relaxed and welcoming environment for people from any and all walks of life.

Whether you're a fresher or a third year, university can be a daunting time for anyone, and the task of finding people you identify with and relate to can seem impossible at times, particularly for those who are a part of a minority group.

I spoke to Naima Masud, events coordinator and one of the founding members of the Big Open Party, who described how the society came about as a result of this very feeling.

It all began at a university BAME (Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic) conference where the founders got to talking about the need for a safe space for people of any ethnicity, something which is vital on a campus where the majority of students are White and British.

Just two years later the society is thriving, boasting attendance of up to 140 people at their most popular events, consisting of home and international students from a wide range of backgrounds. If nothing else, this rapid growth just goes to show how necessary the society is.

Their events range from informal discussions on contemporary BAME issues, to games nights and coffee evenings, to exchanges where members can share aspects of their culture such as traditional dress and food.

One of the most popular events on their calendar is an open mic night, which will be taking place at Pyramid on 6th November. This showcase of talents includes many cultural aspects such as traditional music and dance, singing and spoken word, and promises to be a fun and entertaining night for all.

*If there's one thing BOPsoc wants you to know, it's that this society is for everyone!*

Throughout my conversation with Naima it was clear that, for her, the most important aspect of the society is its inclusivity and open environment. This means that the society is also not limited just to people from an ethnic minority.

BOPsoc can be a great place for non-minority people; whether they want to provide an alternative perspective in discussions, learn about a new culture, or simply socialise in a laid-back and open environment. The relaxed nature of their events means that there is also no obligation to drink alcohol that can be the case with many university societies.

If there is one thing that BOPsoc wants you to know, it is that this society is for everyone. Whether you're from an ethnic minority or not, whether you're with friends or alone, just come along, give it a shot and learn what they're all about.

BOPsoc is a space that is constantly evolving to cater to exactly what its members want so if you feel like you haven't yet found the place for you, BOPsoc is probably it.

## Creating Connections and Change With Leeds' Pan-African Society

Sifuma Wekesa – Vice President of the Pan-African Society – discussed decolonisation, education, and the founding of one of LUU's newest societies

Sam Jenner

Coming into concept in February 2019 and becoming official during October 2019, LUU's Pan-African Society aims to welcome African students looking for community, as well as to create a space for education. Alongside Sifuma, those also involved in its conception were Aysha Burton, Carolina Hall-Rodriguez and Kay Sihanya.

Sifuma explained that it "developed out of a lot of different desires" from his own interest in Pan-Africanism and the exclusion students can face if they don't fit into existing African societies. He pointed to the lack of awareness and support for issues faced by African students. They were also spurred by the desire to educate students on notable Pan-African intellectuals and their ideas.

"We want to be a society where all African people feel welcome and can make friends," Sifuma said. He went on to explain that ideas of egalitarianism and human rights were incorporated into the core of the society to prevent gatekeeping, and therefore create a truly welcoming atmosphere.

Pan-Africanism itself is the belief that "African people, both on the continent and in the diaspora, share not merely a common history, but a common destiny." For the Pan-African Society, this means fighting issues facing Black students on campus: issues such as eurocentrism, poor mental health

provisions, and the prevalence of the 'social myth'.

A phrase first used by Walter Rodney to describe the Jamaican government's attempts to hide racial tensions in the country, Sifuma redefined Pan-Africanism to apply the idea to the wider world.

A new "social myth" is the attempt to create an image of a "harmonious multicultural global society" while whitewashing systemic racism. An important aim for the Pan-African Society is challenging this myth, as well as decolonising the curriculum to combat the Eurocentric 'distortions' that erase the academic contributions of people of colour.

Alongside academic decolonisation, Sifuma also

hopes the society can create a bigger stage for African perspectives and push the university to take African interests more seriously – especially regarding mental health services.

"I've heard testimonies from a few people about how the mental health services available to them were often unfamiliar with the issues faced by people from other cultures," Sifuma said. She added that the problems around cultural differences and mental healthcare were the primary reason in the inclusion of a Wellbeing Officer position in the society.

Hoping to function as a space to train future leaders and help solve African problems, the Pan-African Society intends to hold educational events such as discussions and reading groups.

However, their focus isn't solely educational – they also want to celebrate African culture and community through other events. These include an upcoming society social, a hopeful Fruity takeover and a plan to "hold at least one major cultural showcase event."

If you're interested in getting involved with the Pan-African Society, be sure to visit their Facebook page for more information, especially as they're currently looking for people to fill open committee positions.





# In the Middle

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



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# Contents

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## Music & Clubs

- 4 Black Artist Spotlight
- 5 Black Artist Spotlight
- 6 In the Middle with George Riley
- 7 Credit Where Credit's Due?
- 8 In the Middle with Not Exotic
- 9 A Tribute to West African Music

---

## Fashion

- 10 Looking Like a Clown: Fashion in Todd Phillips' Joker
- 11 The Good, The Bad and The Ugly: Putting Your Best Foot Forward with Sustainable Sneakers
- 12 Black Names in The Industry: Working Seamlessly Behind the Scenes
- 13 Fashion Week in Three: Standout Shows at London Fashion Week

---

## Arts & Culture

- 14 Why No One Should Talk to Chelsea Handler About Race
- 15 Treat Your Shelf: Black History Month
- 16 British Period Dramas: The Steady Progression of Black Representation
- 17 A History of Black Horror Films
- 18 Jamaica Kincaid: An Insight into the Captivating Works of a Carribean Writer
- 19 Review: Netflix's Top Boy

---

## Blogs & Lifestyle

- 20 What's on this Black History Month?
- 21 Finding Your Feet as a Mixed Race Student in Leeds
- 22 The Best Burgers in Leeds
- 23 Boob School 101

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# Black Artist Spotlight

In celebration of Black History Month, our team of writers pay tribute to some of our favourite musicians.



## Beyoncé by Ed Barnes

By this point, it would be hard not to argue that Beyoncé is one of the most influential black artists in history with a career that spans more than twenty years. Despite not having released a full solo album for three and a half years, she's hardly stopped working. Since *Lemonade* and the release of 'Formation', the Queen Bey has continued to root her work in the traditions of Black Feminist thought referencing the likes of Maya Angelou, Alice Walker, Malcolm X and Audre Lorde.

Having dropped a Netflix film in April about her ground-breaking Coachella performance that brought African American culture to the White, upper-class crowds of the Californian festival, she released a curated album two months later alongside Disney's *Lion King* remake that featured collaborative work from African artists and producers. 'Brown Skin Girl' that spurred an internet challenge, sung with Blue Ivy, SAINT JHN and WizKid, seeks to celebrate all things melanin. Lines like "your skin is not only dark, it shines and it tells your story" challenge dangerous narratives of colourism and illustrate how Beyoncé's position as a powerful and influential Black woman puts her in a position to critique mainstream pop cultural spaces.

## Abdullah Ibrahim by Robbie McGrail

Abdullah Ibrahim's music has endless joys within it. He spans genres from traditional bebop with the likes of his early band The Jazz Epistles, to Cape Jazz, a branch of jazz that Ibrahim and other South African musicians like Hugh Masekela and Basil Coetzee were rooted in. There's so much variety in his music to recommend, but in particular I'd suggest his album *Water from an Ancient Well*, with tracks like 'Mandela' and 'Mannenberg Revisited' -- the latter being a cherished anti-Apartheid anthem. *Echoes from Africa* is another fantastic album which is meditative and rooted in his Islamic faith (Ibrahim converted to Islam in the late 1960s). The song 'Zikr', I would recommend in particular. He's one of those artists whose albums I can never tire of.

**Track recommendation:** *Mannenberg Revisited*

## Alice Coltrane by Robbie McGrail

Alice Coltrane was one of the central figures in spiritual jazz from the 1960s onwards. *Journey in Satchidananda* is a personal favourite album of mine, featuring Pharaoh Sanders and with a track dedicated to her late husband, John Coltrane. Alice and John became fascinated by Hinduism in their later years and dedicated a lot of music towards the religion's spirituality (a particularly great one from Alice is the album *Radha Krsna Nama Sankirtana*). Alice Coltrane is also a rarity in her choice of the harp, as well as the piano, in her music, which is fairly rare for jazz. The harp works so well in bringing a new spin to the genre that Dorothy Ashby has also contributed to.

**Track recommendation:** *Blue Nile*

## Bakar by Fern McErlane

Contemporary Camden artist Bakar's sound is hard to describe, if only due to its variety. He veers from romantic odes to aggressive rhymes and back, with every track almost completely different in tone.

The staple of his music is an odd-sounding combination of lethargic rap and lyricism over trap-style beats and noodley electric guitar. This originality shines through on tracks such as 'Dracula', a guitar-heavy roar of energy that shines through in live performance (though hearing it on Spotify is just as good).

Bakar's sound has become distinctly softer recently, however. The recently released EP *Will You Be My Yellow?* ruminates on relationships, and new single 'Hell N Back' adopts a more innocuous tone with Bakar crooning about love and loneliness over groovier sounds.

**Track recommendation:** *Something I Said*

## Childish Gambino by Jessica McCarrick

Known for his fluidity between all sub genres of entertainment, Childish Gambino – real name Donald Glover – continues to push the boundaries in every aspect of his work. Having helped the resurgence of mainstream soul with his latest work, as well as commenting on the political climate in America, he carefully cultivates a variety of sound that has grown with him as an artist. This multifaceted man proves you can do it all: music started from the depths of rap to a more nuanced sound with a funk inspired twist. Glover continues to impress with his dedication to the arts.

**Track recommendation:** *Heartbeat*

## Dev Hynes by Queenie Qureshi-Wales

What would 2010 indie pop or my teenage years have sounded like without Dev Hynes?! Under the moniker Blood Orange, he's created and produced some of the funkier, smoothest and saddest tunes of the last 10 years. He's responsible for not just four of his own wonderful albums but also an original motion picture soundtrack for Gia Coppola's debut and the production of two of the most exciting pop records of late: Solange's *True* EP and Sky Ferreira's single 'Everything is Embarrassing'. His distinctive production style is filled with spacey yet sticky synths that are perfect on both the dancefloor and in your bedroom. Paired with his yearning falsetto, they're a romantic escape or an indulgence in heartbreak, depending on your mood. He's truly one of the most distinctive and defining producers in pop.

**Track recommendation:** *Sutphin Boulevard*

**Credits:** [tinymixtapes.com](https://www.tinymixtapes.com) and NicePNG





## Donna Summer by Alex Gibbon

Glitter, flares, platform shoes and excessive decadence - the era of disco was one that thrived on the doctrine of 'more is more'. Therefore, it's fitting that, as arguably THE biggest voice of the 70s, Donna Summer is remembered as the emblematic embodiment of an epoch of such pure unadulterated joy. With output ranging from the hypnotic pulsations of "I Feel Love", often considered the very start of electronic dance music, to epic classically-tinged "MacArthur Park", Summer's formidable back catalogue of hits never fails to invigorate a dancefloor.

**Track recommendation:** *Bad Girls*

## FKA Twigs by Ishmael Silvestro

Since releasing her first EP and its surreal accompanying music videos in 2012, FKA twigs has always been a woman to watch. Her music pairs skeletal beats and perfect harmonies, her lyrics painful and aching, her visuals a blurred distortion of the sexual, horrific and ethereal. Twigs is a polymath - a musician, singer, dancer, dancer, visual artist, producer, director, and it's captivating to watch her perform.

**Track recommendation:** *Two Weeks*

## Frank Ocean by Ishmael Silvestro

R&B shapeshifter, modern poet, queer icon - it is hard to express Frank Ocean's significance to the world of music today. Elusive, mysterious and completely in control of his career, everything he turns his hand to comes out fully formed, from Kanye West features to stunning full-length albums. Most recently, the foreword he wrote for the companion book to Moonlight is something beautiful to behold. The world eagerly awaits his next move, whenever he chooses that to be.

**Track recommendation:** *Nights*

## Grace Jones by Alex Gibbon

As the OG pioneer of BDE, this list would be all the worse off without a mention of the fiercely enthralling artistry of Grace Jones. Her trailblazing body of work defies the boundaries of genre and fuses conceptual visual art with infectious grooves and electrifying club music; such feats that could only be accomplished by a true genius. However, it seems that Jones' blend of raw feminine power with masculine edge is what most makes her stand out as a force to be reckoned with in public consciousness with her androgynous image being a clear point of reference for many of the stars of today.

**Recommended track:** *Slave To The Rhythm*

## Kelela by Safi Bugel

Queen of cool Kelela beautifully welds pop-y and crunchy synths to create futuristic R&B. Working with a formidable list of collaborators (Kaytranda, LSDXOXO, Bok Bok etc.), Kelela drapes her silky-smooth vocals around a range of upbeat dance cuts and slinky slow-burners. Her discography seamlessly spans mood and flirts with different BPMs, from the 2013 chuggy number Guns & Synths to the slower, more ethereal Cherry Coffee that closes the same mixtape. Kelela's most recent album Take Me Apart (2017) is also pretty dreamy, adding to her back catalogue of emotion-heavy bangers.

**Track recommendation:** *Keep it Cool (Prod. Jam City)*

## Lizzo by Neive McCarthy

Queen of self-love, Lizzo is one of the most unwaveringly positive figures in the music industry. The release of her breakthrough album *Cuz I Love You* earlier this year plunged Lizzo into both the limelight and the hearts of everyone. Her catalogue of empowerment anthems are incredibly important and beloved, as well as intensely catchy. With the voice of an angel, Lizzo also happens to be unbelievably multi-talented (her skills on the flute are incomparable). This, combined with the way in which she has pioneered body positivity, leaves no room for doubt: Lizzo is a complete and utter legend.

**Track recommendation:** *Soulmate*

## Michael Kiwanuka by Ed Barnes

You might know Kiwanuka for his haunting voice that accompanies shots of the California coastline in the opening credits of the hit show Big Little Lies. Growing up in London as the son of two Ugandan immigrants, Kiwanuka draws on the genres of jazz, blues and soul in his music, unafraid to go the radio-unfriendly route by opening his debut album *Love and Hate* with the haunting five-minute instrumental of 'Cold Little Heart'. Songs like 'Black Man In A White World' use a minimalist rhythmic production, gospel and repetition to link Kiwanuka's experience as a black man in modern-day Britain with the slave songs of the past.

**Track recommendation:** *Cold Little Heart*



Credit: Lizzo

## Nneka by Hollie Griss

"Half cast, half black, half white, for fuck's sake I'm Nigerian" - Nneka's frustration with modern perceptions on race and identity lie at the forefront of her music amid her neo-soul beats. Born in Nigeria and based in Germany, the songstress battles ethnic, political and social issues through the medium of afrobeat, reggae and unforgiving soulful vocals. A decade on from perhaps her most defining album, *No Longer At Ease*, its social commentary still resonates all too heavily, and it is testament to the power and genius of Nneka's song-writing.

**Track recommendation:** *Suffri*

## Prince by Safi Bugel

The late, great Prince provides the perfect soundtrack to any good party, with his extensive back catalogue of hits, in which sex appeal and sharp wit collide in full force. From the karaoke-classic slow-burner 'Purple Rain' to the cheeky pop banger 'Kiss' there's something for every occasion. Campy, slick and smoking hot!

**Track recommendation:** *Raspberry Beret*

## Sister Nancy by Alex Gibbon

No tribute to the culture of black music would be complete without a nod to dancehall and reggae and who better to honour than the queen of the genre herself: the incomparable Sister Nancy. Undoubtedly best-known for her iconic single "Bam Bam", the most-sampled track of all time and always guaranteed to evoke a rousing from any crowd, it is the hidden gems from her seminal 1982 album "One Two" that deserve a special mention. From the aplomb-laden "Ain't No Stopping Nancy Now" to the powerful youth anthem of "Gwan A School", Sister Nancy continues to be one of the most influential figures in Caribbean music and will forever be a legend.

**Track recommendation:** *Gwan A School*

## Tricky by Liam Cattermole

Through a ground-breaking debut album, ex-Massive Attack member Tricky managed to represent what it was like to be British in the late 80s and early 90s. His entire philosophy bound the ethnic diversity of England together, with his music exploring sound-system culture, hip-hop and post-punk, to articulate a sound completely intrinsic to him, as well as the DNA of the UK. Despite hip-hop's hyper-macho nature, the Bristolian musician continued to disrupt stereotype by posing in wedding dresses and unapologetically wearing make up; just check out the video for 'Hell Is Round The Corner'. The man really is a true original.

**Track recommendation:** *Overcome*

## Tyler, the Creator by Neive McCarthy

With a solid six albums under his belt, all fantastic in their own right, Tyler, the Creator is inarguably one of the most influential artists of our time. Regarding and worshipping music as an artform, Tyler continues to stun and shock with every release. Odd Future, and especially Tyler, have shaped the current rap landscape, and it is commendable. Innovative, impulsive and unpredictable, everything Tyler, the Creator touches is gold, solidifying him as one of the most integral artists around right now as he continues to push the boundaries of rap as well as venture into a multitude of other impressive avenues.

**Track recommendation:** *What's Good*



# In the Middle with George Riley

In the lead up to the release of her debut single, our online editor Andrea Loftus caught up with Leeds alumni George Riley to find out about her uni experience and how's she's navigating the industry as a female soloist.

**What motivates you as a musician, and have you found it harder as a solo female artist in the industry?**

I just want to do something that I love and be happy. It has been hard to get started for the obvious reasons but I've visualised and manifested a lot and I am in a much better place now socially and professionally.

**Your debut single is coming out tomorrow (congrats), how has the process been leading up to that and how are you hoping people will respond to it?**

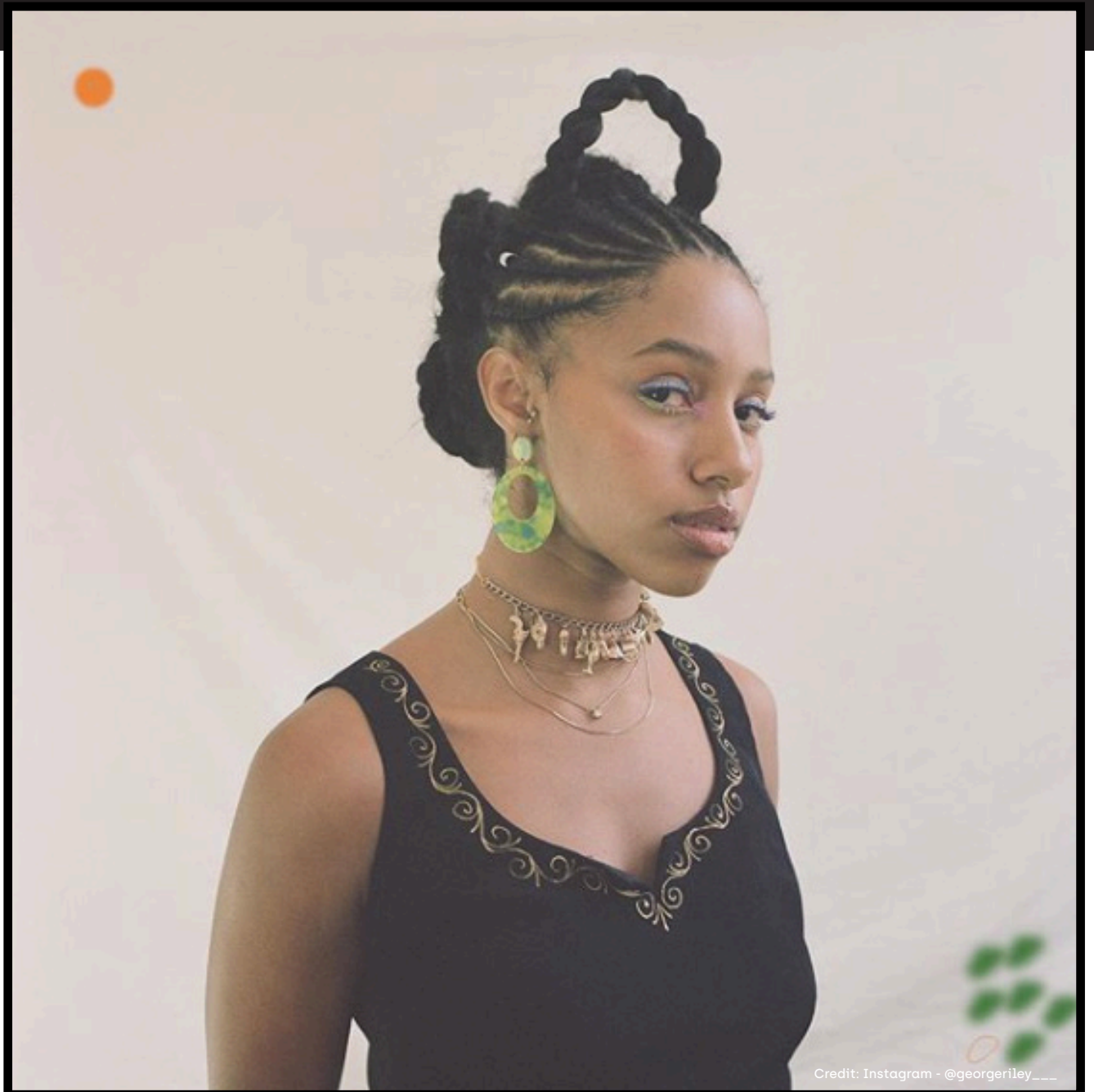
It's been a lot of mixed emotions - exciting, boring, long, but mostly fulfilling. I just hope my younger self could feel seen and of course have a bop to it - I think she would!

**As a former student of the university, how did you find your experience and did it / the city influence your approach to your musical career?**

For the most part I hated Leeds, there was an article in the Gryphon about BlackFemSoc I wrote in last year that will be able to offer a more rounded explanation but there were a lot of visibility issues on campus as a woman of colour. In spite of that, I finally did find my place.

**"There were a lot of visibility issues on campus as a woman of colour. In spite of that, I finally did find my place."**

And yes, university life provided some much needed isolation for personal growth and eventually some great creative friendships. It helped me meet some of the most important beings including Jason Vaz (graphic designer) and Kwame Dappa (photographer) who I regularly collaborate with, and of course Baile (Rodeo Joe) of Sable Radio, making Leeds a better place for POCs and misfits. I can't miss out Aissa Toure of Delice D'Ivoire where I worked for the whole 3 years. She's a wonderful lady who serves incredible food and I hear she's got a new spot so go check out the jollof if you haven't already!



**If you had to pick 3 words to represent you as an artist, what would they be and what do they mean to you?**

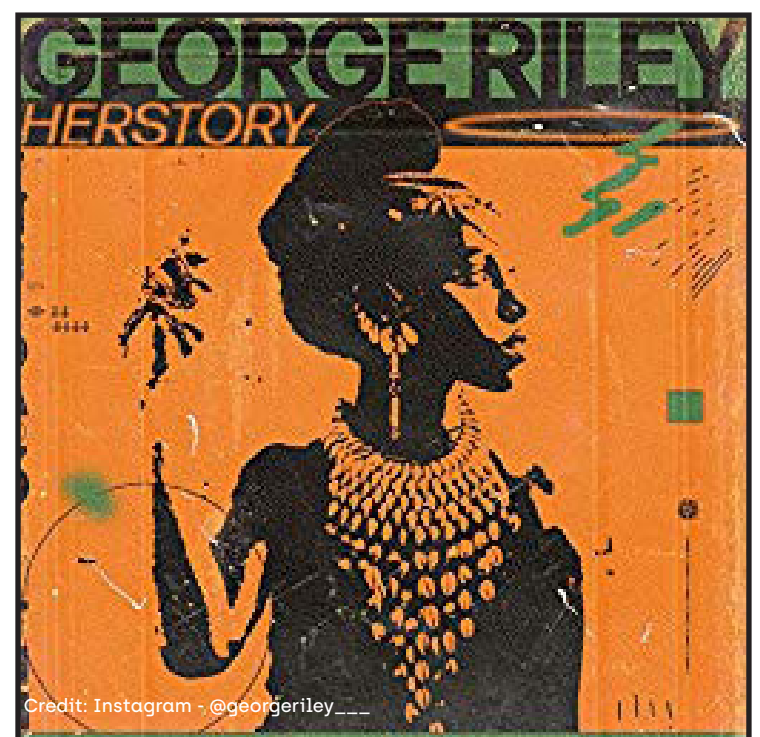
I tried but it's simply impossible - I'm a whole lot of person!

**Finally, can you share one song that you can't get enough of this month?**

Anything from Klein, she has a new album out and it's made me feel a lot of things.

George's new single 'Herstory' is out now.

Andrea Loftus





# Credit where credit's due?

## The continuing influence of Black musicians on the soundscape of Britain



Credit: Getty Images

It seems very relevant to talk about the history of Black influence on such a crucial element of our pop culture, music. Where would British music stand today if not for the influence of Black musicians, both past and present? The dues music owes to Black musicians of the past are not really discussed enough, even if we do recognise some of those icons as icons in their own right.

This might seem at first a correct statement; Dave just won the Mercury Prize for his phenomenal *Psychodrama*, making him the 7th Black artist to win the prize since 2000. Grime, hip-hop [or 'trip-hop'] and trap are what currently dominate our charts - all genres pioneered by, and led today by Black artists.

### Where would Britain be today without black musicians?

We could discuss how some of the most legendary - and White - musicians of the past

benefitted so greatly off the works of lesser known Black musicians; Led Zeppelin, for instance, is known for heavily 'borrowing' lyrics and musical elements from musicians such as Willie Dixon, Kansas Joe McCoy, and Muddy Waters; not always plagiarism, but not always remembering to credit them.

I could spend an entire essay talking about how Loyle Carner has destroyed the boundaries of genre; blending elements of everything with his permanently chilled, smooth and silky voice.

Whilst Twitter rages today over whether the new James Bond should be black, or a woman, it is Dame Shirley Bassey who has tracked three of the most iconic 007 themes; a woman who set the record for being the first...Welsh person to chart at number 1. A voice of pop culture, immortally more iconic than any one of the films themselves.

JLS can surely be credited more than say, Westlife or Take That can, for the modern model of the boyband, and for carrying the genre from the mid noughties to the teens. One Direction might have still existed, and might still have been successful; but would the hype for a British boyband have been there without JLS first? Hm.

Ska and 2tone were some of the sounds of the UK 70s but they were themselves an imported style from Jamaica growing out of the Midlands and London with bands like The Specials and The Selecter (Interestingly, the yearly Ska festival is held right here in Leeds).

The image of the skinhead wasn't always associated with white supremacy too like it is now. Shorn hair and DMs were signs of White working-class appreciation for and solidarity with the Black musicians growing out of these places. There was considerable overlap between early skinhead culture, mod subculture and the rude boy subculture amongst Jamaican British and Jamaican immigrant youth. During the fight for civil rights in Britain, it was Black music bringing communities together.

The biggest result of this, though? The US punk scene of the 90s, a direct development from UK 2tone. Most of this music was to be made by White artists, but what I'm trying to say here is that without the Black musicians of Ska and Two-tone, we wouldn't have the masterpiece today that is Smashmouth's 'All-Star', and Shrek would have been a lesser film for it.

And - lets face it, grime is more punk than punk ever was. Gone are the gratuitous messages of drugs, sex, and guitar rock. Grime was planted by those like Dizzee and Wiley, and today bears so many talents: Kano's *Hoodies* All Summer addresses the state of the nation, whilst Little Simz spits scathing femme power on tracks like 'Venom'. Dave's 'Black' is the sublime commentary on racial experience that

Whilst Stormzy is the eye-roll-typical example, he is one of the gutsiest artists Britain has ever been gifted with, and one of the best examples yet of a Youtube start-up making it big - a symbol of the digital age. It is this swathe of grime and hip-hop, both politicised genres, that have ushered in a new wave of political and protest music.

And you know what? 'That's Not Me' is easily the Wonderwall of this decade.

It's often too simple to describe genre as plainly as Black or White. But, why does it feel like the doors of 'Black music' have opened for artists of other races, whilst predominantly White genres remain staunchly so?

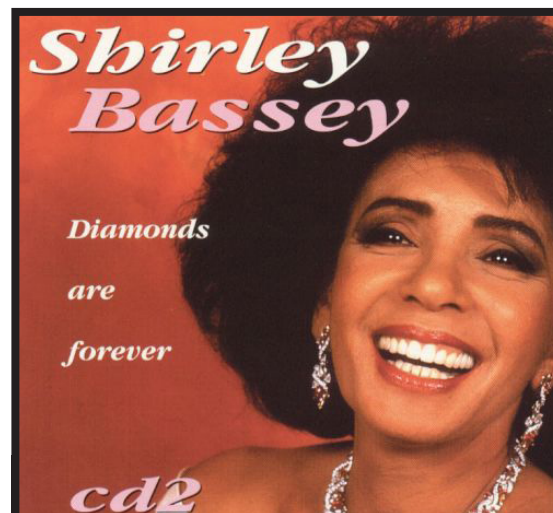
**"And you know what? 'That's Not Me' is easily the Wonderwall of the decade."**

After all, Sam Smith of all people won best album amongst three other awards in 2014 at the Music of Black Origin awards. Aitch is reaching for the top of the charts right now with his rapping on 'Taste' and 'Strike a Pose'. Even our older icons, like soul songstress Amy Winehouse, is clearly influenced by American columns of Jazz and Soul like Billie Holiday and Dinah Washington, including closer to home inspirations like Britain's own Ms. Dynamite.

There are doubtless hundreds of Black artists that don't make it into articles like these or the classic considerations of the great columns of British music, both famous and otherwise. It is clear, even looking at a few musicians, and by recognising other nameless influences, that 'black music' has had a huge shaping influence on the past and present of the UK's sound - an influence often gone uncredited, or forgotten.

And, we can't fail to credit Corinne Bailey Rae, from right here, Leeds.

Tom Poole





# In the Middle with Not Exotic

**Not Exotic is a new collective and club night created by and for people of colour. We caught up with DJ and founder plugkeisha to hear about the clubbing scene in Leeds and the need for representative parties.**

## Why the name Not Exotic?

plugkeisha: Not Exotic was coined by my good friend and collaborator Baile! Unfortunately I cannot take any credit for the name. I was so drawn to it because, between my peers and I, we have countless experiences of being described as "exotic" - usually (but not always) by white people. I found the idea of rejecting a gaze that dehumanizes and simultaneously fetishizes us empowering.

## So on social media you describe Not Exotic as 'a POC led exploration of underground nightclub culture', what motivated you to create this night with these intentions?

plugkeisha: My experience and relationship with nightclubs and club nights is inherently political. The reason being because nightclubs do not exist in a vacuum - systems such as white supremacy and hetero-patriarchy all manifest and operate in these spaces. Consequently, after I moved to Leeds I really struggled to go out. I struggled to enjoy myself in spaces that typically capitalized on my identity and heritage for a white cis/het audience. Therefore my motivations behind this night were borne out of the frustration and disillusionment many People of Colour (POC) in Leeds feel - I wanted a night that was primarily for us, by us, allowing us to not have to minimise or reduce ourselves in such spaces.

## Why do you feel it's important to recognise the history and cultural context of dance music?

plugkeisha: Marginalised peoples (specifically queer Black and Brown people) have played an integral role in shaping dance music and club culture. Due to this role often being negated and erased from history, I think even our sheer acknowledgement is a form of resistance to this whitewashing. Furthermore, I want to be able to pay my respects to those who were at the forefront of a culture that overwhelms, excites and inspires me - to those who lived their truth through music and dance.

## In the 3 years I've been in Leeds, I've definitely found that in the last year there's been a bigger push for more POC - led and - centered nights and networks [read: Race Zine, Equaliser, Sable radio], why do you think these are occurring more? Or is it a matter of knowing where to find these nights and the communities they create?

plugkeisha: To some extent, I do think that the longer you stay here, the more in tune you become with the city and its various scenes, which leads to greater awareness of the really cool people here doing amazing things (Leftovers, Season, Slut Drop and Race Zine to name a few). In the last few years we have seen organisations aiming to serve marginalised communities such as Equaliser, Sable, Our Space, OnBeat, Race Zine and QTIPOC Leeds all pop up. I think it's due in part to more and more people feeling empowered enough to be the change they want to see.

## How important is creating a community and celebrating community for Not Exotic and yourself?

plugkeisha: The purpose of the project was to create a space for communities that already exist. In a city like Leeds, POC at times can be really disconnected from each other - I remember going to BHM events at this University and being amazed at all the black and brown bodies I was surrounded by - so many unfamiliar faces that I wouldn't see again for the next 11 months. For lots of POC who relocate to Leeds, it can be very isolating at times not seeing and interacting with people who look like you, very often whilst also feeling somewhat ostracized and excluded by institutions. It is of paramount importance that POC, especially our QTIPOC family, can come to Leeds and know where to find spaces that accept them wholly.



**There is a lot of playfulness and joy in Not Exotic; the Unofficial Opening party at Wharf Chambers was genuinely fun and exciting. Do you feel this is important to creating an expressive communal night?**

plugkeisha: Ah thank you! I'm super glad to hear that. I think those themes are important in creating most nights. I want people entering the space to be able to freely express themselves, without taking themselves too seriously. I think clubbing can be a form of escapism and an outlet of expression - creating a carefree and playful environment can help to facilitate this.

## What do you envision for the future of Not Exotic and when's the next event?!

plugkeisha: Our official big boi launch is on Saturday 16th November. The future? More parties and more fake fruit for sure.

Queenie Qureshi-Wales



The official launch party will take place on the 16th November, location and lineup TBA

Keep up to date via social media ...  
Facebook/ Instagram: @n0tex0tic



# A Tribute to West African Music

With Bobby's Disco blasting Steve Monite's Only You and DJs like Folamour and Hunee who famously mix Afro boogie, funk and beat into their sets, it's quite clear the influence of West African music is strong in Leeds. Also, in the mainstream, artists like Beyoncé and French indie group Phoenix sample Afrobeat pioneer Fela Kuti, while Rihanna and Michael Jackson repeat Manu Dibango's famous "makossa" hook. To celebrate the immense cultural output this region gives us, writer Astrid Jung Laursen has put together a playlist of some of the essential bangers from the 1970s onwards.



For the full playlist, head to [thegryphon.co.uk](http://thegryphon.co.uk)

## Black History Month Club Picks

**SubDub - Iration Steppas, King Alpha & One-ness High Vibration @ Leeds West Indian Centre [19/10/19]**

Following on from their raucous 21st Birthday Party, Subdub are back at it again in their spiritual home, the West Indian Centre. A truly unique club night like no other, experience a clash of 3 great dub soundsystems that will all truly rattle your body backed up by a strong selection of artists spanning the darker sides of D&B that are sure to put your head in a spin.

Misha Karmiloff

1. Zombie by Fela Kuti
2. Expensive Shit by Fela Kuti
3. Madan Exotic Disco by Salif Keita
4. Bofou Safou by Amadou and Mariam
5. Ivory by Kio Amachree
6. Kudashe by Afriquoi, Kudashe Matimba
7. Hafi Deo by Tabu Ley Rochereau
8. Soul Makossa by Manu Dibango
9. Doni Doni by Baba Sissoko
10. Chega Mais [Imaginei Voce Dancado] by Banda Black Rio
11. A.E.I.O.U. by Di Melo
12. Dog Eat Dog by the Souljazz Orchestra
13. Only You by Steve Monite
14. Atomic Bomb by William Onyeabor
15. Disco Dancer by Kiki Gyan

## NikNak presents: Melanin @ Wharf Chambers [26/10/19]

NikNak -Leeds' very own DJ and turntablist - brings together a range of some of the city's finest selectors for a night of jazz, bashment, techno, house and jungle, among other genres. Expect bespoke DJ sets from the formidable plugkeisha, Kessie, Tan and NikNak herself.

Safi Bugel

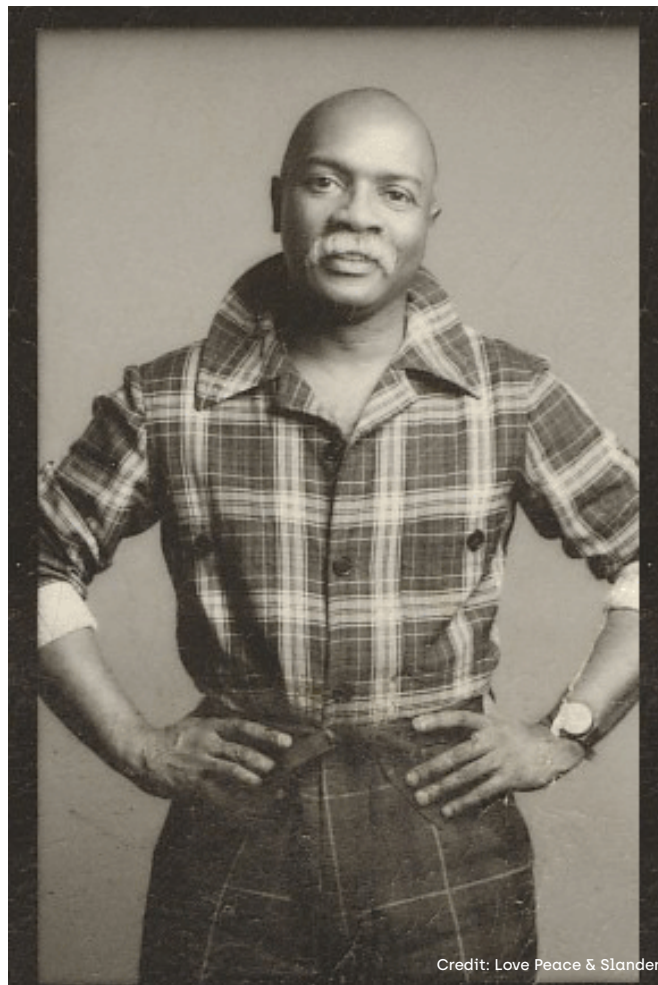


# Black Names in The Industry: Working Seamlessly behind the Scenes

Nisha Chandar-Nair sheds some light on under-appreciated Black talent in the fashion world



Credit: BlackPast



Credit: Love Peace &amp; Slander



ANN LOWE:  
SOCIETY'S BEST-KEPT  
SECRET

By Thomas B. Congdon Jr.

RICH WOMEN PASS HER NAME AMONG THEMSELVES—SOME HAVE EVEN CHEATED HER. BUT FEW OUTSIDERS HAVE HEARD OF ANN LOWE, THE ONLY NEGRO TO BECOME A LEADING AMERICAN DRESS DESIGNER. Credit: National Museum of American History

Behind the glamorous façade, the fashion industry has come unstitched for its lack of Black representation. Naomi Campbell, Tyra Banks, Winnie Harlow and other big names demonstrate successful careers of people of colour in fashion. Yet there remains an issue with the ability of the industry to fully represent the Black community. In February 2018, less than 10% of designers at New York Fashion week were Black, whilst the same year, at London Fashion Week it was learned that only 34.6% of shows represented models of colour.

Despite a lack of mention, there are many Black names which have made remarkable contributions to the fashion industry. Ann Lowe, an African American, became the first Black designer to open a boutique on Maddison Avenue, an iconic moment that symbolises the breakthrough of Black owned business. At the peak of her success, Lowe designed the wedding dress of Jacqueline Kennedy, the First Lady of the United

States. In spite of her successful work, Lowe was not protected from the inequalities faced by Black people at the time. During her studies in New York, she was made to study alone in a separate

**“In February 2018, less than 10% of designers at New York Fashion week were Black”**

classroom. Even after news of her success spread, she continued to face impediments to her career, as people were reluctant to mention their clothes were designed by an African American designer. This led Lowe to be named ‘Society’s Best Kept Secret’ by a 1966 Saturday Evening Post, explaining her disproportion of fame in relation to her talent that has resonated to this day.

Zelda Wynn Valdes is an African American fashion designer who worked closely on the original design for the Playboy

bunny costume. Before being noticed Vales acquired a job at a boutique where she was kept in the back, away from customers. Her talents were noticed which quickly gained her a reputation among clients, leading to many positive long-lasting contributions to the industry. One of these was the National Association of Fashion and Accessories Designers effort to promote racial diversity in fashion through the elevation of other Black female designers. Valdes contributions resonate to this day as she remains the motivator for the creation of pointe shoes for dancers of colour, opening the door for Black women in other industries besides fashion. Despite dressing some of the most famous women in the world, she still remains virtually unknown.

Arthur McGee, an African American designer was told, along with many others, there were no jobs available for him as a person of colour. At the peak of his career he was able to design for celebrities including Stevie Wonder. Despite this,

he was unrecognisable to those in the fashion industry and was even mistaken for a postman in the office. The absurdity of this confusion stems from the underlying tendency of society to devalue Black achievement.

Black Fashion matters. The work of Black designers represents more than just their skills, it represents their ability, or the ability of those before them, to break the racial barrier that prevented people of colour from entering sectors such as the fashion industry for many years. By underrepresenting Black names in fashion, Black history and Black culture are simultaneously overlooked.

Fashion is recognised as a hard industry to break into, but it should never be your ethnicity that holds you back from being successful.

Nisha Chandar-Nair



# Fashion Week in Three: Standout Shows at London Fashion Week

## Millie Cross breaks down the trends and themes in three of her favourite SS20 shows

### Bright Colours, Big Florals

At another London Fashion Week, Irish-American fashion designer Paul Costelloe pulled it out the bag yet again. On the 16th September in the Waldorf Hotel, models strutted down the catwalk in bright colours and bold prints bringing sunshine to a rainy London.

The Costelloe show has to be one of my favourites from London Fashion Week. The prints were eye catching with contrasting bright colours combined with dark floral outlines. Bright yellows, vibrant pinks and neon orange paraded around the Hilton creating a West Coast party vibe. The collection was made up of suits and dresses, with power shoulders and sleeves consistent throughout.

Models wore neon pink, yellow and orange heels with neon mesh socks. Costelloe got his models to wear neon head to toe including painted nails. Neon seemed to be a theme throughout Fashion Week this year; look out for the trend from Spring 2020.

@paulcostelloeofficial



Credit: London Fashion Week



Credit: The Upcoming

Renowned for his audience to be reality TV cast members, not only did the collection catch my eye but so did the front row. Love Island were there in full force with Yewande taking to the runway before the show to pose for the press in her Paul Costelloe two piece. Made in Chelsea star Francesca Newman-Young and Scottish singer Talia Storm were also on the front row to view the SS20 collection.

### Upcycling at London Fashion Week

On the 15th September, Natasha Zinko presented her brightly coloured collection to the masses. What made Zinko's collection so eye catching and different for me was her use of upcycling. Blazers and shirts were combined together to create a garment, and squares of printed fabrics were sewn together to create items of clothing.

With Extinction Rebellion being such a large part of this year's fashion week, even to the point where it almost didn't happen, Zinko's collection felt important. Although designers are making a conscious effort to be more sustainable, to see upcycling on the runway felt different and significant. The show didn't take place in a venue, but on the street which created an atmosphere of excitement. It felt like fashion was changing.

@natashazinko



Credit: The Pink Prince



Credit: nowfashion.com



Credit: nowfashion.com



Credit: The Upcoming



Credit: The Upcoming



Credit: standard.co.uk

### Animal Print Will Always Be OK

Animal print is everywhere, and in my eyes its timeless. At the University of Leeds, it's safe to say we love an animal print. Leopard, zebra, cheetah print you name it, it's always on campus. Zebra print was consistent throughout Mark Fasts collection this year.

Models paraded down the catwalk in laser cut style zebra patterns. Fabric was cut out showing skin underneath. The zebra print didn't cover the whole garment, but was instead frequently worn as a mesh layer over another item of clothing. Layering with animal prints was a key theme and a big trend. But let's be honest, Leeds University students knew this years ago.

@mark\_fast

Millie Cross



# Looking Like a Clown: Fashion in Todd Phillips' Joker

Lizzie Wright examines the power of costume in the new Joker film.

Joaquin Phoenix's transformation into the iconic Joker in the Todd Phillips film has been lauded for its nuanced, cinematic approach and true-to-the-source graphic-novel style cinematography. But another key aspect of the film was the appearance of the Joker, and the man behind the makeup, Arthur Fleck. With his comic book origins, readers were made to judge him based largely on how he looked and dress, and costume designer Mark Bridges (also known for his Oscar winning work on 2011's 'The Artist' and 2017's 'Phantom Thread') didn't shy away from making bold choices that directly influence the tone of the film and how the audience see the evolution of Phoenix's character.

## The Original Clown:

Fleck's job as a clown means he spends a good portion of the first act in the clown costume we're more accustomed to seeing- with comedic elements such as the lime-green afro wig and water-squirting flower, which, as two of the most recognisable clown accessories, are highlighted during pivotal points in the film. Fleck activates the flower as he lies beaten in an alley, a tragicomic moment of self-comfort, and on the subway train where he makes his first kills. The men taunt him to remove his wig to remove the man underneath, thus symbolising the beginning of his transformation to regular clown-for-hire into the murderous Joker that he becomes by the end of the film. Otherwise, the outfit features the more muted tones we get used to seeing Arthur in throughout the film; whilst the clown accessories may make him stand out, his actual outfit as a clown is neat, but subtle, meaning he blends in with the crowd.

## Arthur Fleck and Colour:

Arthur seems to prefer warm tones: he favours burgundies (the colour of blood), and brown tones, perfect for blending in with the seemingly 70s time period. He avoids brights altogether, save for his signature white socks, suggesting the recession back into that childhood innocence he longs for, with the addition of comforting layers like cardigans which were deliberately made to seem worn in. He still lives with, and has to care for, his mother, and thus Arthur is not going to be a fashionable, hip man, and Bridges said in an interview with IndieWire:

*"[...] there's something kind of awkward and adolescent in his clothing. He's probably had his sweaters and shirts for years, and, when he does his laundry, he puts it all in with his mom's laundry. That influences the look of the clothes."*

Arthur's clothes are as awkward as he is; they're often ill-fitting, reflecting the weight loss he's experienced trying to support his mother. His shirts are off-white, his trousers come up too short like he's been wearing them since before a growth spurt, and he wears his camel hooded jacket to hide from the world, which only serves for a greater contrast between this and his new look at the end of the film.

## The Joker:

Arthur's transformation into the Joker is so stark and sudden that it takes the audience by surprise - the awkward, sad man we've watched for 90 minutes has completely disappeared, and a new, suave, confident man marches in his place. His clothes finally fit him well, the complimentary primary colours matched to his makeup perfectly. He sheds the uncomfortable skin of his past with the murders of his co-worker, his mother, and his girlfriend (in delusion only) and with the face paint takes on a refreshing new persona. Arthur becomes unrecognisable amongst the crowd of rioters at first, but after his explosive appearance on the Murray Franklin show, when the face paint begins to wear, the Joker remains, smearing his own blood across his face to create a macabre smile that, unlike his previous outfits, seems to be made for him.



Credit: USA Jacket



Credit: Daily Mail



Credit: Warner Bros



Credit: British Movies Death

Lizzie Wright





Credit: EDM

### Ethletic £62

Ethletic pride themselves on being an entirely ethical trainer brand. All products are made from natural resources that follow their guideline of 'fair, vegan and sustainable'. This has therefore earned Ethletic the number one ranking. With many of the shoes mimicking a converse style, it's easy to gain the look whilst being much kinder to the planet in the process.

### Veja £95

Veja craft their trainers from raw materials obtained from organic farming, a process that avoids pollution and harsh chemicals. The brand remains focused on being entirely transparent in the process, publishing a social audit every year. Despite this, style is not compromised and Veja remains a firm staple amongst celebrities such as Meghan Markle.



Credit: Toast



Credit: My Theresa

### Stella McCartney £360

Stella McCartney's recent launch of the 'Loop' trainer is an innovative attempt to reduce the harmful impact of fast fashion. This shoe has been created using only eco-friendly materials, including using clips to assemble the shoe instead of glue. The choice of materials mean that once the shoe is no longer wearable you can dismantle the trainers and recycle all the parts.

# The Good, the Bad and the Ugly: Putting your Best Foot Forward with Sustainable Sneakers

**Lizzie Wright proves there's more than meets the eye when it comes to trainers, investigating the sustainability credentials of some Leeds' favourites**



Credit: Office

### Reebok £69.99

Reebok's remain focused on emission reduction and its workers are reported to receive a living wage payment. However, a main issue is the use of leather without stating its source, as this implies it is not likely to be a by-product of the food industry. Moreover, leather is not a sustainable material, and for Reebok to score higher it would have to consider less harmful alternatives.



Credit: Office

### Nike £84.99

Nike's production can be seen as highly problematic. Nike has not eliminated hazardous chemicals, and thus have been criticised by environmental group Green Peace. The welfare of the animals in which leather, wool and down feather is sourced from has not been revealed by Nike. Many question the amount spent by Nike on celebrity sponsorship compared to the low wages it pays workers. Therefore, Nike has received the lowest sustainability rating.



Credit: Old Skool Vans

### Vans £64.99

Vans uses few eco-friendly materials and does not aim to eliminate hazardous chemicals. It also does not strive to pay the living wage and uses leather in many of its products. It is therefore not a sustainable shoe option.



# Why No One Should Talk to Chelsea Handler About Race

Image Credit: Netflix



It was hard to start the documentary, *Hello Privilege*. It's *Me Chelsea*, with the confidence that Chelsea Handler, comedian, actress, and award-winning writer (who has a book cover which features her in Ugandan traditional dress beneath the title 'Ugandan Be Kidding Me') was going to grapple with the complex nuances of White privilege in a serious and committed manner.

Unsurprisingly, my cynicism was not misplaced. If one is to be generous and believe this documentary really was a selfless attempt to gain an understanding of her own social status and agency, rather than an effort to counteract 44 years of accumulated guilt, one could label this a failed attempt at the very least. Whilst my disappointment is directed at Handler and the lazy and self-indulgent style she conducted herself with throughout her 1hr 4 min special, I find it far more unforgivable and telling that Netflix, the billion dollar mogul, would accept such a poor standard of investigative work from the project they have funded.

If one can look past the bizarre concept of a White woman taking centre stage to educate herself and Netflix viewers on a privilege that has essentially propped up her whole career, sadly there is little relief in the wake of the litany of missed and wasted opportunities expended throughout. Handler's careless and sarcastic interviewing style does not achieve the cool, down-with-the-kids demeanour she so clearly strives for.

Instead it holds a detached indifference, ironically symptomatic of the very privilege she is challenging. Her first interview with Kevin Hart and Tiffany Haddish sets this precedence. Voicing their grievances, both comedians speak of the disadvantages of being Black in

an entertainment industry built upon nepotism and racial scepticism. Whilst Handler clearly does her best to retain an air of earnestness, either boredom or a short attention span results in her interjection of a completely unnecessary ill-humoured sexual innuendo - a tangent from an unaired anecdote about a past experience of Haddish's. In derailing any possibility for adult conversation, Handler plays out the lived experience of Black people everywhere.

Although one can credit Netflix for airing a critique of the entire production at the first stop on Handler's self-serving campaign, what they thought to be democratic transparency on their part was in fact far more controversial. A Black audience member of the spoken word event Handler was attending deemed the film 'another example of White privilege', with specific address to the plausibility of Handler entering these spaces to 'learn' without the act of 'taking'. The inclusion of this criticism revealed a far darker truth of White privilege, one which neither Netflix nor Handler had the sensitivity to be conscious of - the omission of the Black voice altogether. Had the Black woman's rationale been engaged with the sincerity it deserved, the concept of the show would have been taken back to the drawing board, perhaps even with a Black figurehead. But sadly, a momentary expression of recognition gave way to a response of nothingness, continuing with a full steam ahead approach.

Whilst a significant part of the documentary is rightly reserved for Handler's education from the Black community, in a painfully pathetic attempt to 'get on side' and see up close the ignorance facing the Black community, she aptly scouted out Georgia's Oktoberfest as a venue for a demographic struggling with the concept of White privilege. Picking on punters at the event she

then ensued in a series of blatantly leading questions, the crudest being "So, what we're filming is a documentary on White privilege, to see if it exists or a fantasy that people are just making up in their heads. What do you think?" She successfully ensnares "I think it's something they're making up in their heads", substantiating to the viewer the clear distinction between the racist whites and herself.

Though the whole documentary is undeniably crass it was her reunion with teenage boyfriend that felt most unsavoury. It seemed as though the whole episode was geared toward her confessional admission that she had a Black boyfriend, the strangeness of which was not eased by her painstaking insistence on hanging on to the two syllables of his name "Taaaay-Jauun" - a cringe inducing two minutes I will never get back. It is such a tired and meaningless declaration for those accused of exhibiting racist or White privilege behaviours to drawl the 'but I have Black friends' line, but it seems Handler cannot help herself.

Sitting on the pavement outside Tayjaun's house and listening to the tribulations of his time spent in jail, some of which was spent watching Handler on television, is deeply saddening. However, what is made worse is that by her own acknowledgement the time she spent with his family, though she loved and cared for them was 'not a good time' in her life and 'she was a wreck and off the rails'. The climax of this scene is her entry into Tayjaun's mother's house, where she calls out 'I'm home' to the upbeat background music - a crude allusion to the white saviour complex. This documentary is not an investigation of White privilege, rather a performance with Chelsea Handler basking in the limelight.

Lauren Gee



# Treat Your Shelf: Black History Month

As University reading lists are often pale, stale and overwhelmingly male, Arts and Culture have compiled a list of the best literature by Black writers in order to diversify your bookcase and honour the rich tapestry of the Black story.

## To Be Real: Telling the Truth and Changing the Face of Feminism - Rebecca Walker

This collection of essays exploring the realities and complexities of identifying as a third-wave feminist is certainly a must-read. Rebecca Walker, editor and daughter of writer/activist Alice Walker, excellently articulates her experience of escaping the 'feminist ghetto' of the second wave in the introduction; her tone is delicate yet firm. The collection includes essays covering themes from being a supermodel to seeking marriage and enjoying masochistic sex, showing that there's no one way to be a feminist. Relatable, accessible and thoroughly enjoyable, this read is a refreshing alternative to other, stuffy academic literature.



## Sister Outsider: Essays and Speeches - Audre Lorde

Describing herself as a 'Black, lesbian, mother, warrior, poet,' Audre Lorde has become one of the most authentic figures of the 20th century by embracing each aspect of her identity. In her 1984 essay collection Sister Outsider, she treats various subjects that have long been the center of her journey as a writer and activist: the meaning of poetry, the power of the erotic, and, most importantly, the necessity of intersectional politics that address and acknowledge racism, sexism, classism, ageism and homophobia at the very same time. Brutal and unapologetic, moving and graceful, these essays and notes display the very brilliance of a woman who fought hard for liberation.



## Too Black, Too Strong - Benjamin Zephaniah

As one of the most outspoken, charming and enthralling voices of British poetry, Benjamin Zephaniah effortlessly captures the core of what it means to be Black in the modern world. This 2001 collection in particular is one that confronts the realities of societal inequality in a hard-hitting, candid manner albeit with a flair of dark humour. What's more, despite being published just shy of twenty years ago, this is a book that still feels chillingly apt in the current political climate.



Alex Gibbon, Safi Bugel, Sabrina Martins.

Image Credits: lacuna.org.uk, cdn.britannica.com, time.com



# British Period Dramas: A Steady Progression of Black Representation

**Abbie Jones details how the use of 'blind' casting has allowed for Black casting to become more paramount in our British obsession with the period drama.**

Britain is as obsessed as ever with period dramas, however it seems that producers are not stuck in the past along with the programmes. Historical dramas have traditionally been made up of all-white casts, leaving no room for Black talent to emerge. However, British television seems to be having a breakthrough with many shows now featuring a 'blind' casting.

Race rows continue to surround Idris Elba's potential casting as 'traditionally white' James Bond with Sir Roger Moore being criticised for saying that Elba is not "English-English" enough. The Bond franchise is set in more modern times than many much-loved British period dramas, making it arguably more unforgiveable to not cast an actor because of their race. Downton Abbey creator, John Fellowes, states that it is important for period dramas and productions to be historically accurate. This comes after Fellowes had to defend his musical, Half a Sixpence, in a race row with critics claiming that the cast shows an inexcusable lack of diversity despite the production being set in 1900.

British television producers are seemingly ignoring Fellowes' concerns as we see an increasing amount of Black actors in period dramas despite the arguable 'historical inaccuracy'. BBC One's adaptation of Les Misérables features Black actor, David Oyelowo, as Inspector Javert. The series is set during the French Revolution, a time when a Black man would not have been appointed to roles of such authority. Despite this, there is absolutely no reference or acknowledgment of Javert/Oyelowo's race throughout the series - he is presented as though he is meant to be there.

Many other shows and productions are using the same casting strategy, as Call the Midwife recently introduced their first West Indian midwife in Season 7. Jane Austen is not a novelist that inspires thoughts of racial diversity but even ITV's adaptation of her novel, Sanditon, presents Black actress, Crystal Clarke, as the leading heiress Georgiana Lamb. Recent Globe productions have cast a Black Hamlet and a Black King Lear whilst Black actress, Naomie Ackie, took the leading part in the film Lady Macbeth, all of which prove that Shakespearean productions have come a long way since the times that young men had to play the female roles with women being banned from the Renaissance stage.

Black British actress Thandie Newton has previously complained about period dramas offering "slim pickings for people of colour," adding that she does not want to "play someone who is being racially abused." This burgeoning 'blind' casting strategy offers a refreshing take on the traditional period drama, emancipating Black actors from playing the roles of slaves or the discriminated-against 'Other' and prioritising principles of diversity over debatable historical accuracy.

Television and film often engage with audiences by making the content relatable and relevant to people's lives. Even though period dramas are not set in our time, the plights of the characters still resonate with the modern-day man. The Royal Shakespeare Company's artistic director, Gregory Doran, states that television and production "is a mirror to life. If you don't see yourself in that mirror, why should you engage with it?"

Black representation in period dramas then not only expands opportunities for Black actors but will also mean that the shows become more accessible to Black audiences. Maybe things aren't so Black and white these days, as the introduction of Black actors into period drama brightens the future of television and film, hopefully paving the way for Black actors to not be denied roles on the basis that they're not "English-English" enough.

Abbie Jones



Image: Digital Spy



Image: The Wrap



Image: goodhousekeeping.org



# 'We've Always Loved Horror. It's Just Horror, Unfortunately, Hasn't Always Loved us'

Says Xavier Burgin, in the striking opening statement of his 2019 documentary **Horror Noire: A History of Black Horror**.

It is no secret that Western cinema has had a long history of erasure and racism, and horror is a genre with a particularly problematic history when it comes to representation. As Black actors slowly got introduced into the screen, the roles that were offered were often reductive: the token Black character, the first one to die, the sidekick and the voodoo witch are just a few of them. Yet recently things have been changing: new doors seem to be opening, and Black horror films that were neglected are being rediscovered by the public. Therefore, in honor of Black History Month and Halloween, here are five key films of Black horror history that you should include in your October marathon.

## **Night of the Living Dead (1968), dir. George A. Romero**

Considered as the launching of the modern zombie film, *Night of the Living Dead* is one of the rare films of its time that features a Black man as its protagonist. The story follows a group of people trapped in a farmhouse as they are attacked by bloodthirsty creatures. Ben, played by the iconic Duane Jones, is not a sidekick or mere token: he is an active character who takes charge of his fate and drives the movie from the beginning to the end. Visually haunting, Romero's film continues to chill its audience even today.

## **Blacula (1972), dir. William Crain**

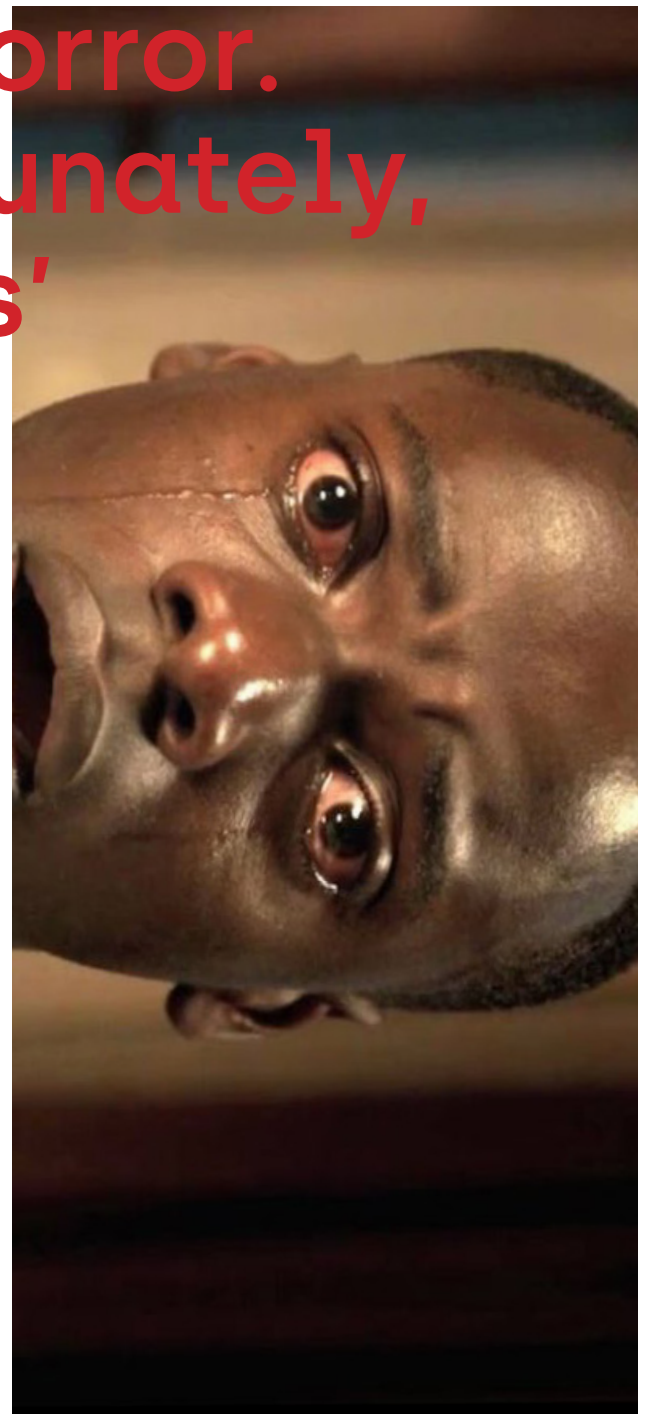
The 70s are marked by the emergence of the Blaxploitation subgenre. While the era has received backlash for solidifying stereotypes, it has also opened doors for Black representation. *Blacula* tells the story of an African prince who was turned into a vampire by Count Dracula while visiting him in Transylvania. Two centuries later, he stumbles upon a woman who he believes to be his wife's reincarnation. William Marshall's performance as the first Black vampire is both terrifying and mesmerizing. Campy and vintage, the story is filled with underlying messages on slavery and Black identity.

## **Ganja & Hess (1973), dir. Bill Gunn**

After the success of *Blacula*, Bill Gunn was approached with the idea of a new Black vampire film. However, his picture quickly took a very different direction. After getting stabbed with a ceremonial dagger, Hess Green gains the power of immortality and a thirst for blood. He then forms a passionate relationship with Ganja and gives her the same gift and curse. Unconventionally structured, Gunn offers a profoundly human take on the vampire film that touches on addiction and African American heritage. Shortened without the director's consent, the film has since been restored to its hypnotic and psychedelic form.

## **Eve's Bayou (1997), dir. Kasi Lemmons**

Although not marketed as horror, it undoubtedly holds elements of the genre. Kasi Lemmons's film tells the story of ten-year-old Eve Batiste who helplessly watches her family fall apart as she learns about her father's numerous infidelities. Blending a family drama with the Gothic and supernatural, *Eve's Bayou* is a psychological and sensitive tale about puberty and secrecy that displays a singular and atmospheric quality. This exquisite and mystical film has played a distinctive role for Black female directors in cinema.



## **Get Out (2017), dir. Jordan Peele**

You've probably seen this one already, but have you had enough of it yet? As Chris Washington anxiously visits his girlfriend's family, he slowly realizes that a horrifying secret lies behind their awkwardness. While the genre was suffering from its remakes and never-ending tropes, *Get Out* offers a compelling and original story that reminds us of the beauty of horror. Thrilling, hilarious and deeply symbolic, Peele's brilliant debut film quickly made him one of the leading figures of contemporary horror.

## **BONUS. Horror Noire: A History of Black Horror (2019), dir. Xavier Burgin**

Featuring interviews of actors, writers and directors of the genre, *Horror Noire* is a detailed piece that traces the history of Black horror from the controversial *Birth of a Nation* (1915) to Jordan Peele. Offering various insights and analyses, it sheds a new light on films that were marginalized and serves as a perfect catalogue for horror fans. After the international success of *Get Out*, Jordan Peele has continued to deliver in quality and originality with his 2019 film *Us* and his *Twilight Zone* web-series. Recently, it was announced that he would be rebooting the horror classic *Candyman*. Yet, the genre has still a lot to learn and make up for, as recent horror films continue to show traces of this history of erasure. It is important to remember that on-screen and behind-the-screen representation shouldn't rely on a single man, and that the studios and their audiences should keep on pressuring for equal visibility.

Sabrina Martins



Image Credit: nme.com, rebuild-foundation.org



# Jamaica Kincaid: An Insight Into the Captivating Works of a Caribbean Writer



Image Credits: KRCW.com

A predominant thread running through much of the literature of Jamaica Kincaid - an Antiguan-American novelist, essayist and poet - is her vivid exploration of feelings of admiration and longing for the richness and vibrancy of her Caribbean homeland, alongside powerful expressions of anger and resentment; this outpouring of rage is usually directed toward colonialist endeavours to erode the history of her motherland and her own personal history. Kincaid's often experimental works centre on these conflicting emotions, which the writer explores as a circumstance of her ventures from the West Indies to America.

Kincaid regularly toys with the central motif of not quite knowing where one belongs in the world, and she meditates upon feeling split between her Caribbean homeland and the Western customs which have become part of her life for much of her upbringing under British colonial rule of Antigua (Antigua only gained full independence from Britain in 1981). Here, we take a look at just a small selection of Kincaid's highly thought-provoking writings, which illustrate in nuanced ways this striking sense of cultural disconnection that Kincaid critiques as being a product of colonial history.

## Lucy (1990)

Jamaica Kincaid's postcolonial novel, *Lucy*, demonstrates the complex journey of a protagonist who seeks to resist the sense of colonial domination which has been imposed upon her personal history. Enter the novel's teenage protagonist, Lucy, who adopts a fierce and critical gaze onto the West when she moves from her native Antigua to New York to work as an au-pair for a wealthy, white, middle-class family.

**Lucy rebuts the role of naïve, passive, subject upon which a powerful country will dazzle her, and the reader cannot help but be enthralled by her tenacity and sharp-wittedness. Lucy refuses to perceive her host family as the pinnacle of perfection and happiness, as she soon begins to notice this veneer of pleasantries is a mere façade, when she learns that beneath the surface the family has many problems of their own. Kincaid's illustration of the host family is perhaps a metaphor for white privilege as just that—an empty façade. With *Lucy*, Kincaid fiercely questions "white privilege" at its very core.**

The story of *Lucy* is a lively and engaging account of one Caribbean woman's fight for resistance against her colonial past, and this very resistance ultimately paves the way for the protagonist's growing desire for self-invention and ultimate control over her life. As is the case with much of Kincaid's writing, the novel is also thought to be a thinly veiled autobiography of the writer's adolescent life.

## A Small Place (1988)

With Kincaid's book-length non-fiction essay, we are introduced to a very different engagement with the central themes of her work. *A Small Place* is a sharp-tongued polemic which critiques the damaging impact of mindless tourism upon the Caribbean.

Kincaid's sardonic, poetic, and highly emotive writing brings to light the problematic idea that holidaymakers do not have to concern themselves with colonial history, and of how the past affects the present, when enjoying themselves abroad in Antigua. Kincaid forcefully interrogates the tourist that is encouraged to come to the Caribbean to get away from the complexity of modern life, without having to bear any

understanding of the complex history of the country that they are visiting. As the reader, we are placed in an uncomfortable position, as we reflect upon our own motivation for an escape from the monotony of ordinary life when choosing to holiday abroad; Kincaid powerfully evokes shame as a prompt to move one into action.

*A Small Place* is a punchy indictment against the corruptive influences of colonialism. The text is a must-read in order to gain an appreciation of the way in which tourism can be perceived by the country's natives as potentially insensitive. Kincaid reminds us that tourists in countries, such as Antigua, may be dismissive of the complications of history and, instead, are encouraged to visit such a place with the desire to merely see an array of aesthetically pleasing scenery. Kincaid is not afraid to interrogate the status quo, and this is why her works are often so politically powerful, informative, and engaging.

Shannon Cook



Image Credits: Amazon.co.uk



# Review: Netflix's Top Boy



Image Credits: Evening Standard

**Top Boy makes a return with its third season after a six-year break, with the help of executive producer and big fan, Drake. The show offers a lens into young people’s lives living on an East London housing estate, their lifestyle comprising of both hardship and camaraderie.**

The protagonists, Dushane, played by rapper ‘Asher D’, and Sully, played by rapper ‘Kano’, return to Summerhouse to find that the workings of their estate have evolved during their time away. An abundance of artists endorses the series’ comeback, including Mercury Prize winner Dave with his impressive TV debut as Modie and rapper Little Simz as Shelley.

Since Dushane, Sully and the viewers’ break from Summerhouse, aspiring ‘Top Boy’ Jamie is on the rise, offering a fresh personality to the estate and the screen. The show has been criticised for fuelling the prejudice around Black working class people by depicting them as ruthlessly violent criminals.

The multifaceted character Jamie, played by Michael Ward, challenges this critique. Jamie’s rise to the top is unequivocally achieved through the merciless and Machiavellian means too familiar to loyal viewers, as well as many of those who live on an estate similar to Summerhouse. Nonetheless, he simultaneously fathers his two younger brothers after their parents die of illness, making him an honourable and sympathetic character which contradicts this stereotype.

It is not only the boys on the block that have changed over time; Top Boy also offers an insight into the changing nature of London, showing how areas like Hackney have become gentrified. This is comically captured in Dushane’s homecoming from Jamaica, when he buys a £3.50 coffee, which is fastidiously brewed by the barista. The show also makes more salient observations, the most harrowing of which being the distressing visits from immigration officers to the mother of the young hardworking schoolboy Ats, played by Keiyan Cook. Having lived and worked in England for 20

years, Ats’ mother, Amma, played by Jolade Obasola, is haunted by the threat of having to leave her son and life in London. This compels Ats to take on some of the financial burden, firstly selling homemade burgers to fellow students outside school. Later, he is enticed by the appeal of selling drugs and is driven into a violent gang culture.

This woeful path that Ats is dragged down shows how ostracization and financial injustice can force young people to get caught up in the troubles of the streets. This heart-breaking story strongly resonates with all affected by the Windrush scandal. Top Boy humanises this political crisis and highlights the traumatic reality facing families like that of Ats’. The long-awaited return of Top Boy, with its gripping plot as well as its fresh and familiar faces, does not come as a disappointment. In our uncertain political times, it is reassuring that the arts retain a front seat in shining a spotlight on the contemporary injustices of society.

Livia Kenton

# An Ode to Maya Angelou

Reading Maya Angelou’s writing, particularly her autobiographical book series, is an essential requirement when seeking a deeper understanding of the plight of Black women in America throughout the 20th century. As her most famous book, “I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings” is especially important because of the wide range of topics it discusses - her experiences living in the American south during the Great Depression, to the sexual abuse she endured at a very young age. Angelou is considered the first Black woman to write unapologetically and explicitly about these experiences with clear conviction and purpose.

This is the core of much of her work, as evident in the imagery of the titular “caged bird”. She gave a voice to the voiceless, took everything she had suffered from, and used that to inspire a community of people and give them hope for the future.

Louis Newstead



Image Credits: KThoughCo.com



# What's on this Black History Month?

This Black History Month, LUU is exploring a whole host of 'Black &' identities through the following line-up of events:

<p><b>Leeds Student Radio x Black History Month</b></p> <p>Leeds Student Radio are throwing open their balcony windows each Friday of Black History Month between 12-2pm to celebrate Black DJs past and present.</p> <p>Date: Every Friday, Oct 4th-25th Time: 12 - 2PM Place: Outside LUU Ticket: Free</p>	<p><b>Farmers' Market x Black History Month</b></p> <p>Each Monday in October, Black History Month is taking over the Farmers' Market in front of LUU to showcase food, drink, art and more.</p> <p>Date: Every Monday, Oct 7th-28th Time: 10AM - 5PM Place: Outside LUU Ticket: Free</p>	<p><b>Black History Month Terrace Tunes Takeover</b></p> <p>Come to Terrace and enjoy a special Thursday night for Black History Month, featuring a curated playlist of Black artists through history.</p> <p>List of offered drinks available on the LUU website.</p> <p>Date: Friday Oct 18th Time: 7PM - 12AM Place: LUU - Terrace Ticket: Free</p>	<p><b>Black &amp; Books: Decolonising Workshop</b></p> <p>Abiha, your Education Officer, wants to know why your reading lists are so pale, male and stale. Bring along the reading list for one of your modules and join her for a series of workshops that explore how your curriculum could be much more diverse.</p> <p>Date: Friday Oct 18th &amp; 21st Time: 12 - 2PM Place: LUU - Room 5 Ticket: Free</p>
<p><b>Black &amp; Film: Hidden Figures</b></p> <p>LUU's Liberation Coordinator team present a free screening [with popcorn!] of the 2016 movie Hidden Figures which tells the story of three brilliant African-American women at NASA - Katherine Johnson, Dorothy Vaughan and Mary Jackson - who played an integral role in launching astronaut John Glenn into space. There'll be room for discussion of the film as well.</p> <p>The film is 127 minutes long.</p> <p>Date: Monday Oct 21st Time: 6 - 9PM Place: LUU - Function Ticket: Free</p>	<p><b>ACS Legacy</b></p> <p>The African Caribbean Society presents Legacy: A cultural showcase that aims to celebrate, embrace and empower what it means to be of black heritage. We have performances from spoken word artists, musicians and even a fashion show presented by the East African society. The African and Caribbean culture also offer wonderful food, from the spicy and flavor-filled Jollof rice to the beautiful aromas of jerk chicken. All in all, Legacy is the epitome of Black History Month.</p> <p>Date: Wednesday Oct 23rd Time: 6:30 - 9PM Place: LUU - Riley Smith Theatre Ticket: £5-7 (Buy now or On Door)</p>	<p><b>Home Sweet Home</b></p> <p>This event is about community, celebration and cooking. Come and join members of the Windrush generation and the wider local community as we end our Black History Month Celebration in song, stories and taste.</p> <p>All are welcome.</p> <p>Date: Tuesday Oct 29th Time: 6 - 8:30PM Place: LUU - Foyer Ticket: Free</p>	<p><b>Black Feminist Halloween Special: Astrology and Black Spirituality</b></p> <p>More information to be confirmed. Please look on the LUU website for more details to come.</p> <p>Date: Thursday Oct 31st Time: 6 - 8PM Place: Baines Wing SR 2.10 Ticket: Free</p>



# Finding Your Feet as a Mixed Race Student in Leeds

**Ellie, LUU's Health and Wellbeing Ambassador, gives her advice on settling in at Leeds as a person of mixed race: "For anyone who may be feeling similar to how I was in these first few weeks, is to remember that you are not alone here"**



**Ellie Lewis**  
LUU Health and Wellbeing  
Ambassador

Although full of thousands of students all around the same age, university life can often be isolating for those of us who feel like an outsider. It is obvious that Leeds as a city is one of the most diverse in the UK, but within campus walls it can sometimes be hard to remember this. Personally, when thinking about the classic 'model' person who is in a higher education environment, some common ideas that spring to mind are, middle-class, white, cis gendered, and able-bodied. These are fabulous things to be, but when you identify outside of these lines, a little support is sometimes necessary.

Being a mixed girl from a working-class family I know all too well how hard it is to fit in here without feeling like you are hugely compromising your identity. Over the last year, I have learned a lot, and although I can't say that uni feels 100% like home, it's getting closer each day.

I have compiled a list of a few ideas that will help you if you are feeling a little isolated at university too.

## **Host a potluck with your flatmates**

Tired of your flatmates asking, "what's that?" while you're cooking a traditional dish? Why not have a potluck with them? This will allow you all to cook something you love for each other while also learning about different cultures and foods from around the world. Food is a universal language, so this sort of activity can help you to build further connections with those you are living with.

## **Join a society**

LUU have hundreds of societies to join that can help you to meet more people like you and help make your time at university run as smoothly as possible while also having a good time. For almost every country and religion, there is a society to go with it. By joining one of these, you can meet people who may be having similar experiences to you, this may be about feelings of homesickness, culture shock or even wondering where to get hair products.

There are also various societies where gender and sexuality are at the focal point, such as, the LGBTQ+ society, QTIPOC, Feminist Society and Black Feminist Society. These are safe spaces for many students to express themselves in any way they are comfortable with, which can often be a relief from day-to-day life. Socials can be a fabulous way to have fun with people you identify with too.

## **Explore Leeds**

You are going to be here for 3 years (or more) so make sure you get to know where you are living. Go to the local markets, get a bus somewhere and try all the yummy food you possibly can. This way, you will be able

to find those hidden gems that you can even take your friends to.

## **Feeling homesick? Make the most of discounted travel**

If you are really missing your family or it's your friend's birthday, it is a cool idea to go home for a weekend. If you are lucky enough to only live a few hours away from Leeds by car, megabus can be the cheapest way to travel. For instance, Leeds to Manchester can cost as little as £2.50! If like me, you're not the biggest fan of long bus journeys, the perfect way to get home for a discounted price is with a rail card, which saves you 1/3 off trains. Also, if you live on an LNER route, you can save up to 40% further off with unidays. If your home is overseas, it may not make a lot of sense to go home for a weekend, but you could always go with a friend to visit their family! You could explore a new town affordably this way.

## **Don't be afraid to talk to a professional**

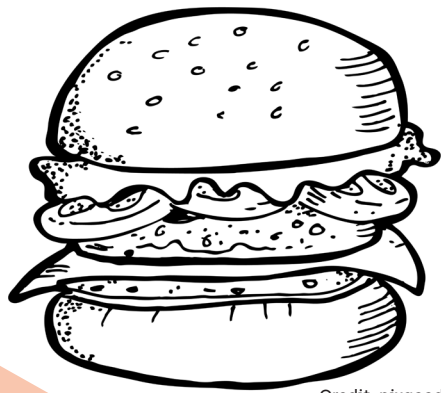
If feelings persist and become a big hindrance to your everyday life, it is perfectly okay to seek further help. The LUU Help and Support team are based in the foyer of the union and are always ready to help you if need be. Even if you feel like your problem is only small, they will be able to get you in touch with someone who can support you.

**Hopefully these tips will help you to find your place at Leeds and enjoy your time here as much as possible. Make sure to share these ideas with friends who you think may be struggling or need a little help too.**



# The Best Burgers in Leeds

Laura gives her top five burger restaurants in Leeds to satisfy your cravings and spare you from cooking.



Credit: pixgood

**Sometimes, nothing beats a burger. You can go to as many fancy restaurants as you like, but every so often your body just needs a big slab of meat (or not meat!), sandwiched between carbs. So with that in mind, here's a rundown of the best burgers in Leeds.**



Image: Handmade Burger Co

## For the choice:

Handmade Burger Co: Based in Trinity, this much more open, bright setting is perfect for a bit of lunch in-between lectures and shopping. Their veggie menu is lush; from Mexican to Thai themed burgers, their vegan and veggie options go a bit further than the basic halloumi offering. If you're in the mood for something a bit lighter (and cheaper), Handmade Burger Co also offer beef, chicken and vegan 'smaller' burgers. In my experience, this is still plenty of food, and the smaller options are still eligible for a student discount of 25% - a win-win situation. With so many choices, it's hard to recommend just one, but I would start with the Mexican burger for something a bit different.



Image: Patty Smith's Burger Co

## For the vegetarian:

Patty Smith's Burger Co: Amongst the action in Belgrave Music Hall, you'll find Patty Smith's Burgers, home to one of the best burgers (and THE best) veggie burger in Leeds. While there might not be as much choice as some of the other places I've mentioned, what they do offer is amazing. Their jackfruit veggie burger with a dollop of sriracha sauce is to die for, and their classic dirty burger comes with everything you would expect in a burger, all sandwiched in a beautiful brioche bun. The atmosphere in Belgrave is amazing, and with burgers from £6 - £9 (and student discount), it is a Leeds must.



Image: Byron

## For the chicken:

Byron: Now hear me out, I know this list should be made up of little independent burger places, but the Byron burger really is amazing. Not only is their Clucky Smashed Avo Burger probably the best thing I've ever tasted, it also comes with chips! I don't know about you, but there's nothing more annoying than having to pay for chips separately (cough \*Five Guys\* cough). Their menu isn't exactly what you would call 'budget', but there is always a solid student discount which makes it a little more bearable on the wallet. Personally, I would say it's the best chicken burger on this list, so if that's what you're after, you're sorted. Their milkshakes are also perfect for satisfying your sweet tooth, but I would recommend some loose trousers if you plan on a burger and a milkshake, trust me.



Image: MEATliquor Leeds

## For the carnivores:

MeatLiquor: As the name suggests, this place is a meat-eater's heaven. The restaurant itself is hidden underground, with a cool basement vibe and lots of American décor. The menu alone makes this place worthy of being on the list; with a massive range of beef and chicken burgers, a make-your-own hot dog menu and some interesting vegetarian options, this place has a bit of something for everyone. The burgers are a messy business (which I blame on their 'hippie sauce'), but they're burgers that you can really get stuck into. Their chip portions are generous, although separately priced which we'll try and ignore. I would recommend going for their lunchtime deal which is any burger, chips and unlimited soft drinks for £10!



Image: Almost Famous

## Almost Famous:

If you're a beef burger fan, there's nowhere better than Almost Famous. While their chicken and veggie options are limited, the creativity and originality in their classic and loaded beef burgers is definitely worth checking out. Whether you fancy a pizza themed burger, or a burger loaded with mac 'n' cheese AND pulled pork (my personal favourite), this place really knows how to beef up their burgers! The atmosphere is chilled, tucked away in the centre of Leeds, with funky décor and dimmed lighting. While it might not be the cheapest on the list, it's worth the price if you're looking for a dirty beef burger with a bit of oomph.

Laura Kerr



# Boob School 101

## Ellie discusses how to check yourself and myth busting regarding breast cancer.



Credit: FreePik

**Guys, gals, non-binary pals:  
Breast Cancer Awareness  
Month is upon us and, as part  
of the Leeds Uni Boob Team  
representing the charity  
CoppaFeel! on campus, I want  
to encourage everyone to make  
a boob-checking pledge this  
October.**

### Who should check?

In the UK, breast cancer is the most commonly diagnosed cancer for women but, despite the stereotype of being a 'female' disease, 400 men get diagnosed every year too. Seeing as the key to breast cancer survival is early diagnosis, consciously choosing to give your chest a monthly check could end up being a habit that saves your life, no matter your age or gender.

### Help! How should I check?

There's no perfect way to check yourself - so do it whenever or wherever you feel most comfortable. For a lot of us, that'll be in the bath or shower by running a soapy hand over each boob and up under each armpit. Don't be afraid to have a good feel - it might be a little nerve-racking at first, but once you get into a monthly boob-checking routine, you'll start to feel more confident. Don't forget, breast tissue reaches underneath your armpit as well as right up to your collarbones- so don't miss these out when you're copping a feel.

### What am I looking out for?

All boobs are different and come in naturally different sizes, shapes and with lumps and bumps in different places. This is when checking monthly and getting to know your normal comes in extremely handy. Being aware of what your boobs (and pecs) usually feel and look like will make it so much easier to identify when

something could be wrong.

While you're having a feel, you should be aware of any constant or unusual pain in your breasts or armpits as well as thickening or lumps. In terms of physical appearance, you're looking out for nipple discharge, changes in skin texture, swelling in your armpits and collarbones, rashes or crusting on your nipple, sudden changes in size or shape and a change in nipple direction.

It's also definitely worth keeping in mind that, if you have periods, hormones will likely affect how your boobs feel at different times during your menstrual cycle. If you do find something abnormal, our mantra is: if in doubt, get it checked out.

### Want monthly boob-checking reminders?

Currently only 30% of women aged 18-29 years old check their boobs monthly, which is something that needs to change. In the midst of essay deadlines, endless hangovers and scouting out seats in the library during exam season, boob checks are often something that slip out of students' minds. This is where CoppaFeel!'s monthly text reminders come in handy. [By texting UBT LEEDS to 70500, you can opt in to receiving FREE punny and light-hearted reminder texts once a month.](#) It doesn't take a lot to sign up, but could one day save your life.

Ellie Futter

# Tips for a Good Night Routine

I'm sure everyone can agree that there is nothing worse than being exhausted, lying in bed, and still being unable to fall asleep. You toss and you turn, you count sheep, you even play 'relaxing sleep music', but still nothing seems to do the job. Call me your agony aunt, because here are ten (ish) tips that I hope will solve these issues.

If you're like me and enjoy a bit of exercise, going to the gym late in the afternoon works wonders for your bedtime routine. Not only are you left feeling good about yourself, but your body releases serotonin (the 'happy hormone') when you exercise, leaving you feeling less stressed.

Going to the gym usually gives you the biggest appetite, and I find that listening to some nice music whilst cooking a nice meal with your housemates distracts your mind from the stresses of the day. I'd recommend eating your evening meal at least 1.5 hours before you sleep to give your body time to digest your food.

This tip is probably a given, but also one of my favourites. Having a bath (if you're lucky enough to have one at uni) or shower surprisingly has amazing health and mental benefits. Not only does a warm shower leave you feeling refreshed, it also normalises your body temperature so you're neither too hot nor too cold for bed!

This next tip is certainly down to personal preference, but I find that studying late at night always stops me from having a good sleep, so stopping work at about 8:30pm and relaxing in front of the TV or laptop provides the perfect chance to unwind and clear your head (Bake Off works wonders for me and my housemates). Of course, this might not be possible for all students, especially for third and fourth years, but I'd recommend leaving an hour between working and going to sleep in order to unwind.

Drinking water close to your bedtime is also known to have amazing health benefits such as flushing out toxins from the day, keeping you hydrated, and giving your skin that healthy glow - you will quite literally be sleeping beauty! So, water you waiting for?

This is without a doubt my favourite (and in my opinion most useful) bedtime tip that is almost guaranteed to have great effects: reading before you sleep. Although it sounds simple, even the most successful CEOs, such as Elon Musk, have admitted to reading before they sleep. It's a great way to stimulate your brain, whilst also placing you in a world of your own. I suggest reading a non-academic book - although this might be a given if you've been studying all day. My current bedtime read is *The Picture of Dorian Gray* by Oscar Wilde.

## "Still awake after counting sheep?" Try these top tips to help you sleep!"

Although your parents might have lectured you about turning your phone off when going to sleep, the benefits are surprisingly shocking. If you're anything like most students, your phone is the first and last thing you see in the day. However, your body needs at least thirty minutes to wind down without a screen. Simply looking at your phone increases stress levels, causing your body to release a hormone called cortisol, and consequently keeps you awake.

Bedtime timings really vary from person to person, but I would say 10:30 - 11:00pm is the best time to go to sleep. Ensuring that you have the recommended 8 hours sleep, leaving you feeling refreshed in the morning - early bird catches the worm!

If you don't already have a bedtime routine similar to this, I hope that this brief article helps you get a better night sleep. I may only be a History student and far from a sleep specialist, but I value my beauty sleep and have hopefully mastered the bedtime routine for other students like me!

Kerry Pearson



# In the Middle

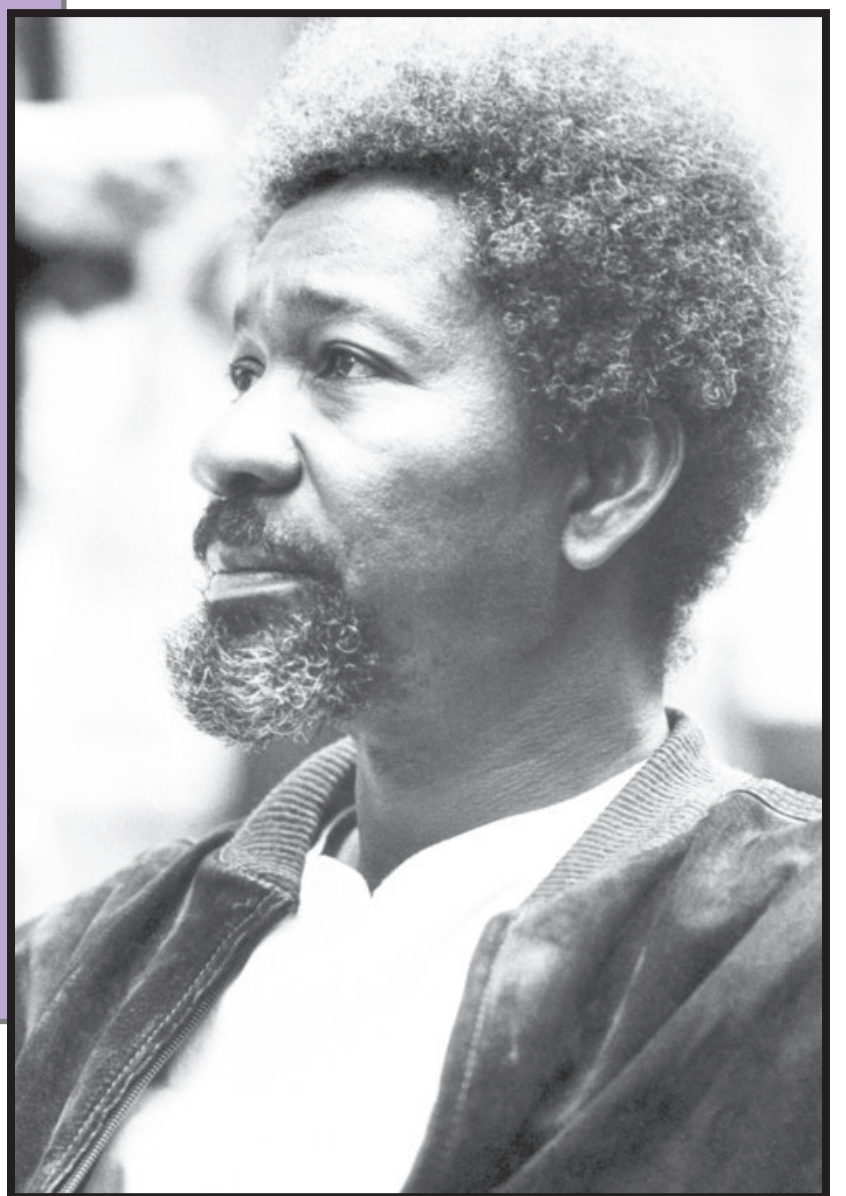
## In the Small Hours by Wole Soyinka

Blue diaphane, tobacco smoke  
Serpentine on wet film and wood glaze,  
Mutes chrome, wreathes velvet drapes,  
Dims the cave of mirrors. Ghost fingers  
Comb seaweed hair, stroke aquamarine  
veins  
Of marooned mariners, captives  
Of Circe's sultry notes. The barman  
Dispenses igneous potions –  
Somnabulist, the band plays on.

Cocktail mixer, silvery fish  
Dances for limpet clients.  
Applause is steeped in lassitude,  
Tangled in webs of lovers' whispers  
And artful eyelash of the androgynous.  
The hovering notes caress the night  
Mellowed deep indigo – still they play.

Departures linger. Absences do not  
Deplete the tavern. They hang over the haze  
As exhalations from receded shores. Soon,  
Night repossesses the silence, but till dawn  
The notes hold sway, smoky  
Epiphanies, possessive of the hours.

This music's plaint forgives, redeems  
The deafness of the world. Night turns  
Homewards, sheathed in notes of solace,  
pleats  
The broken silence of the heart.



Wole Soyinka is a poet and a playwright. A Leeds alumnus, Soyinka was the first African recipient of the Nobel Prize for Literature, which he was awarded in 1986.





# All Bark and No Bite: Corporate Commitment to Diversity

Ruby Fatimilehin

In recent years, there has been an increased push for diversity in the workplace, whether that be in business, marketing, education or public institutions. It seems that the public are tired of air-brushed pictures of slender women and images of White, heterosexual families.

*[Companies] pay lip service to minority groups because they view diversity as a marketing tool*

In a survey, 71% of clothes shoppers preferred retailers to use more diverse models in marketing campaigns, proving consumers want to see more women, LGBT and BAME people represented.

The media has responded to the increased demand for diversity, with marketing campaigns such as Sport England's 'This Girl Can,' Absolut's 'Equal Love' and Channel 4's 'Advert Takeover'. These advertising campaigns include people of all races, sexualities and genders, with a view towards promoting greater inclusion and acceptance in society.

But while the use of diversity marketing is flourishing, it is not reflected in these companies' workforces. Despite using a range of people in their advertising, the boardrooms of top companies are as

White, male and straight as ever. At the most senior level of corporate leadership – Chair, CEO and CFO – 96.7% of individuals are white and 92.4% male. 48% of FTSE100 companies still have no non-White board or executive committee members and there are no non-White women who have ever been CEO of a FTSE 100 business.

To make matters worse, many companies display solidarity for marginalised groups on social media or in marketing campaigns, drawing attention away from their internal representation.

Businesses were accused of 'pink washing' during Pride, as they changed their logos to the colours of the Pride flag, then quickly reverted once the month was over. More than one in seven FTSE 100 firms who changed their Twitter logos to support Pride month in July did not mention LGBT+ at all in their annual report. LGBT+ staff are paid 16% less than their heterosexual counterparts, and the rate of reported LGBT hate crime in the UK rose by 144% between 2013-14 and 2017-18.

Companies and institutions are willing to pay lip service to minority groups because they view diversity as a marketing tool. They know that people who see themselves represented in their advertisements will be more likely to buy their products. It is evident that the people profiting from diversity campaigns are not the people that the campaigns represent.

Some businesses, however, do feel pressure to respond to protest over their lack of internal diversity.

Google spent \$114 million on its diversity program in 2014; yet, its diversity report showed that black people made up just 3.3% of its workforce and held just 2.6% of leadership roles.

Continual failure does not cause many institutions to change their tactics. Prof. Lauren B. Edelman, Professor of Law and Sociology, found that courts tend to look for symbolic structures of diversity rather than their efficacy. The diversity apparatus does not have to work – it just has to exist – and it can help protect a company against bias lawsuits, which are difficult to win.

Even if marginalised groups are employed by these businesses, they often function as tokens and are expected to remain silent. Companies do not want to hear their voices and innovative ideas, but their presence is used to prove that the company is 'progressive.' 28% of BAME employees have experienced or witnessed racial harassment from managers in the last five years, supporting the view that inside corporations, little is changing.

For people who rarely, if ever, see themselves reflected in the media, any representation can seem like a positive. Representation can be a tool to empower and inspire confidence in marginalised communities but, until change is implemented within the organisations themselves, diversity will just be another promotional tool lining the pockets of the established elite.

## Victims of a Greener World?

Ted Orme-Caye

Anyone who watched the first episode of The Americas with Simon Reeve on Sunday night would have been stunned by two things. Firstly, the incredible natural beauty of the Alaskan landscape, and secondly, the major impact of climate change on this natural beauty.

Reeve revealed that the North Pole is heating twice as fast as the rest of the world, that temperatures have risen above freezing even in winter, and that over nine trillion tonnes of ice have melted in the past century. Ironically, Alaska is a centre of oil extraction, the use of which is a major contributor towards the climate change which is destroying the state's environment.

US President Donald Trump has recently announced that the Arctic National Wilderness Reserve will be opened to further drilling, which supporters claim will create thousands of jobs and generate millions of dollars of revenue.

Conservationists counter-argue that this will not only further exacerbate climate change but will further damage Alaska's natural beauty and the fragile ecosystems that exist there.

However, a new angle on the climate crisis was introduced when Reeve spoke to the residents of the remote Arctic town of Kaktovik, home to around 300 people. The people of Kaktovik are part of the Inupiat, an indigenous Native American community.

After enjoying a game of bingo, which is a popular pastime in the dry county where alcohol is prohibited due to the community's past troubles with abuse and addiction, Reeve spoke to community leader Matthew Rexford about the impact oil extraction has had on the area. Surprisingly, Rexford spoke positively of the impacts of oil extraction, chiefly the revenue generated by it.

This included development of housing and sewage systems and the modernisation of power and water supply. Prior to the oil revenue, no one in the community had running water – now everyone does. The life expectancy of the Inupiat has increased by ten years as a result. He even showed Reeve a community freezer which had been built with funding from ExxonMobil, one of the largest oil companies operating in Alaska.

As a result of this, many of the indigenous residents are supportive of further oil extraction in the park, in the hope it will generate further revenue for their community. Rexford also made a comment on how indigenous peoples "have a lot of bad experiences of people coming in and telling us what to do."

This reflects the long history of exploitation of native peoples and their land by European settlers – after so many centuries of hardship, is it not right that they should be given a say in the direction of their community and economy?

The new angle on the debate that this introduced, and one that has been largely underdiscussed, is

the impact the shift towards renewable energy will have on people and communities who rely on the extraction of fossil fuels for their livelihoods. Once a shift towards renewable energy takes place as climate activists argue it should, what will happen to the economies of these areas?

In my opinion, the impact that climate change will have in the long-term is undeniable, and although communities such as the Inupiat have benefited greatly from resource extraction, humanity must make changes in its energy consumption in order to ensure our future and that of the planet.

However, while doing this we must ensure that the people who rely on resource extraction for a living are not left behind, and do not fall into economic deprivation as a result.



Image: CBS News



# XR: Go Forth or Back Down?

Paulo discusses the morality behind protesting, in relation to Extinction Rebellion and their recent legal setbacks in London

Paulo Garibaldi

Bob Dylan, when asked what he thought the 1963 March on Washington had achieved, famously replied: absolutely nothing. This was the same march where Martin Luther King gave his iconic 'I have a dream speech'. It is difficult not to share this pessimism as Extinction Rebellion has to launch its second wave of protests after no changes occurred after its, seemingly only symbolic, victory earlier this year.

This brings into question the very essence of protest: does protesting on the streets ever work? Furthermore, with all the disruptions caused and the rising arrest numbers (Extinction Rebellion London Facebook page are now boasting about the arrest count of 1,237 in the first week) the recent protests seem to ask: is breaking the law to achieve a political aim justified?

To begin, can protesting work? In the example of climate change, when the main sources of emission are massive entities that seem to exist in a realm of international business far above the average citizen, it seems hard to have much optimism. After all a climate emergency was called last year, but there seemed to be little urgency in Westminster; they have not taken enough steps to prevent the incoming doom that climate change represents.

There is, of course, moments in history that show protest can be effective: suffragettes helping women win the vote in the UK; protest growing the solidarity of the LGBTQ community leading to the movement we have today; and crucially, despite what Bob Dylan thinks, the civil rights movement, which did lead to some key progress in the struggle for racial equality in the US.

*The idea of a 'government approved protest' seems laughable*

However, for every successful social movement there are many more protests consigned to the dustbin of history. For every anti-Vietnam protest there are protests like those in defense of Julian Assange that failed. Change perhaps needs protest, but it is not true to say protest will necessarily lead to change.

What protest does provide is hope. While Extinction Rebellion may not solve the issue, there is something reassuring in knowing that there are people out there who are willing to fight for it, at the expense of their own liberty. The politics of hope born from groups of people who (privileged as they may be) seem to say: 'When it comes to the future of our planet we can never retreat, and never surrender because without victory there can be no survival.'

Having sat on Waterloo Bridge last year to protest,

what became apparent is that protesters were not so much concerned with outcomes but rather on doing what they deem to be right. They do not claim they will change the world, they do however read a poem at 3am explaining they're not there to fix everything, but rather are there because the ghost of their great great grandchildren would not let them sleep.

So instead of asking 'Does it work?', I pose another question: Does it matter? If climate change is an inescapable reality, XR at least allows us to look our unborn grandchildren in the eyes and say we fought with everything we had. It gives us hope: at least some of us are trying; at least there is something we can do; and even if it does fail, it will fail only when last man, woman and child has been arrested for having the courage to dream. That seems as good a reason as any, to try.



Image: BBC

However, it is still fundamentally breaking the law: should we glamorise groups that encourage illegality? The mantra of 'for the greater good' has been used to justify the unjustifiable. As Albert Camus said: "The welfare of the people in particular has always been the alibi of tyrants."

Is the desperation of XR just an alibi for criminality? As reports that protesters like James Brown glue themselves to a BA plane, it is easy to understand why the disruptions XR causes may merely alienate them from the public. With the blockades stopping key emergency services and the disruptions caused by XR choosing to dig its trenches in the heart of London, one can understand the government's frustration. As Met Commissioner Dame Cressida Dick said XR should 'protest lawfully or go home'.

Yet the idea of a 'government approved protest' seems laughable. A government mandated protest seems like an inherent contradiction, it seems to celebrate an oxymoronic, toothless form of protest. The law is not intrinsically moral merely because it is law: from slavery to genocide, human history has countless examples of state-led brutality that was perfectly compatible with the laws of the day. It is however fair to be wary of breaking the law for its own sake; illegality is not moral just because it's illegal, the same way legality is not moral merely because it is legal.



Image: BBC

The question should not be if protests break the law, but if they have any virtue in their actions. Perhaps taking down air travel is not a productive way to seek change, it creates no positive value; there is no hope in seeing an individual glued to a plane. That is not a sustainable method and creates frustration rather than sympathy.

However, there is something uplifting in seeing people come together and form communities in different cities around the world. It serves as a reminder that these streets, like the planet that XR is fighting for, belongs to the people (which is less the case in planes).

*XR at least allows us to look our unborn grandchildren in the eyes*

While it is frustrating to have to alter your route to work or to school, it seems hard to find a moral betrayal in people who are, at the end of the day, only sitting on the road.

It seems to be unreasonable to label people as 'terrorists' if all they do is sleep on a street. Whilst not every action XR takes is perhaps right, the core of their protest does not seem to try to justify more than peaceful protest, and peace, rather than legality, seems a more adequate measure for what is right.

Protest will always be difficult, and XR is no different. Maybe it will fail, maybe it is but a shout into the oblivion.

However, the biggest achievement of XR is not its legal impact but its political impact. It has not given us a bill of environmental rights, it has given us something more powerful: it has given us hope. Take that, Bob Dylan.



Image: BBC



# Infants Pay for Government Inaction on Wealth Inequality

Mairéad Zielinski and Loulou Braddick

Every year more infants are dying within the first year of their life. This is caused by a failing government that refuses to acknowledge that their policies are doing more harm than good.

According to the Nuffield Trust and RCPCH, infant mortality has risen each year in the UK from 2014 and Britain now has the fourth highest infant mortality among 15 OECD countries.

Infant mortality rates are used – among other indicators – to demonstrate the overall health of

*The gap in life expectancy between the most and least deprived people is only getting bigger*

societies. This rise would be concerning in any country, let alone a high income area like the UK.

A recent article, published by academics at the University of Leeds, shows that this unprecedented increase in infant mortality is linked to rising levels of poverty. This has significant implications regarding the failure of our current government's strategies, and 'austerity' politics, that continue to disproportionately affect the poorest areas of the country.

Researchers at Leeds, Liverpool and Newcastle universities contributed to the study, examining this rise in infant mortality rates across England and Wales.

They found that overall there were 572 more infant deaths than expected when compared to the historical trend. However, it is only families from the most economically deprived groups that make up this excess; affluent families were completely unaffected.

Their study collected data from 324 local authorities and sorted them into five groups based on levels of income deprivation. The gap between the least deprived areas and most deprived was an extra 52 deaths per hundred thousand births.

Essentially, infants are more than twice as likely to die in England and Wales if they are born into a poor family than a wealthier one

This only further demonstrates the growing economic disparity in the UK. A 2019 study showed that the gap in life expectancy between the most and least deprived people is only getting bigger. Women in poor areas saw their life expectancies drop 100 days from 2012 to 2014, and from 2015 to 2017. Meanwhile, richer women saw their own grow by 84 days in the same period. Life expectancy and infant mortality are a litmus test for the overall health of societies, and the UK is failing.

Disturbingly, the United Nations recently reported

that rising poverty in the UK is a political choice. Philip Alston, the UN Special Rapporteur on extreme poverty and human rights, released a damning report on the state of Britain in November 2018.

The report stated: 'Austerity could easily have spared the poor, if the political will had existed to do so. But the political choice was made to fund tax cuts for the wealthy instead.'

Alston concludes that, especially as the country moves toward Brexit, the Government should implement policies designed to ensure that economic burdens are not shifted towards the most vulnerable in society.

It was expected that, after this report was released, UK politicians would have to finally act, and acknowledge their 'systematic immiseration of a significant part of the British population.' However, the government stayed in a steady state of denial, saying that the UK was one of the happiest places in the world, despite overwhelming evidence accusing them of causing the unnecessary suffering of an increasing number of its people.

This research – old and new – explicitly demonstrates that increasing poverty is having a tangible impact on child mortality, making it only more and more necessary that the government starts to take notice and protect their children from poverty, through welfare systems and more proactive policy making.

# Immune from Justice: Harry Dunn Case

Isabel Ralphs

In the latest challenge to the so-called, 'special relationship' between the UK and the US, the wife of a US diplomat has fled the UK after being implicated in the tragic death of 19 year-old Harry Dunn.

Anna Sacoolas was named as a suspect in the fatal collision between Dunn's motorbike and a car in Northamptonshire in August of this year. Originally, the chief constable in charge of the case was assured that Sacoolas had 'engaged fully' and 'had no plans to leave the country in the near future'. However, the story has taken a sour turn after Sacoolas did in fact return to the US, despite her promises not to do so.

*The continued relevance of diplomatic immunity is questionable*

The main point of contention that surrounds the case is the US's refusal to waive Sacoolas's diplomatic immunity. This is the process which allows diplomats and their family members to be immune from prosecution in the country in which they are working. They can be forcibly expelled from the country but cannot be prosecuted, unless their home country opt to waive diplomatic immunity.

PM Boris Johnson and the Northamptonshire

police have urged the Trump administration 'in the strongest terms' to consider waiving immunity, in order for them to proceed with the Dunn case. However, they have so far been refused. As long as the US continues to take this stance, the case will remain unresolved and Harry Dunn's family and friends will not be able to obtain the closure they so desperately need.

As it stands, the outlook for the British side looks decidedly bleak. Hardly famed for his capacity to reason and negotiate, Donald Trump recently expressed his sympathies for Sacoolas – after all, who hasn't found themselves accidentally driving on the wrong side of the road in the country they've lived and worked in for years?

"The woman was driving on the wrong side of the road, and that can happen. You know those are the opposite roads, that happens. I won't say it ever happened to me, but it did." President Trump said in a press conference on Wednesday.

If this compelling argument does not convince you that the US's decision to protect Sacoolas is the right one, then perhaps appealing diplomatic immunity would. Historically, it is something that has very rarely been waived, amidst fears that to do so may carry much larger implications for foreign relations between countries.

Conversely, for a country not to waive immunity can be just as problematic. One famous example of this

occurred in 1984, when a Metropolitan policewoman was fatally shot from the Libyan embassy. Following an 11-day lock-in, everyone in the building was released with their diplomatic immunity in tact. The incident put a massive dent in US-Libyan relations from then onwards.

The case for upholding diplomatic immunity in any situation where criminal proceedings are held up – or, indeed, halted entirely – seems to have little going for it.

Personally, I fail to see any case where the mere fact of being employed as a diplomat should exclude someone from receiving the same treatment as anyone else implicated in a crime.

Last year, the Foreign Office expelled a diplomat accused of two rape offences after diplomatic immunity prevented them from being able to actually convict him.

Tragically, the current Dunn case is looking set to become another addition to the long list of instances where diplomatic immunity has prevented cases from being closed; much to the detriment of everyone involved on the side of the victim.

It is my belief that the continued relevance of diplomatic immunity is questionable – particularly in (largely) clean court systems like ours here in the UK.

Hopefully, the legacy of Harry Dunn might start moving more people towards the same feeling.



# Donald Trump is Under an Impeachment Investigation... So What?

Revelations of Trump's alleged phone call with Volodymyr Zelensky requesting dirt on Joe Biden could spark the beginning of the end for the President

Joe Carter

"I'm really quite tired of the stream of hysterical Guardian articles asking whether this time he will actually be removed" – These were the words of my housemate as we entered another turbulent week in US politics.

To be fair, his rather dismissive and uninterested tone is not without basis. I think on some level almost everyone is exasperated with the constant barrage of firestorms emanating from Washington D.C. Wave after wave, news cycle after news cycle, tweet after tweet, the Trump Presidency has obliterated everything in its path that had once resembled an institutional norm, and has cut deep through the existing divisions in American society like a knife through butter.

Saturated with scandal and exhausted by anger, anyone on either side of the Atlantic could be forgiven for feeling just a little indifferent to the latest White House drama. Therefore, I embark on the task of writing this knowing full well that it may fall onto justifiably apathetic ears.

*Almost everyone is exasperated with the constant barrage of firestorms emanating from Washington DC*

Nonetheless, I will endeavour to explain, as painlessly possible, why this current outrage is different and why it is the one to pay attention to.

To explain the current crisis, one must hark back to a previous American headache, the delivery and testimony of the Mueller report. This was the almost two-year inquiry, which investigated Russian interference in to the 2016 US election: contacts between the Trump campaign and the Russian government and President Trump's efforts to obstruct justice by impeding said investigation.

While the report concluded definitively that, a foreign adversarial government successfully interfered in the election but that Trump himself did not collude with the Russians, it provided little clarity on the obstruction question. Thus, the report fell beneath the cracks of America's ever deepening partisan chasm and President Trump declared himself vindicated.

Fast forward to July 25th, two days after Robert Mueller's Congressional testimony – Trump makes a call to the newly elected President of Ukraine, Volodymyr Zelensky. On the call, Trump asks whether Zelensky could do him a favour by investigating Ukraine's role in the 2016 election, as well as the family of Democratic Presidential hopeful for the 2020 election, Joe Biden.

We know these facts to be true from the White House's own collated notes of the conversation, as well as from a complaint from an anonymous intelligence community whistleblower, who brought the call to Congressional and public attention. It is this call which forms ground zero

of the current impeachment enquiry, launched by House Democrats.

For the President's detractors, Trump's actions are seen as problematic since US law explicitly bans the soliciting of help from foreign governments for electoral purposes. Moreover, they point to the administrations withholding of £316 million in military aid to Ukraine as further evidence of a 'quid pro quo', whereby the aid (and a potential state visit) became conditional on Zelensky cooperating with a corruption investigation, intending to 'dig up dirt' on Biden.

So why is this crisis anymore significant from the ones which have characterised the Trump presidency from day one? Firstly, Democrats in the House of Representatives have opened an impeachment enquiry into the President. Whereas the Mueller Report only served to divide the opposition on the impeachment question, the Trump-Ukraine affair has united the Democratic leadership and base behind a common goal. However, by no means will this result in Trump being removed from office.

Secondly, the Mueller investigation was incompatible with the modern characteristics of America's media landscape. It dripped and drabbed indictments for two long years, made complex twists and turns, left many ends of string untied and did not produce the blockbuster Hollywood finale needed to inspire the imaginations of the 24-hour cable news bingers. In a nutshell, it was the final episode of Game of Thrones. To an extent, this muffled its ability to move the needle of public opinion on issues such as impeachment.

The call at the centre of the Ukrainian affair on the other hand, acts as a short and concise document which is easy to access and understand. Unlike the Mueller report, which was full of legalistic language and heavily redacted content, the phone call can be effectively communicated by the media and its content weaponised by both sides.

Finally, even if this phone call is not considered a smoking gun, there may be more in existence that could constitute the final straw which finally breaks the camel's back. As well as correctly explaining the contents of the Zelensky phone call, the whistleblower also claimed there were multiple other phone calls that Trump made to international leaders that equally alarmed White House staff.

As has now been reported by multiple news organisations, White House lawyers logged these calls in a top-secret database which is usually used to protect highly classified government secrets including further sensitive phone conversations with China, Saudi Arabia and potentially Russia, now all stored in this computer.

The White House is likely to fight tooth and nail to prevent these transcripts from ever seeing the light of day, regardless of whether they contain any incriminating information. However, just as the presence of secret White House tapes triggered the beginning of the end for Nixon, the presence of this top secret computer and the questions surrounding its use could at last, spell the beginning of the end for Trump.



Image: The New Yorker





# The Future of African Trade

As the African Union proposes an African free trade area, Emmanuel Young examines the opportunities and potential pitfalls presented by the scheme.

Emmanuel Young

October 1st marked the start of Black History Month – a month in which we recognise the contributions that people of African and Caribbean descent have made to our country. However, whilst it is important to reflect and learn from the history of the Afro-Caribbean community in the UK and around the world, it is arguably even more important to look to its future.

This is precisely what the African Union (A.U.) has done with the proposition of a pan-African free trade area (FTA) that aims to liberalise trade and the movement of people on the African continent to the benefit of all 55 African nations. But before we look into those benefits, let's take a look at the detail of proposed FTA.

The African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) is an FTA proposed by the African Union that will: reduce 90% of all tariffs on the Continent, remove all barriers to the free movement of African people between African nations, harmonize regional and international trade policy and, create several pan-African institutions (including a secretariat, an assembly of African leaders, a council of ministers, a dispute settlement body, and various committees) to ensure the implementation of the rules of the area.

If successful, AfCFTA will be the first of its kind on the Continent and the largest of its kind in the world; representing 1.2 billion people and 55 economies with a total gross domestic product (GDP) of \$2.5 trillion.

Moreover, the A.U. predicts several benefits that may arise out of its implementation. Firstly, it is predicted

that intercontinental trade will increase by 43%. Currently, only 17% of the goods traded by African nations go to other African countries compared with over 50% of Asian goods with other Asian countries and 70% of European goods with other European countries within the European Union.

Secondly, the cost of transporting goods between African countries will be dramatically reduced. It currently costs six times more to transport goods between neighbouring countries Chad and Cameroon than in costs to transport goods between Chad and Hong Kong!

Finally, there is hope that the liberalisation of borders on the Continent will attract foreign direct investment from more developed countries, and potentially even turn some African countries into trade hubs for the region.

All of this, the AU estimates, will result in a 1% – 3% growth in GDP on average for each economy as a direct result of AfCFTA.

However, as Amaka Anku (Africa head for Eurasia Group) points out, there are always winners and losers with these types of arrangement. China, a big player in Africa at the moment, could find it easier to flood African nations with cheap Chinese goods masquerading as African goods which could decimate African industry.

Furthermore, there is no doubt that Africa's elite (a large section of which are corrupt to the core) will find a way to exploit AfCFTA to their benefit.

Additionally, many have argued that Africa isn't yet ready to support such an ambitious trading

arrangement as it lacks the basic infrastructure, such as roads, rail networks and internet, that is needed to facilitate free trade. Taking this into account, predicted increases in intercontinental trade may not materialise as expected.

Moreover, African governments do not have the resources to deal with any mass economic migration that may take place as people become free to move to wealthier African nations.

Although the AfCFTA is ambitious in its aims, these are the problems for which solutions must be found in order for African nations to fully realise its benefits.

If found however, this could be the first step in rectifying the legacy of colonisation which left African nations trading more with their former colonisers than with their own neighbours.

What a way to start off Black History Month 2019, ey?



Image: MoneyWeek.com

# KPMG Take Back Work Phones

Georgina Corre

KPMG is the fourth largest accountancy firm in the world, turning over \$29 billion in 2018. In the past week they have announced plans to have over one hundred employees hand in their work mobile phones in an effort to improve profitability and get closer to meeting long term growth targets.

This cost-cutting decision has come about in an effort to reduce KPMG's costs, which, in comparison to the other big four accountancy firms, are particularly high. The firm are therefore hoping that such a strategy will help improve their market position, in what is, a highly competitive market.

Additionally, recent events have damaged the company's reputation, as they were fined £5 million and severely reprimanded in May following the collapse of construction group Carillion and for their audit failings at Co-op Bank.

KPMG also plans to cut around 200 administrative support staff. These plans go back to last year as KPMG were reportedly threatening UK staff with £100 fines if they are late to file their time sheets, which record how long they spend on tasks.

Such a policy turned out to be unsuccessful for KPMG, whose employees were only willing to go so far in the name of cutting company costs. As such,

the policy was dropped and swapped for a different policy that charged staff for lost IT equipment such as computer privacy screens.

These are all efforts from KPMG to cut costs in order to improve profitability.

The company has informed staff and explained the changes: the following memo was sent to them; "To realise our growth ambition, we need to improve our profitability by building a leaner, more responsive cost base".

This will help free up funds to invest in the future of the firm – to recruit and retain the best talent and invest in big, integrated solutions'

KPMG have made particular efforts to give staff notice of this mobile phone policy, so employees who don't own a personal phone to have the time to



Image: Reuters

purchase one.

The policy is set to exclusively affect those employees that work only in office hours and those that don't travel.

A spokesperson from KPMG has said that investments have been made over the past year to support staff in enabling them to work from home to the office with ease through the introduction of new technologies.

However, this has raised several concerns for stakeholders over data protection and its role in this new technology.

KPMG hope that his cost cutting initiative can lead to the investment of funds into other aspects of the running of the company and the future growth of the firm. This could include investment in the recruitment and retention of staff which would impact future innovation and decisions.

KPMG are not the only ones adopting aggressive cost-cutting policies. One of the other Big Four consultancies PWC have also made strategic decisions surrounding technology, such as getting rid of landlines.

The use of new and improved technology seems to be a trend in the industry as companies, especially the Big Four are making efforts to stay current in order to provide the most efficient service to clients.



# Labour Pledge Four-Day Week by 2030

After the conclusion of the annual party conferences, The Gryphon analyses the key policies from Labour and the Conservatives. Callum Ellis discusses whether John McDonnell's dream of a four-day working week could one day become a reality.

Callum Ellis

Those who are still attempting to understand the current political climate, and haven't given up and turned to the line up for 2019's Ex on the Beach, will know that we have recently seen the conclusion of the annual party conferences.

Common to these party conferences are bold slogans and empty rhetoric of how 'things have never been better', or 'have never been worse.' But what has particularly caught the attention of the public is Shadow Chancellor John McDonnell's promise of reducing the working week to 32 hours, within 10 years.

It is worth mentioning that this does not follow



suit of a French-style cap on hours. Rather, working hours will be negotiated between employers and trade unions.

Arguably, Labour have recognised the nation's woe towards the current work-to-life ratio; captured in John McDonnell's speech where he states, "we should work to live, not live to work."

Reports are increasingly demonstrating the correlation between work and depression, as shown in The Independent, where it was found that people with high stress jobs have twice the risk of developing serious depression.

Through a logical chain of thought, it can be established that the prevalence of depression, as a consequence from stressful working conditions, can lead to economic repercussions. Namely, a more discontented workforce is a less productive workforce.

It is possible that people reading this will have grown to resent the word 'Brexit' because of its domination over the media.

However, I do remain unapologetic for mentioning Brexit as that is sadly a relevant factor in this discussion. Brexit presents a series of issues, a significant one being job security.

With the UK's position in the world's largest trading bloc being uncertain, it is now essential that the UK can conduct business with the rest of the world.

Commercial links are established based on trust:

trust that the UK can operate efficiently, trust that the UK can provide advanced infrastructure and a strong economy. Foundational to this is an available labour market. Without a workforce there is: no efficiency, no means of providing strong infrastructure and thus no strong economy.

This article isn't advocating for the reintroduction of Victorian-style working conditions. But what has to be considered is that we take a realistic position to this policy.

It isn't guaranteed that the UK will withdraw from the European Union anytime soon, so to expect employers to be susceptible to the idea of reducing working hours at an unstable time is, in the eyes of many, implausible.

According to the BBC, if the workforce remained the same, these cuts in hours would see 100 million hours of work lost a week which would detrimentally impact the economy.

Whilst there is consensus that the wellbeing of the UK workforce should be promoted, many believe that reducing working hours is not how this should be achieved and is not economically viable. Instead, critics advocate that measures should be implemented to see working conditions improve in order to see better productivity, without compromising the incentive to conduct business here in the UK.

# Conservatives Pledge National Minimum Wage Increase

Emmanuel Young

As the Conservative Party conference got underway, the indications were clear that the Tories, following the direction of Prime Minister Boris Johnson, are positioning themselves to fight a general election.

With the declaration of an end to austerity, the normal pre-election promises were made: more money for the NHS, an increase in police numbers and a levelling up of school funding, to pick just a few.

The most striking pledge however, was that made on Monday by the Chancellor of the Exchequer Sajid Javid, who promised to drastically increase the national living wage and make changes to the age threshold at which it can be earned.

Before we evaluate the merits of these new policies, let's first have a look at the detail.

By 2024, Mr Javid has committed to: Increasing the national living wage from £8.21/hour to £10.50/hour; Lowering the age at which a worker can start earning the national living wage from 25 to 23 by 2021 and Lowering the age at which a worker can start earning the national living wage from 23 to 21 by 2024.

These proposals would transform the British workforce into one of the most highly compensated in the world.

The Living Wage Foundation has welcomed this proposal as it brings the official wage rate into line with their estimations of a 'real' living wage, currently set at £10.55/hour in London and £9.00/hour outside of London.

Furthermore, the treasury itself estimates that around 4m people will benefit positively from the proposals, each gaining on average an extra £4,000 per year.

However, the treasury is yet to say how much this will cost government and businesses, nor could the Chancellor answer this question on Monday following his speech.

The director general of the British Chambers of Commerce added that "companies already face significant cumulative employment costs...so government must take action to alleviate the heavy cost-burden facing firms, or risk denting productivity and competitiveness", signalling that businesses have real concerns about how much these new proposals will cost them.

Moreover, if these costs are passed onto the

consumer, the lowest paid will still be affected by higher prices.

With the Labour Party planning a similar increase to £10/hour and lowering the age threshold to 18, these concerns need to be addressed in order for proposals to benefit those intended.

Nevertheless, it would seem that the Tories are genuinely prepared to support their declaration that the period of austerity following the financial crisis has now come to an end.







# Carbon-Free Concrete? Count Me In!

Alec Sims

While often neglected in favour of sexier sources of greenhouse gases, the massive worldwide demand for concrete means that, as of 2016, the chemical and thermal processes in cement production contributed about 8% of global carbon dioxide emissions. If it was a country, cement would be responsible for the 3rd largest CO<sub>2</sub> output, just trailing behind the US and China.

Patented by Leeds native Joseph Aspdin (a local legend!) in the 19th century, cement presents a trying challenge for the built sector – fundamentally, cement is needed for concrete, and we need concrete, so how do we de-carbonise our cement?

First, it's worth addressing the two sources of CO<sub>2</sub> in the cement production process. To make cement, the raw material components are ground to a fine powder before being heated to massive temperatures (about 1500°C!) in a kiln.

This sinters the powder together and forms 'clinker', which is then processed after cooling to make cement. Both the burning of fossil fuels to raise kiln temperature and the chemical reactions that

occur in the sintering process release carbon dioxide.

MIT recently published research into an electrochemical method of cement production that would allow the CO<sub>2</sub> released in the equivalent 'sintering' stage to be repurposed, e.g. fizzing up a drink.

With a renewable heat source (biomass burners perhaps?) this process could in theory produce emissions-free cement. This is perhaps wishful thinking, while we flirted with a shortage in the UK last year, it's hard to imagine worldwide demand for drink fizz (or any other form of focused CO<sub>2</sub>) getting up to 2.2 billion tonnes a year.

Some of the University of Leeds' own academics are contributing to research into alternatives. Researchers within the Civil Engineering school are some of the leading worldwide authorities on alkali-activated cements. These utilize a fundamentally different chemical composition and reaction that reduces the carbon footprint versus conventional cement (aka Portland cement) by up to 80%.

The construction industry can be slow to move however, and the soundness of mind offered by a cement recipe with 200 years of proven success means

that some are reluctant to make the leap.

Others don't suggest de-carbonising cement, but removing it from the concrete equation entirely.

Carbicrete are a start-up who pride themselves on a 'carbon-negative' concrete – injecting CO<sub>2</sub> into their mix and using steel-slag from industrial waste processes instead of cement as a binder. Another startup, bioMASON, utilize microorganisms to effectively grow biocement based materials. It's reasonable to ask what the feasibility of such solutions is on a massive scale: how much spare steel slag is there really floating around? How long does it take to 'grow' a building? These reasonable questions likely point towards the fact that, as with so many aspects of the climate crisis, we'll need to apply different solutions to different scenarios.

Though annual cement demand has levelled off in recent years, the continued urbanization and development of Southeast Asia and sub-Saharan Africa means the world's floor area is projected to double in the next 40 years. We've got some ideas, but we've yet to come to a solid conclusion on how it's all going to stick together – cement might not be the answer.



gettyimages.co.uk

Michelle Heinrich  
Science Editor

## Facial Recognition Failure

recognition of dark-skinned faces is not dependent on physical features, such as the reflection of light on the skin, but rather on expanding the facial image databases.

However, this was not the first time that it became clear that facial recognition software still faced major difficulties. In 2015, Google came under scrutiny after its recognition software on Google Photos identified a Black man's face as a 'gorilla'.

Unfortunately, all that Google did to fix the problem was removing the labels referring to 'gorilla' from their database; they have done little to address the actual underlying issue.

But how does facial recognition actually work, and what is its purpose? Facial recognition software is used by Facebook to recognise faces of people you might want to tag; to enable phones to unlock the screen by only using your face, but most importantly, it has been used by law enforcement to scan faces to identify possible criminals or terrorists.

In order to achieve these results, the software takes facial features in a given image, such as shapes, and compares it to faces in a database. The more features which can be matched with a face on the database, the more accurate the result will be.

So why does facial recognition have such a low accuracy-rate for dark-skinned faces? First of all, facial recognition software can only compare the target image to an existing database containing images of faces gathered during the development of the software. Thus, if the majority of faces on

the database are from white males and females, the software cannot accurately match facial features from dark-skinned faces to existing data. This is indeed what has happened with virtually all facial recognition software thus far. It is likely that the majority of staff members who were working on the software during its developmental stage, were white males.

In order to make facial recognition software less racially biased, Google decided to gather facial images through a greater mix of people with various skin tones, which could later be used for the face unlock feature on their new Pixel 4 smartphone.

In theory this sounds great, however, the contractors that carried out the data collection were allegedly rushing people, including black homeless people, into signing the consent form. Most of them, especially the homeless, didn't even know what was happening. By offering incentives such as 5\$ gift cards or letting people play with the phone, which unbeknownst to them recorded their faces, the contractors were able to collect facial images. Google has now ended their data collection as people were calling for an investigation into the matter.

On the whole, AI-supported facial recognition software is a useful addition to our daily life, but we need to keep in mind that it's still a work in progress.

It is good to see some progress being made in addressing the racial biases of facial recognition software, but without good practice surrounding the gathering of new images, the future of facial recognition is set to remain controversial.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) has come a long way, with one of its most notable advances being that of facial recognition software.

Despite many years of development, the software used by big companies such as Facebook and Microsoft often still fails to accurately identify the faces of women and those with darker skin tones. The question is, what is it about dark-skinned faces that AI has trouble with?

As part of her research at MIT, computer scientist Joy Buolamwini, who herself is an African-American woman, discovered that recognition software primarily works well on faces of white males. Moreover, she found that the software mainly struggled to identify facial features of women, especially those with dark skin tones.

In order to conduct her research, Buolamwini looked at several facial recognition software systems developed by Face++, Microsoft and IBM. She even shared her findings with IBM who, so it seems, have made improvements to their software as a response.

According to her, this is evidence that facial



# Black History Under A Microscope

To celebrate Black History Month, we take a look at some inspirational figures who have excelled in their field and produced leading research around the world which we still rely on today!



## Dr Percy Julian

If you've ever needed medication, chances are that Dr Percy Julian made it possible. Just two generations away from slavery, Julian is regarded as one of the most influential chemists in history – he challenged systematic racism at every step of his career in order to synthesise accessible medicines.

Working and taking evening classes concurrent with his undergraduate studies, Julian graduated university not only as Valedictorian, but also achieved Phi Beta Kappa Honours.

Despite multiple set-backs in obtaining his doctorate due to racial prejudices, he contributed an immense amount to medicinal chemistry in his post-doctorate research. He discovered how to synthesise drugs such as physostigmine, progesterone, cortisone, and hydrocortisone on an industrial scale during his career, which were used in the treatment of conditions such as glaucoma and rheumatic arthritis.

His synthesis of hydrocortisone is still used, and his synthetic methods drastically reduced the cost of these medicines, making them more accessible to the public.

Despite intense institutional racism, he was elected to the National Academy of Sciences, the National Inventors Hall of Fame, and his physostigmine synthesis was dubbed "one of the top 25 achievements in the history of American chemistry" by the American Chemical Society.

He also received 12 honorary degrees, held more than 130 chemical patents, and was awarded the Spingarn Medal by the National Association for the Advancement of Coloured People.

Regardless of all of the obstacles in his way, Julian became one of the most successful chemists in history, and his contribution to science saved thousands of lives, and improved many thousands more.



## Dr Alexa Canady

Imagine being the first African American and the first woman to become a neurosurgeon in the United States. Incredible, right?

Now imagine on top of that, you also become one of the most successful surgeons in the country. This is exactly what Dr Alexa Canady did, and to this day, does. Her expertise and contributions have been numerous; she has contributed to areas such as tumours of the spinal cord and brain, craniofacial abnormalities, epilepsy, and head injuries, to name only a few.

Her patient-driven approach has made her extremely successful. Despite facing an intersection of racism and sexism, she was elected to the Alpha Omega Alpha Honor Medical Society, is an honoured Alumni of the University of Michigan, was the Children's Hospital of Michigan's Teacher of the Year in 1983, received the American Medical Women's Association President Award and Distinguished Service Award from Wayne State University Medical School, and was inducted into the Michigan Women's Hall of Fame in 1989 – joining high-profile African Americans such as Rosa Parks.

Canady is continuously active in promoting racial equity and equality. Particularly, she is an advocate for more research into medical issues in black communities, citing that the lack of research on African American patients results in a lack of adequate treatment for their specific health concerns and needs.

Her relentlessness in dismantling racist practices in medicine, alongside her compassion in her work, have made her one of the most well renowned surgeons in the United States.



## Professor Margaret Collins

Perhaps a less glamorous profession, but no less important, was the rigorous research on termites undertaken by Professor Margaret Collins; a prominent entomologist and zoologist.

She was the first African American woman to be an entomologist and the third to be a zoologist in the United States, making significant contributions to both fields.

Collins was a child prodigy – she skipped two grades and graduated high school when she was only 14. She was also the first African American woman to receive a PhD in entomology at a major university, and was amongst one of the first African American women in the US to receive an advanced zoology degree.

She held tenure at three universities, was the President of the Entomological Society of Washington, authored or co-authored over 40 research publications, was a senior research associate at the Smithsonian, identified a new species of termite with her peer, David Nickle, and had the Collins Collection in the National Museum of Natural History named after her.

Collins was brave and passionate when it came to challenging racial prejudice; she volunteered to drive less fortunate African Americans to work during a bus boycott, alongside publishing 'Science and the Question of Human Equality'.

Given her contributions to a more niche profession she is often not well known, but Collins was a leading figure in zoology and entomology, and provided much needed representation of African American women in science.





# Black Ballerina Defies All Stereotypes

Millie Frain  
Sports Editor

In an industry filled with the stigma that you have to be a size 6, white skinned, blonde female to become a principle ballerina, Sierra Leonean born dancer, Michaela DePrince is defying all odds.

The Black ballet dancer was awarded a scholarship to study at the American Ballet Theatre's Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis School of Ballet in 2012, following her performance at the Youth America Grand Prix.

Her career then escalated, and DePrince was one of the stars of the 2011 documentary film 'First Position', which follows six young dancers vying for a place in an elite ballet company.

Not only this, but in 2011 the talented dancer made her European debut, before joining the Dance Theatre of Harlem, where she was the youngest member of the company. However, despite her ongoing success, Michaela DePrince faces continuous discrimination, all due to the colour of her skin.

Born into a Muslim family, DePrince grew up in an orphanage in Sierra Leone during the civil war. Here, DePrince lost both her father and mother, at the age of three years old, and was often alluded to as the 'devils child', due to her skin condition vitiligo, which causes depigmentation.

The young starlet fled to a refugee camp after her orphanage was bombed, leading to her official adoption taking place in New Jersey, by Elaine and



Charles DePrince.

It is important to consider how DePrince was not formally introduced to ballet, but was inspired by a magazine cover of a ballerina she found and kept while in Sierra Leone.

Whilst earning her high school Diploma, Michaela DePrince began the pursue of her childhood dream by embarking on ballet training. However, at the age of eight, despite having the rawest talent in her class, she was told she could not perform in the classical ballet 'The Nutcracker', because 'America was not ready for a black girl ballerina'. Following this, a teacher told her mother that black dancers were not worth investing any money in.

However, her talent proved that this claim had no substance. In 2012, DePrince landed the Principal role: 'The Sugar Plum Fairy' in the 'Nutcracker', the same

production that rejected her on the basis of her skin colour a few years prior. She then joined the 'Dutch National Ballet', where she was the only dancer of African origin.

Yet again, due to her immense talent, she became a soloist of this company, leading to people recognising her on an international scale.

Perhaps what makes Michaela's story so inspiring is her background. In 2016 she announced she would become an ambassador of War Child, a charity committed to giving war children a future.

This signifies the growth of a Black child born into an orphanage, who faced constant racial discrimination, but who persevered and became one of the most talented, inspiring ballerinas of the century.

## Clive Sullivan: A British Sporting Pioneer

Jonathan Burnett  
Rugby League

Rugby League has long been a sport associated with pioneering. The formation of the game itself was a leap of faith, with 22 clubs in the North of England rejecting the stranglehold of the RFU to stand up for their working-class players and form the professional Rugby Football League. In Australia and New Zealand, the formation of their professional Rugby Leagues followed a similar pattern. Clearly, Rugby League has always been a sport built upon working-class roots and standing up for the lower echelons of society.

This trait also applies to people of colour. In Australia, Rugby League legend Arthur Beetson became the first Aboriginal captain of Australia in any sport, at a time when Indigenous Australians were still classified legally as 'flora & fauna'. The UK's black sporting pioneer? Clive Sullivan.

Born in Cardiff in 1943, operations to his knees, feet and shoulder had effectively ended his chances of becoming a professional Rugby player. With this, Sullivan decided his future belonged in the Armed Forces, and was stationed at Catterick Garrison in North Yorkshire upon enlisting. Soon selected in an inter-corps Rugby League match on the account of being Welsh, Sullivan 'accidentally' lit up the game, scoring a long-range try, despite initially wanting to play badly due to his injuries.

Hull FC soon signed him in 1961 after an unsuccessful trial with Bradford, and Sullivan shone immediately,

showing frightening speed and deceptive strength to score 250 tries in 352 games. In 1974, Sullivan joined cross-city rivals Hull KR, scoring a further 118 tries in 213 games. The winger remains the only player to score over 100 tries at both Hull clubs.

Despite being loved by fans on either side of the Humber Bridge, a feat rare even today, Sullivan's real career highlights came on the international stage. Having made his debut for Great Britain in 1967, Sullivan was awarded the captaincy five years later, leading the Great Britain side to World Cup victory in 1972. As well as being the first black sportsman to captain a British national team, Sullivan scored a 60-metre try in the final against old enemies Australia, cementing his place as a British sporting icon.

Black History Month reminds us of the great contribution black sportspeople have made to British sports in recent centuries, and Sullivan should be no different. Sadly, International Rugby League has long struggled for significant exposure, particularly against its slightly elder brother, Rugby Union.

This, coupled with Great British Rugby League's recent lack of success on the international stage (1972 was their last World Cup win) has seen the achievements of Sullivan somewhat forgotten when discussing black British sporting pioneers.

However, the significance of Sullivan's leadership of the Lions to victory in 1972, at a time when more celebrated Black sporting pioneers such as Cyrille Regis fought against racism from fans of all clubs

including his own, shows that numerous sports have provided Black British athletes with opportunities to transcend the games they play, and legends such as Sullivan have grabbed these opportunities with both hands.

If you even happen to be driving into Hull from the West, past the Humber Bridge, you'll probably take the A63, known to all the locals as Clive Sullivan Way. Named after a Welsh Army recruit who managed to unite a divided city, as well as lead a country to World Cup glory, it is so named to show young Black British athletes that anything is possible, and a sport as great as Rugby can act as a platform for them to become immortal.





# The Gryphon's Guide to Fifteen Black

Racial and ethnic barriers have always existed in the world of sport, but this hasn't stopped iconic Black

Millie Warrilow  
Sports Editor

From refusing to let Black athletes compete to segregating the playing field so that Black athletes weren't allowed to perform at the same time as White athletes; it is clear to say we have come a very long way. Although you may not be able to imagine a life of sport without the likes of Usain Bolt or Raheem Sterling, there are many African-American athletes which once ignored these barriers in order to not only pave the way for their fellow Black athletes in forthcoming centuries but to make the world a more equal platform. Over time, we have had the opportunity to witness many exceptional Black sporting figures that have made history and have changed the world of sport for good. We should be privileged that we were able to witness this.

This year's Black History Month we take the time to look at and appreciate those that have completely changed the game and continue to do so. It's been difficult, but here are your 15 Black Athletes Who Changed the World.

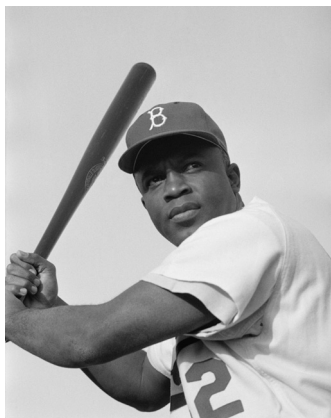
## 1. Jack Johnson

Also known as "the Galveston Giant", Jack Johnson was the very first Black heavyweight boxing champion of the worlds after knocking out reigning champ Tommy Burns in 1908. Johnson faced many issues regarding his race over years. Before smashing White boxer James Jefferies into his first career loss in 1910, Jefferies hit out in the media, saying that he was "going into this fight for the sole purpose of proving that a White man is better than a Negro". But Johnson played to his strengths and rocked the system with his almost flamboyant image and dating of White women. In 1912, Johnson was convicted after bringing a White woman across state lines before marriage. But despite all the accusations against him, Johnson was an extraordinary athlete who really put boxing on the map.



## 2. Jackie Robinson

Jackie Roosevelt Robinson became the first African American to play baseball in the modern era. Johnson's achievements are so extraordinary because he broke the race barrier at a time when it was at its most severe, in what was America's favourite sport. Not only was Robinson the first African American but he was also the first athlete of any colour to win varsity letters in four sports (baseball, basketball, football and track). Robinson is treasured in the National Baseball Hall of Fame for his Civil Rights activism, and in 1949 Robinson led his team to win the NL MVP where history was made. Despite all the setbacks and death threats that Robinson received, he let his play on the field speak more powerfully than he ever could.



## 3. Althea Gibson

Before the likes of Serena Williams, Althea Gibson was the queen of the court. She was the first ever Black player from any nation to compete professionally in Tennis and the first African American to ever win a Wimbledon title. She dominated every competition that faced her in the late 1950's and won the French Open in 1956. In total, Gibson won 56 national and international titles in both singles and doubles. Due to there being such little funding in Tennis at the time, Gibson took up professional Golf and will inevitably go down as a true champion for making history in two sports that were predominantly White.



## 4. Bill Russell

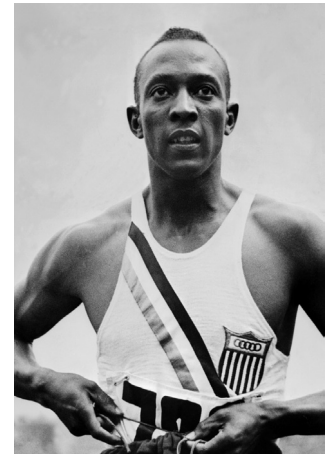
Bill Russell is a former professional Basketball player who as the centre piece for the Boston Celtics, bringing home 11 championships during his 13 year career (1956-1969). Crazy right? But it gets better! Boston was seen as an extremely racist city and despite the sheer talent that Russel had he was challenged by its citizens - who threw both rocks and tomatoes at his bus to school. Despite all setbacks, Russel went on to be the first Black coach in NBA history, and he led his former team (the Celtics) to 2 championships. Proving that, not only was Russell a successful player, but a brilliant coach too.

## 5 . Wilma Rudolph

In terms of Track and Field for women, no one made more of an impact for Black females then Wilma Rudolph. From growing up in poverty with 21 brothers and sisters, as well as suffering from polio at a young age, her determination and sheer talent was not impacted in the slightest. Due to her illness, Rudolph had to wear a brace on her left leg and foot but after many years of correction, Rudolph went on to achieve not one, not two but three gold medals during the 1960 Olympics. This great success inspired



many other young females too take part in track and field. An international star.

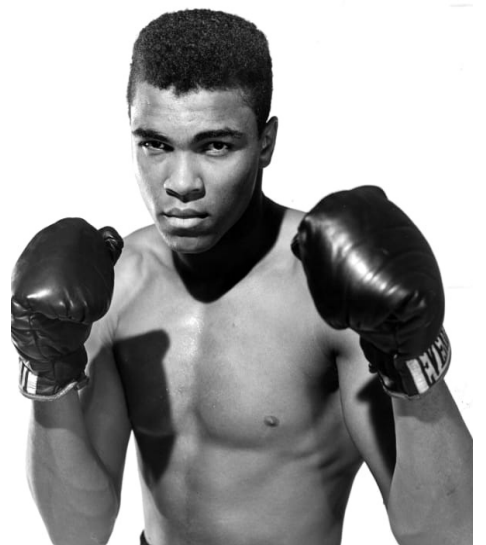


## 6. Jesse Owens

Now, there were lots of people that would have loved to have told Hitler where the door was, and Jesse Owens really did just that. Track and Field athlete Owens is most well remembered for the 1936 Berlin Olympics, where Adolf Hitler planned to use the Games as a platform to support his Third Reich and attempt to highlight the dominance of the Aryan race. But Owens performance didn't half stick a nail in the works after he became the most successful individual at the games winning a total of 4 gold medals. Not only did Owens receive the cold shoulder from Hitler after he refused to shake his hand, but he also battled racism at home as his own president did not recognise him by even sending a telegram for his success. Nonetheless, Owens made history not only for America but for the sporting world.

## 7. Muhammad Ali

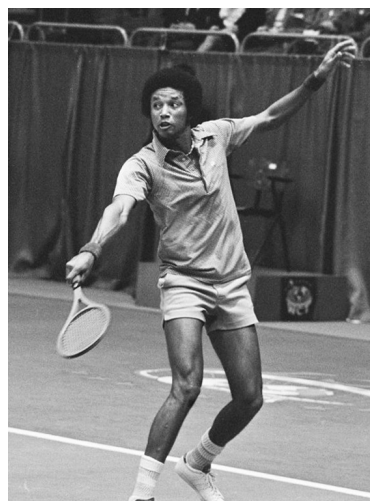
Perhaps the most well-known boxing star and greatest athletes of all time. Ali was an African American professional boxer who became an Olympic gold medallist in 1960 alongside winning heavyweight championship titles three times. Not only is Ali the G.O.A.T of boxing but he is also admired for standing up for what he believed in. After refusing to enlist the Vietnam war, Ali was arrested and convicted losing his boxing licence. But this did not shy him away from voicing his own opinion. Ali convinced Iran to free American hikers that were being held in prison and after being out of the ring for almost 70 months, on his return he knocked out his opponent Jerry Quarry in the third round. Despite all odds and every setback Ali faced, he remained focused and unfazed proving that anything was possible. #GOAT





# Athletes Who Changed the World

athletes from making their mark. Sports editor Millie Warrilow, profiles 15 Black athletes who changed the world.

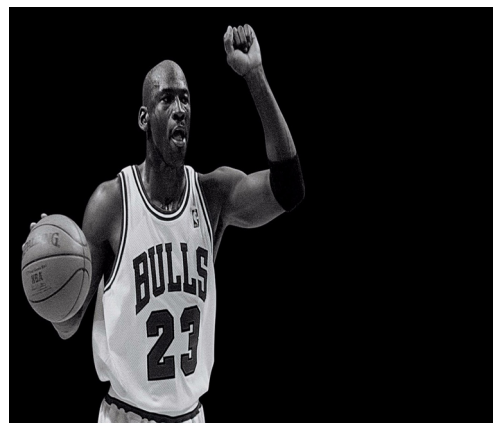


## 8. Arthur Ashe

Arthur Ashe is still a history breaking tennis champion. Ashe became the first and only player to ever win the U.S. Amateur and U.S. Open championship within the same year. He did not just stop there though as his ability seemed to only improve. Ashe won three Grand Slam titles and was the only Black man ever to win the singles title at Wimbledon, the US Open and the Australian Open. Illness forced Ashe to retire from tennis and in 1992 Ashe went public on his diagnosis of AIDS. Before his death in 1993 (Aged 49), Ashe worked hard to educate others about HIV and AIDS. Ashe received the Presidential Medal of Freedom and his legacy will live on forever.

## 9. Vivian (Viv) Anderson

Viv Anderson MBE was the first Black man to ever win a senior England cap. After his debut match in 1978 against Czechoslovakia Anderson then went on to win 30 caps for the England side. Anderson played for Nottingham Forest, Arsenal, Manchester United, Sheffield Wednesday and Barnsley before beginning a career in coaching at Barnsley and later as Assistant Manager at Middlesbrough. Anderson: "At the time, I wasn't really aware of the significance of being the first Black England international. We were all young footballers trying to get on and make a living."



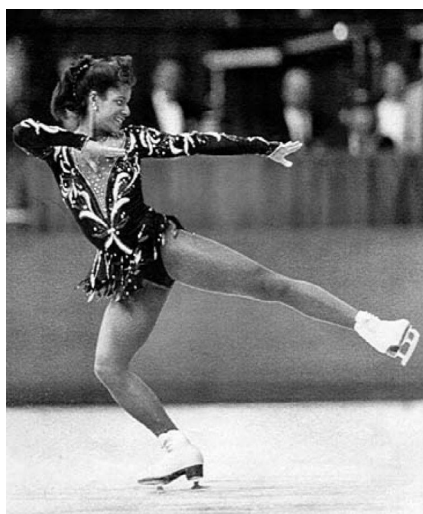
## 10. Michael Jordan

The NBA would not be as well-known as it is now if it wasn't for the likes of Michael Jordan. Not only is Jordan considered as the best basketball player of all time, but he also helped Nike to convert athletic trainers in to a must have fashion want all over the world. Jordan paved his way to the top by winning five NBA MVP awards, six NBA titles and six NBA Finals MVP awards. After retiring

from Basketball, Jordan then perused a career in professional baseball which was a remarkable achievement for anybody in any professional sport highlighting his excellence athleticism. For America, Jordan brought with him tons of advertising with campaigns showing children shouting "I wanna be like Mike!". And children of all colours, from all backgrounds really did.

## 11. Debi Thomas

Thomas is renowned as the only African-American to ever win a medal, not only in figure skating but in any event during the Winter Olympic games. The ice queen famously challenged the International Skating Union after she wore a Black unitard in the 1988 Olympics which has been banned. Thomas faced discrimination from both the media and even judges. However, this didn't faze her as she became the first Black woman to win a U.S Figure Skating Championship title followed by winning Bronze in the Winter Olympics just 2 years later.

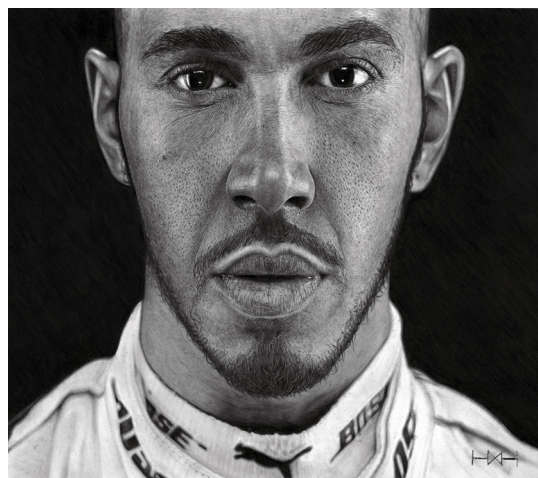


## 12. Tiger Woods

Tiger Woods is an African American professional golfer whose successes and achievements rank him as one of the most successful golfers of all time. Woods changed the finances of golf for the future. After being endorsed by Nike, golfing has excelled, and the brand wasn't even involved in the sport until Woods came along. He is the youngest player to achieve a career Grand Slam after winning all four of the major tournaments (PGA Championship, U.S. Open, British Open and the Masters) at the tender age of 24 and since then has won 16 World Golf Championships. With Woods being one of the most recognisable golfers of all time, he is constantly inspiring young Black golfers in a traditionally high-class White man's game.

## 13. The Williams Sisters (Venus and Serena)

Two young girls trained by their father grow up to be two of the greatest players in tennis history. Seems legit? Venus has won two US Open titles, five Wimbledon championship and an Olympic gold medal in singles. Her younger sister, Serena, may be the greatest tennis player in history with a 23 Grand Slam singles titles and a total of 100 titles including an Olympic gold medal. Enough said? I think so.



## 14. Lewis Hamilton

Lewis Hamilton is known as the first and only driver of Black heritage to compete in a Formula 1 championship. He explains how "I tried to ignore the fact that I was the first Black guy ever to race in the sport. But, as I've got older, I've really started to appreciate the implications. It's a pretty cool feeling to be the person to knock down a barrier". Hamilton has gone on to win five Formula One World

Championships and is believed by most to be the best driver of his generation and one of the greatest in the history of sport.

## 15. Simone Biles

Simone Biles has recently just won ANOTHER world title. This now places Biles in a tied record for the most world-title medals won by both any males and females. The pocket rocket has now extended her unbeaten title to six years and has achieved her 22nd world medal. ESPN magazine named her the "Most Dominant Athlete" of 2018 and this year she is still continuing to dominate. Times have changed and Biles is now the flag bearer for a new breed of American Gymnasts. Her legacy is still to be decided.





# Racist Crowd Mar England Victory



**Julian Bovill**  
Football

English football experienced one of its 'worst ever nights' stated the FA Chairman Greg Clarke in the post-match press conference. Clarke was sent out with manager Gareth Southgate, rather than one of the players, to spare the team from having to recount the ordeal they had been through in Sofia.

England fans, players, coaching staff and officials had warned of this; and it made the racism feel even more vitriolic. The t-shirts that many of the Bulgarian racists – we shall call a spade a spade – were wearing made a mockery of the UEFA 'Respect' slogan, with the word 'No' placed in front. It was clear from the outset what they thought of these concerns.

In what should have been a seminal night in the careers of the likes of Tyrone Mings – making his international debut – instead became an unforgettable one, but for the wrong reasons.

Tammy Abraham had said on Friday in Prague that he hoped the game would pass without incident; that the Bulgarian fans could prove everyone wrong. However, the Bulgarian coach, Krasimir Balakov responded by saying that England 'had a bigger racism problem than Bulgaria'. What is a 'bigger' racism problem?

It should be noted, that England certainly has a problem: Gareth Southgate has been preaching this line ever since he took the England job. Let's sort out our house before pointing out the flaws in theirs. But the racism the likes of Raheem Sterling, Mings and Abraham received on Monday night was so deliberately public and provocative.

The 6-0 win, to put England on the cusp of another international tournament, became a sideshow. The game was halted twice before half-time; it appeared at that stage, following an almost comical 6 minutes added time for stoppages, that the game would be abandoned.

But they carried on. Defiantly, bravely, and in what seemed like a real 'we will not let you win' attitude

to the group of Bulgarians who were committing such heinous acts.

Despite the game being finished and UEFA's three-step protocol not being fully enacted, this still felt like a big night for football. A night where the action finally became direct, and not just one of 'oh, we'll sort it out with a £10,000 fine and potentially a part stadium closure.'

The decisions to stop the game seemed a far cry from the days of Kevin Prince Boateng getting booked for walking off the pitch in a Serie A game for experiencing racist abuse.

The racism here was undeniable. Everyone saw the Nazi salutes; everyone could hear the monkey noises and the clear booing that greeted any Black English touch of the ball. It should be asked then, why the feigned innocence from Balakov, whose very deliberate use of the word 'if' in the press conference felt deliberately pointed. Why the need for Bulgaria's goalkeeper to state after the game that he felt his nations' fans behaved excellently?

This all seems emblematic of a structure that has allowed this racism to fester and broaden itself over a number of years. There is a dangerous far-right surge spreading itself across Europe presently: from Westminster, down to Madrid and across to Sofia. Far-right sentiment is being expressed, quite openly, far and wide and to much avail.

That UEFA refused to hand out any meaningful punishment the last time this happened in Sofia, and the last time before that, and the one before that, leads directly to these incidents. A part-stadium closure? Give us a break. A £10,000 fine that does not hit the pockets of the offenders? It is difficult not to laugh.

England has its own problems with racism; Ian Wright spoke – as usual – eloquently following the match about how the English football 'pyramid' is riddled with racism and racist events.

Yes, we should be looking to arrange our own house and stamp it out, but this should not stop us from taking other nations with us. Europe, once again, stops to watch what UEFA's next move will be.

## Leeds Alumni's World Title

**Ted Orme-Claye**  
Boxing

The former University of Leeds student Josh Warrington, who graduated in 2013 with a diploma in dentistry, has now extended his unbeaten record to 30 wins, with this his 7th by knockout.

This is his third defence of his IBF featherweight title, following successive decision defences against Kid Galahad and Northern Irish legend and former two-weight world champion Carl Frampton. Warrington first secured the title in 2018 by defeating Lee Selby at Elland Road, the home of his beloved Leeds United.

After whipping the crowd into a frenzy by entering the ring to Leeds United tunes and the Kaiser Chiefs, accompanied by midfielder Pablo Hernandez, Warrington dominated the fight from the outset.

His opponent, France's Sofiane Takoucht, was relatively unknown coming into this fight but had an impressive record of 35 wins, 13 by knockout, and four decision losses. However, he was no match for Warrington's lightning fast hand speed and accuracy, as he was dropped to the canvas twice in the second round.

Following another ruthless assault by Warrington, which saw Takoucht take several unanswered hooks to the head, the referee stopped the match and awarded the Leeds fighter a win by technical knockout, and delivered the Frenchman his first loss by knockout.

Addressing his fans, Warrington admitted "I took my frustration in not getting a unification bout on him."

Warrington has made it clear that he is angry he has not been given another title shot in the United States against some of the featherweight divisions other world champions, in the hopes of unifying the division.