

**PLANOR
AMA**



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CULTUR

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visitors

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR



I'm so excited to welcome you to a new era for Planorama! My name is Mayumi (pronounced my-you-me) and I'm the new Editor-in-Chief for this year of the magazine. I'm joined by an incredible exec who have made working on this first issue absolutely amazing, and I can't wait to share our hard work with you all!

For this issue of Planorama we wanted to focus on the undefinable term of 'Queer Culture'. People often view the LGBTQ+ experience as simply a label for non-heteronormative sexuality or gender, without recognising the intensely vibrant, varied, and effervescent community within it. Ask anyone what 'Queer Culture' means to them, and you'll get a completely different answer from each individual person, which sums up the chaotic beauty of it!

We wanted this issue to embody a wide range of Queer Culture, covering a variety of topics and reflecting the experience of growing into one's queer identity, and subsequently queer culture as a whole. This issue begins by exploring significant points in LGBTQ+ history that have informed the queer culture we experience today, before shifting to the queer experience right now - meeting current LGBTQ+ Warwick students: discovering their hopes, fears, and unapologetic queerness. Finally, we conclude this issue with what queer culture has to look forward to- brilliant artists, creatives, and some truly iconic haircuts. The contents of our issue cannot be summarised in a few words, simply because queer culture itself can't be.

In this Planorama edition you'll hear from writers both enthusiastic and furious, thoughtful and bold. Not a single voice sounds the same, yet they all come together to create a beautiful patchwork that symbolises our collective queerness.

Last year I joined Warwick as a nervous fresher, worried about expressing my queerness, fitting in on campus, and meeting other likeminded people. I had the tremendous fortune of joining PLAN and Planorama as a fresher's representative- and I would claim that I was lucky, but really I benefited from the immense effort that the previous Planorama exec put into platforming queer creatives and encouraging their vibrancy to shine.





It's because of Planorama, and the opportunity to be loudly and proudly myself in the scary first year of university, that I'm unabashedly the bright eyeshadow-sporting, tie-clad, crazy earring-wearing person that now roams the Warwick campus. It's because of Planorama that I know - no matter its undefinability - that queer culture is ultimately welcoming, celebratory, and a load of f*cking fun.

To quote Amy (our previous Editor-in-Chief), and their final letter from the Editor: "It is more important than ever to educate ourselves and remember that queerness has always existed and will continue to exist far beyond us."

I can't wait to celebrate that queerness, it's past, present, and future, with all of you readers together through this latest Planorama issue.

I want to say one last thank you to my incredible exec who worked themselves to the bone over summer to bring this issue to life, and I want to give a round of applause to the immensely skilled writers and creatives that contributed- thank you for making my first issue as Editor-in-Chief such a sensational one!

I only ask one thing from you all as readers when you're flipping through our magazine: think about what queer culture means to you, attempt to understand its intangibility by finding pieces of it in each of these works. Bring your experience of queer culture to life in any way you can - we can't wait to see you in the next edition!

**YOURS SINCERELY,
MAYUMI**

MAKERS OF QUEER CULTURE

MARSHA P. JOHNSON

Born in New Jersey in 1945, Marsha P. Johnson was one of the central activists in the Gay Liberation movement which centred around New York in the 1960s and 1970s. As a prominent face of these early gay rights protests, Johnson fought not only for the expansion of rights to all LGBTQ+ individuals, but in particular for the inclusion of transgender individuals and queer people of colour in the gay rights movement.

Growing up as one of seven children in an African American working-class family, Johnson was all too aware of the struggles faced by minority groups in America at that time - a time when gay people were still being persecuted in New York State, for the very fact of being queer. Johnson was herself a self-identified 'drag queen', and became central in fighting for queer rights during the Stonewall Riots - despite organisers of

the riots and parades stating they "weren't gonna allow drag queens" who gave "them a bad name". It is claimed Johnson was one of the first drag queens to enter the Stonewall Inn at a time when the bar was largely a hub for wealthy gay men, and that she was central in fighting against the police during their raids.

Beside this, Johnson was a member of the Gay Liberation Front and co-founded the Street Transvestite Action Revolutionaries, a radical activist group which provided shelter and food to homeless LGBTQ+ youth, while fighting for transgender rights. Beyond this, in the 1990s, Johnson also became a key organiser, this time in the HIV/AIDS crisis. Following her HIV diagnosis in 1990, she called on others not to be afraid of the disease, and she continued her work in fighting for pro-LGBTQ+ rights for queer people in New York.



Image: Public Domain



KARL HEINRICH ULRICHS

"The most decisive and influential pioneer of homosexual emancipation in world history". That is how one scholar in sexual science, Volkmar Sigusch, described Karl Heinrich Ulrichs. Often described as the 'first gay man in world history', Ulrichs was certainly the first person to publicly "come out", and he played a revolutionary role in both sexology - the scientific study of human sexuality - and in campaigning for gay rights.

Ulrichs was one of the first thinkers - if not the first thinker - to categorise queer desire, 'coming out' to his friends and family in 1862 as an Urning - or a 'gay man'. In a series of pamphlets which Ulrichs wrote, he coined a series of terms to describe queer individuals and, while these terms have adapted over time, they reflect the modern-day terms for gay (Urning), lesbian (Dioning), and bisexual (Urningin and Dioningin) individuals. Ulrichs distributed these pamphlets far and wide to lawyers and medical officials in Germany and, in 1867, he demanded for legal equal rights for all sexualities at a legal congress in Munich. His legacy still reverberates today, with the International Lesbian and Gay Law Association presenting an award in his name to celebrate those who champion advancements in sexual equality.

Image: Public Domain

The Labour MP for Northampton North from 1974 to 1979, Maureen Colquhoun was Britain's first openly lesbian MP - something which became known in 1976, after reports circulated that she had left her husband for Babs Todd, the publisher of queer magazine Sappho.

In her early years as an MP, Colquhoun was a trailblazer in fighting for women's rights: "The Labour Party pays mere lip service to International Women's Day", she proclaimed at the Labour conference in 1975. Colquhoun argued in favour of creche facilities for female delegates of the Labour conference, and introduced the Balance of Sexes Bill to Parliament, which would have required equal numbers of men and women on public bodies. The bill did not become law.

After it became known, in 1976, that Colquhoun had a female partner, she was deselected by her constituency Labour Party as the local MP, with members arguing she had an "obsession with trivialities such as women's rights". The vote was eventually overruled by the national party who agreed that she had been unfairly dismissed due to her sexuality, but she ultimately lost her seat in the 1979 General Election. Colquhoun didn't stop fighting for LGBTQ+ and women's rights during this time, however, introducing a bill into Parliament designed to protect sex workers, and in a revolutionary move, brought in 50 female workers to the committee room for the bill's first reading. Colquhoun's work laid the ground for a series of pamphlets, strikes, and protests in the years after.

A key figure of contemporary queer culture in the UK, Lady Phyll came to the forefront in 2005 when she co-founded UK Black Pride, an annual pride event in London which promotes unity among all Black people who identify as LGBTQ+. The festival, which now attracts crowds of nearly 8,000 annually, began as a one-off day trip to Southend by the Black Lesbians in the UK social network, but has continued to grow year-on-year.

Alongside the success of UK Black Pride, Lady Phyll has also served as the executive director of Kaleidoscope Trust, a charity which campaigns for the human rights of LGBTQ+ people worldwide, as well as co-editing the anthology Sista! in 2018, which brought together a series of writings by LGBTQ+ women of African and Caribbean descent.

Listed as one of the 100 Great Black Britons in 2020, Lady Phyll continues to champion LGBTQ+ rights today, and is widely considered as one of Britain's most prominent lesbian activists. In a 2020 interview with Forbes, she said that "UK Black Pride doesn't need to justify anymore, it's vital to the UK LGBT+ movement". Intersectionality for Lady Phyll is central to her campaigning, and it underscores the very idea of community which has always been fundamental to queer culture worldwide.

LADY PHYLL
(PHYLL OPUKU-
GYIMAH)

Image: Lady Phyll.jpg/Dashgust123/Wikimedia Commons/CC4.0

MAUREEN
COLQUHOUN




Image: Keystone/Hulton Archive

The achievements of these queer creators - all trailblazers in the LGBTQ+ community - hold a message of hope for queer people both now and in the future, as well as in years gone by. Their efforts remind us that, in the face of adversity, the queer community is here to stay, more present and loud than ever. These are only four important voices out of hundreds that have fought for, and continue to fight for, queer rights and visibility daily. We should celebrate every creator of queer culture, and always be loud and proud about who we are.

BY
TOM
RYAN

LOOKING FOR LESBIANS: A HISTORY OF SAPPHIC ICONOGRAPHY AND SYMBOL



BY EMILY HARRISON

*Saw the Lesbians kissing across
Their smitten,
Lutes with lips more sweet than
The sound of lute-strings" -
"Sapphics", A.C Swinburne, 1866*

At Birmingham Botanical Gardens last week, my partner struck up a conversation with two students across the ornamental koi pond - over matching jackets. They ask the couple if they are gays on a date as well. They are, but how did we both know? And what did our predecessors turn to when any previous giveaway might have spelt out social ostracism, shame, or worse? When asking your crush, "Hey girl, is that a pride badge in your pocket or are you actually very much not happy to see me now I notice it?", was not only a terrible pickup line but a possible death sentence? The term 'lesbian' as it is used today doesn't appear until William King's 1732 poem 'The Toast'. I want to fill this gap in queer history by explaining my top five most historically rich sapphic symbols that our queer ancestors made for themselves, all inspired by one question:

How did one go queer-spotting in a landscape designed to eliminate difference?



1. VIOLETS

*"If you forget me,
Think of our gifts to Aphrodite
And the loveliness that we shared
All the violet tiaras, braided rosebuds,
dill and crocus twined around your
young neck" - Sappho*

In the 1926 play *The Captive*, an exchange of a bouquet of violets between two women, one trapped in a loveless engagement, was a symbol of secret love. The play was so popular amongst the queer community in New York, that many women in the audience also began to wear violets in solidarity. But why violets?

As one of the oldest queer symbols, lesbian love and violets have been connected for over 2.5 thousand years, for as long as the existence of the word itself. In the Greek poet Sappho's work, known for its depictions of lesbian love, there are many mentions of flower garlands, including violets, being given to her lover. By the early 20th century, many queer writers and poets

who studied Sappho's works wore violets on their clothes, possibly influencing *The Captive's* narrative, and eventually wider society. But it was not the only flower to become a queer symbol.

2. LAVENDER

"It was time to tell the women's movement we would not be ignored any longer," - Karla Jay, lesbian activist.

Purple hues had already been associated with queerness since the time of Sappho, but lavender had only fully been added to this list by the end of the 19th century. Although the initial reasoning for this is unclear (with some suggesting its mix of pink and blue representing gender non-conformity, or its popularity with gay art and beauty lovers in Europe, linking it to effeminacy), lavender was fully cemented into the queer lexicon in 1969. This boost in popularity, spurred by its use in a 'gay power' march in New York a month after the Stonewall Riots, linked it to lesbians too. Betty Friedan, the leader of the National Organisation for Women, rejected lesbian membership as an imagined threat to feminism, calling it the "lavender menace", the term was quickly adopted by lesbian activists. Today, both the colour and flower still appear in newer symbols of queerness.



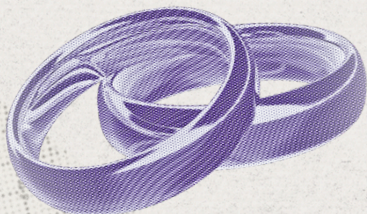


3. NAUTICAL STAR

"This was the first symbol of community identity that did not rely on butch-fem imagery" -

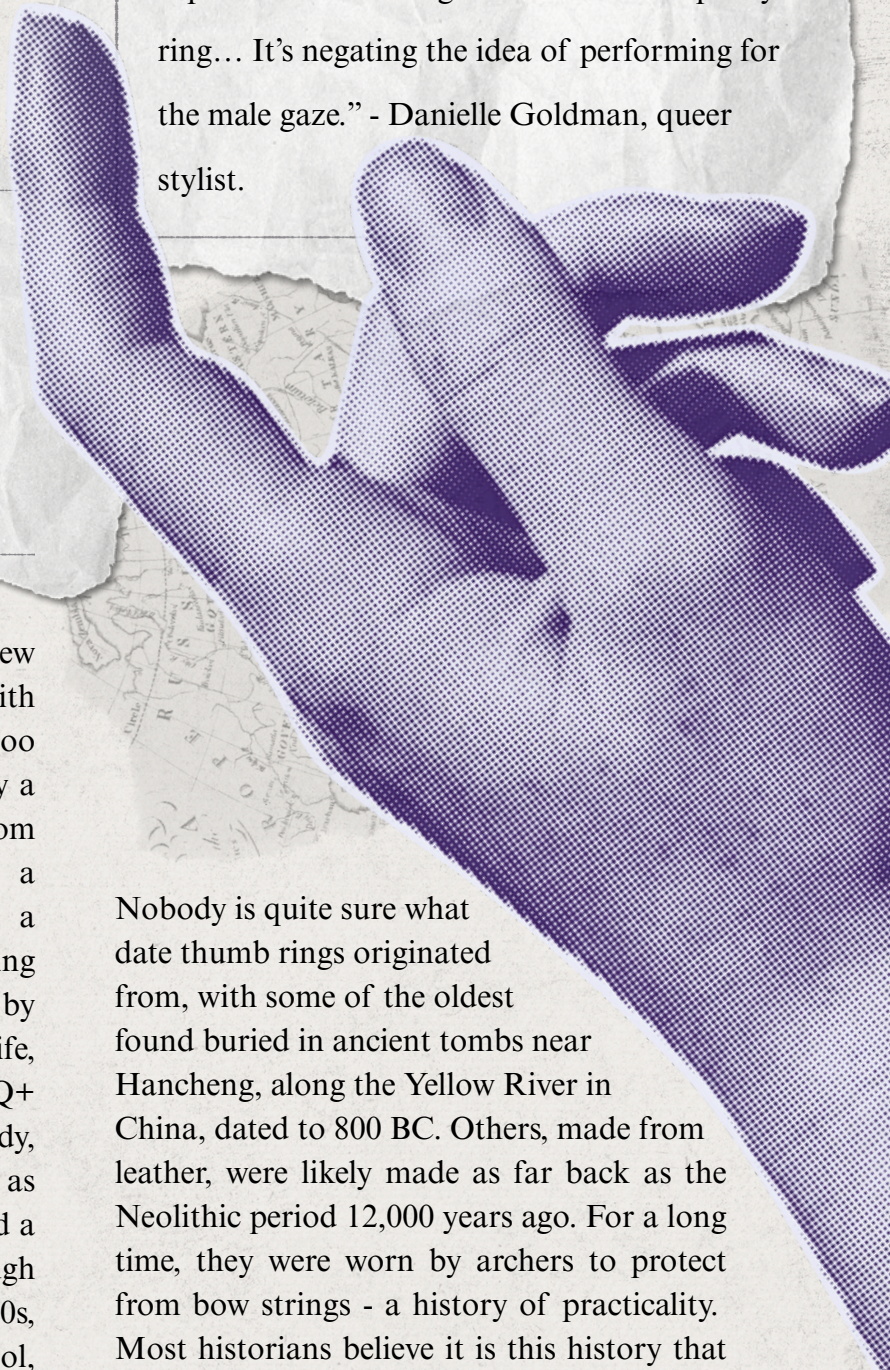
Madeline Davis and Elizabeth Kennedy, lesbian historians.

Stemming from the 40s and 50s in New York, many lesbian bars would be filled with lesbians sporting a small nautical star tattoo on their wrist, intended to be coverable by a watch or a sleeve to protect the wearer from legal or social consequences. It became a symbol of an underground community, a subtle way to find each other without risking exposure in everyday life. Originally worn by sailors to symbolize finding one's way in life, the star became a tradition in LGBTQ+ circles, as according to Elizabeth Kennedy, "the cultural push to be identified as lesbians...was so powerful that it generated a new form of identification among the tough bar lesbians". After its resurgence in the 70s, the nautical star is still a key queer symbol, appearing in jewellery as well as tattoos.



4. THUMB RINGS

"It's a symbol of defiance and non-compliance with the normative femme expression of wearing a 'decorative' or 'pretty' ring... It's negating the idea of performing for the male gaze." - Danielle Goldman, queer stylist.



Nobody is quite sure what date thumb rings originated from, with some of the oldest found buried in ancient tombs near Hancheng, along the Yellow River in China, dated to 800 BC. Others, made from leather, were likely made as far back as the Neolithic period 12,000 years ago. For a long time, they were worn by archers to protect from bow strings - a history of practicality. Most historians believe it is this history that drew lesbians to it, due to its clear distinction from the feminine, patriarchal wedding, engagement, and promise rings societally expected from them. It was a quiet rebellion, characteristic of queer women's skill in turning everyday items into subtle symbols of resistance.

5. WEASELS



*"A weasel hath not such a deal of spleen
As you are toss'd with"* - William
Shakespeare, *Henry IV, Part 1*.

A much less well known symbol, weasels began to become associated with 'perverse' sexual acts and desires in the early 16th century, due to some very questionable ideas about its reproduction. Female weasels can hold a fertilised egg for up to 10 months before gestation, and when born, the toothless, deaf, and blind young are carried around in their mother's mouth. This, bizarrely, led to the belief that weasels give birth through the mouth, and their babies were conceived through their ears. Soon, they appeared in early Christian teaching, warning against the dangers of oral sex, and 'ungodly' lesbianism in general, even saying it would result in birth through the mouth!

Unbelievably, as society changed, this apparent 'virgin birth' led the weasel to become at first a symbol of purity, then a good luck charm for pregnancy and fertility, then much more, all appearing in Tudor tapestries and earlier artwork. But still, it holds its place in early sapphic history!



Ultimately, LGBTQ+ fashion and art signals are constantly evolving as their communities adapt and change within the societies in which they exist - so don't stress if you never see any of these! Although it is fascinating to look back upon these symbols that queer people of the past would have used and turned to, it's just as good to create your own way of expression, using knowledge of those who have paved the way.

LIVE ON AIR WITH MAYA AND BEN!

AN INTERVIEW WITH THE NEW HOSTS OF 'THE QUEER STUDENT' PODCAST

It's a warm Thursday during week nine of term three when Ben Lenaghan and Maya Wiseman meet to have their Q&A chat interview for the Planorama July edition. By meet, we mean they get the Zoom up, because it is far too hot to travel anywhere, and the penultimate week of term laziness has truly hit. Maya is sipping on a fanta with a straw, and Ben is eating his pesto pasta lunch. After the usual tech faff of 'can they hear each other', and 'is the transcript being recorded', they start...

M: So Ben, we're super excited to be going into the role of Heads of Podcast, what made you apply for the role?

B: I was a huge fan of the podcast originally and have loved what Jasper and Yusra did with it, so I knew if there was an opportunity for me to come on board I had to take it. Also, my friends have always told me I had a face and voice for radio so I feel like this is a natural progression for myself.

B: What about you Maya, what inspired you to apply?

M: Well I've had the honour of watching our now Editor-in-Chief Mayumi experience the fantastic world of Planorama as a Frep, so when they told me about open positions I knew I had to go for it. And I've always loved podcasts, hearing people talk about random interesting things can be surprisingly calming! But like you, listening to Jasper and Yusra's podcast really inspired and excited me to run for the role.

M: Ben, what visions do you have for Planorama and the podcast in the following year?

B: I feel like we're on the same page about this because we love what has been happening with the podcast up to this point, but I would love to expand the range of guests we speak to, such as reaching out to teachers as well as queer entertainers/comics. Also, we are very excited at the idea of doing a live episode during freshers week so we can make it even more interactive with the uni students!

B: So, Maya, this edition is about queer culture - what does this idea of queer culture mean to you?

M: I feel like queer culture is so hard to define or term in many ways. I think one of the wonderful things about queer culture is it means something different for every person. To me, queer culture is about the many things that unite queer people and bring our community closer together. It's about the art, media, words, fashion, people, and so much more that shape the queer community.

B: I love that response. What was your first encounter with queer culture like?

B: Personally, I wasn't exposed to much queer culture growing up, so my first proper encounter would probably have been when I started watching Glee. However problematic, Glee at the time exposed me to so many different ideas and people that would have been passing me by so I will always be grateful to it for that.

M: I guess my first encounter I can think of is RuPaul's Drag Race, so I'm glad to know we've learnt our queer culture and history from TV. I love how much television and film has become queer, and yes even if problematic, it really opens the young queer mind to the endless gay possibilities out there!

M: Right Ben, what aspect of queer culture do you think has impacted you the most?

B: As a film student I feel like my answer here is pretty obvious. I actively seek out smaller queer productions to watch as I think there is nothing more powerful than seeing yourself reflected back through a screen. Two particular favourites of mine have been *My Summer With Carmen* and *Uncle Frank*.

M: Wow I love that, I have got to watch those films then. I think my initial answer would be TV, watching *Drag Race* along with queer cartoons really shaped me. But as I've gotten older, I've done some burlesque and pole dance, and that has really opened up a whole new queer world of culture and expression for me.

M: Along those lines, what queer culture have you found within the university, are there any things you would 'recommend' to others?

B: I am not someone who has particularly interacted with the world of drag, and yet *Warwick Drag Race* earlier this year was one of my favourite memories of the entire year. I felt so much pride and joy at seeing these students being so unequivocally themselves on the stage and I would recommend everyone going to watch next year.

M: I was gutted to miss out on the *Drag Race* night, but *Euphoria* has been a really fun way to embrace queerness on campus, and even if it's not massively attended I think it's great! And, I think *PLAN* and *Planorama* have been really amazing in shaping the queer culture within university.

M: So, Ben, a bit of a complicated question - How do you think queer culture fits within pride month?

B: I think pride month allows queer people to bombard people who would have missed queer culture with what they are missing out on! It is a time where queer creatives can be lifted onto a pedestal and hopefully have their work reach a wider net of people.

B: What would you say?

M: I know I posed the question, but it is a difficult one to answer. I think my cop out answer is that queer culture is pride month and pride month is queer culture. Pride Month was a riot and being queer is an act of riot and rebellion in itself. I think queer culture is pushing against the norm and creating change and revolution.

M: To round off our Q&A Ben, the summer holidays are upon us - What ways are you going to be participating in or creating queer culture this summer?

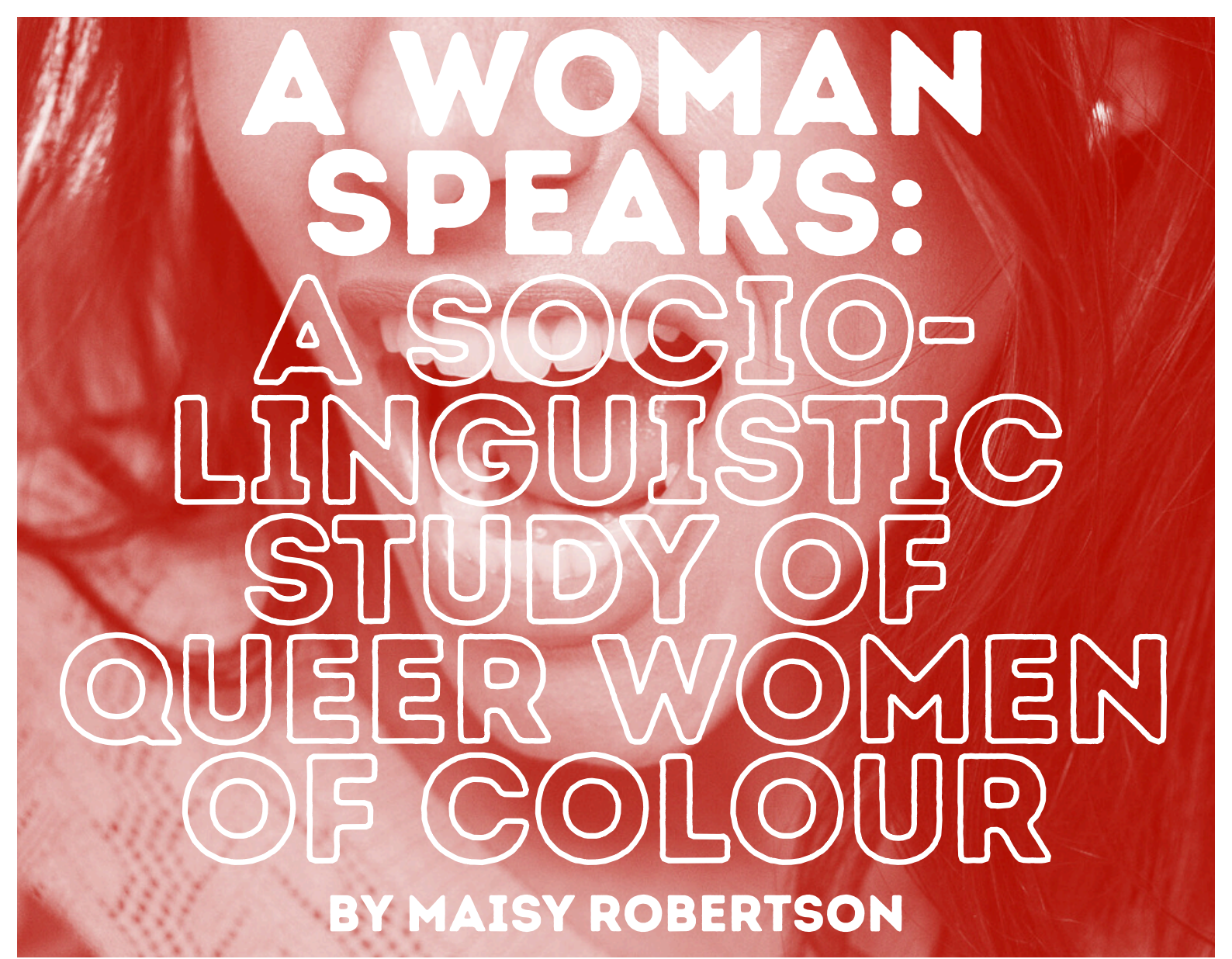
B: I will be at London Pride this year, a tradition of mine that I look forward to each year. But I am also lucky enough to be going to the Venice Film Festival where I will watch the Queer Lion award nominees and hopefully see a diverse range of equally profound queer cinema.

M: Wow the film festival sounds amazing I'm very jealous! Maybe you can sneak me into your suitcase. I will be remaining in my room with my fan on, being queer for most of the summer. But I'm really lucky that I'm going to be running a stall at the Pride Month Pearly Makers Market, that's done with the Vagina Museum and Amy Holland. I'm going to be selling my earrings which I think is peak queer culture.

B: Brilliant! Well thanks for the chat and I look forward to seeing you in freshers week to start the new Queer Student Podcast era.

M: I second that! To those that are reading in August, have a great summer. And we look forward to seeing you all, and many new campus queers, in September!





A WOMAN SPEAKS: A SOCIO- LINGUISTIC STUDY OF QUEER WOMEN OF COLOUR

BY MAISY ROBERTSON

Despite all the social progress made through modern waves of feminism, intersectional identities remain consistently disregarded and underrepresented in academia. There is a hugely vibrant and significant section of society that is simply not spoken about: queer women of colour.

In linguistics, there is a glaring gap in sociolinguistic research that excludes the idea of intersectionality. Women, queer people, and people of colour have all been studied to varying degrees within the field, but this has almost always been exclusively. .

Sociolinguistics – a sub-study of linguistics – focuses on how social factors (such as ethnicity, gender, and sexuality) influence the language we use. In a world where red-pill, dog-whistle slang from the manosphere is becoming dominant, we wanted to shift the linguistic focus to the crossover between identities – we wanted a study focused on intersectionality.

IDENTITY EXHIBITED

I have been out as a bisexual woman for many years, and I'm lucky to say I've experienced very little stigma over it. However, this is not the case for a large number of queer people. My partner in this project, Angeline Catucumbamba German, is an Ecuadorian woman, and of course being Latina in a predominantly white country is never easy either. And so, when we came together to talk about ideas for a project, we came together as a queer woman and a woman of colour to try and finally platform those facing discrimination and stigmatisation on every front.

We wanted to look at how the idea of intersectionality affects the way people navigate the world around them, and what they have to say about it. We were extremely honoured that a group of 11 queer women of colour came together to display and perform pieces inspired by the theme of intersectional identity.

Within these works, we found exactly what we had been searching for.

Every piece was expressing a completely different aspect of intersectionality: from cultural belonging and othering, to queerness and femininity.

This exhibition was not only impactful for those involved, but for all the people who came to see it. We left out a guest book at the event and had extremely positive responses:

This exhibition primarily aimed to give a voice to those consistently underrepresented, however it was not our only goal: we wanted to show the world new perspectives. These perspectives were rich – they were all honest, bare, and raw. And this exhibition is only the first half of our project: we aim to use the Undergraduate Research Support Scheme at Warwick to extend sociolinguistic research into a new field of intersectionality and inclusion.

'CAUSES IN COLOUR AS WELL AS SEX'

This entire project was inspired by one poem - 'Who said it was simple' by Audre Lorde. Lorde was a self-described "black, lesbian, feminist, socialist, mother, warrior, poet" and was instrumental in the Civil Rights movement and second-wave feminism.

Part of my English Literature A-Level encouraged us to research female writers, since the curriculum featured predominantly male authors. In all honesty, I stumbled across Audre Lorde's poetry, but what I found there spoke – and continues to speak – to me immensely. Growing up as a white woman in a white area, her words opened my eyes to areas of life that never touched me. Her poem 'Who said it was simple' is all about intersectionality in the second-wave feminist movement, and it was this part which started everything:

*But I who am bound by my mirror
as well as my bed
see causes in colour
as well as sex
and sit here wondering
which me will survive
all these liberations.*

"TRULY AN ENRICHING AND INSIGHTFUL EXHIBITION, GIVING ME A NEW PERSPECTIVE ON SOMETHING I COULDN'T EXPERIENCE MYSELF"

"YOU'VE MADE AN EXHIBITION THAT TOUCHES THE SOUL OF EVERYONE WHO HAS FELT OTHERED AT SOME POINT IN THEIR LIFE. THIS WAS BEAUTIFUL"

"A LOVELY EXHIBITION FROM SO MANY QUEER POC ON THEIR EXPERIENCES IN THIS WORLD AND A POIGNANT AND VULNERABLE BARING OF THEIR SOULS IN FRONT OF OTHERS"



Audre Lorde und May Ayim/Schultz, Dagmar
Wikimedia Commons/CC4.0

The 16-year-old me, who at that point thought she knew everything there was to know about being a woman in a man's world and a queer person in a heteronormative world, suddenly realised everything she knew was barely half the story.

I admit I had a fairly 'easy ride' of my queerness and my womanhood: only a few cat-calls, only a few gropings, only a few slurs. And to call this an easy ride really shows how far we all have to go and how much more we have to keep fighting.

However, I never had to experience navigating the world being a person of colour as well. This is why highlighting intersectionality never stops being important. This project is dedicated to the work of Audre Lorde, for not only being an outstanding activist during her time, but for opening my eyes to a whole new experience, as we hope our exhibition also helped to do.

We want to truly thank all the people who have been involved in this process from start to finish: all the wonderful participants, the (Q)ulture, our project supervisor Matthew Voice, and all of our friends who banded together with overwhelming support for the entire project. None of this would have been done without all your help, so thank you.

[You can view the artwork featured in the exhibition on pages 13-14]



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A WOMAN SPEAKS

The

FETISHISATION OF GAY MEN



FOLLOW

A Lesbian's Problematic First Love

@ Abbie Hoyle

Anyone who was chronically online in the 2010's will understand the deep infatuation with shipping culture: a fan-cultivated interest in a romantic pairing. It only takes a glance to notice the consistent trend amongst these popular couples: DeviantArt users flooding the explore page with *Dean and Castiel*, the Wattpad craze surrounding *Eren and Levi*... It was an era of thinly-veiled gay appreciation, flying too close to the sun and often veering into fetishisation.



Though, what constitutes fetishisation? In this context, the definition sits closest to placing an excessive interest or sexual fascination on somebody - or, so much so, the *concept* of two men. It becomes problematic specifically when fans reduce the character's personalities down to their position in bed, often feminising one man of the pair and mischaracterizing them as a result.



Fetishisation is, of course, not only deeply objectifying, but also actively contributes to harmful gay stereotypes – that queer men are overly sexual, effeminate, and have to follow a heteronormative dynamic. But this issue becomes a whole new can of worms when fetishisation focuses on real people and not just fictional pairings.

Post your reply

REPLY

The victims of my own infatuation were Daniel Howell and Phil Lester, colloquially known as Dan and Phil. In a way, they were textbook targets – two attractive men engulfed in online culture, living solely with one another and sporting matching haircuts. Once the online fandom space caught wind of them, theories of their undisclosed queerness flooded the internet.

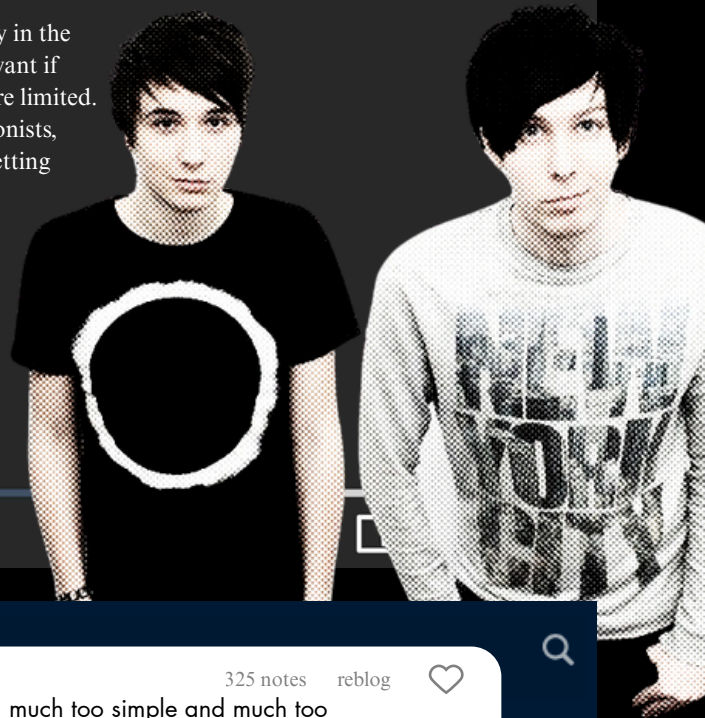
Looking back now, I find that many of the young fans once deeply involved with these ships have now come out as lesbians, myself included. I began to wonder why this collective phenomenon exists: how so many of my female mutuals, who once made theories about how Dan and Phil might've shared a bedroom, are now proposing to their girlfriends on my Twitter feed. I found that the indulgence was oftentimes an escape from our own sexualities – or even a desperate projection of our own desires.

Love between two girls in the early internet teetered between nubile and nauseating, often simultaneously. Pornographised for a woman's supposed 'innocence' and then ostracised for not involving a man. The very word itself, *lesbian*, or associated terms, were tossed around as insults within popular media, such as the lesbophobic slur *d*ke* towards Janis in *Mean Girls* (2004). It makes sense why young sapphics would steer away from lesbian ships. Any engagement set them up for mockery or unwanted sexualisation. |

But secondly, there was simply no lesbian media for us to unknowingly fetishise. This stemmed from a dual burden of discrimination: misogyny and homophobia. The 2010's rarely featured any female characters that were more than one dimensional. Virginia Woolf explores the lack of depth in literary female characters in a segment of her essay *A Room of One's Own* (1929), titled *Chloe liked Olivia*. She ponders on the observation that two women in literature were never presented as liking each other. Whether this 'liking' stumbled into romanticisms is still debated, considering Woolf's own sapphic affair, but her point stands true regardless. Female-to-female relations were uncharted territory.

Woolf quotes, women were "only seen in relation to the other sex." Not only in the literal sense of solely romanticizing with men, but additionally are only relevant if they serve as an accessory to a prominent male character. Even then, they are limited. Men in media are written with complex psychologies and tend to be protagonists, whereas women are stuck as love-interests and often despised by fans for 'getting in the way' of their favourite gay ship.

This same thinking leaks into the culture surrounding real person fiction (RPF). These fans were not necessarily shipping the real *Dan and Phil*, but the idealised, *fictional* versions they'd crafted in their head to fit their fantasy. Essentially, they became *characters*. Yet, it was rarely female celebrities who became shippable in this same way. Hegemonic misogyny made women be perceived as uninteresting, and fans were put off by the concept of lesbianism due to negative representation in media.



▶ ⏮ 🔊 20:31/50:47



325 notes reblog ❤️

In her essay, Woolf concludes, "the fictitious woman [was] much too simple and much too monotonous" to be worth shining light on, let alone pair with another, equally monotonous female character. "So much has been left out, unattempted," she mourns, and I mourn with her – would I have been more comfortable with my sexuality if female characters were written to the same degree of depth as men? All along, was this shipping culture I worshipped inherently misogynistic? Even now, gay media garners more attention than lesbian media. *Heartstopper* (2022), which, don't get me wrong, deserves its love, has received numerous season renewals, whilst *First Kill* (2022) got cancelled, despite its equally positive engagement online. Fans never cared about whether Chloe *liked* Olivia, because neither Chloe nor Olivia were written well enough, or written at *all*, to be liked individually in the first place.

325 notes reblog ❤️

There's a pang of guilt as I reminisce on my young behaviour, an almost voyeuristic fascination with two grown men that crossed the parasocial threshold. When both stars came out as gay in 2019, it ate me alive, knowing I'd actively contributed to this incidental outing, a wicked type of manifestation. And although my behaviour likely stemmed from internalised misogynistic and lesbophobic feelings, this painful truth doesn't excuse my actions, exploiting and fictionalising the platonic relationship that Dan and Phil shared with us.

Entire Work

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This trend is not lesbian-exclusive, yet its strong correlation shows how canonical media representation is vital in normalising lesbianism to recently-discovered queer youth. I wonder, if Chloe did own that laboratory and had been allowed to like Olivia explicitly, would I have embraced my sexuality in an appropriate way instead of projecting my identity onto closeted men? While there is not a simple solution for fetishisation, I hope that more lesbian representation will allow young sapphics to indulge in characters much like them – instead of headcanonning their favourite male strangers as a coping mechanism against the lack of female queer representation.

AN INTERVIEW WITH RESILIENCE AND HOPE:

BY MAYUMI STAUNTON

Planorama's last issue held an urgent callout to support the trans* community, discussing the "government plan on puberty blockers" and how it poses a "terrifying future for trans* students." This article, written by Amy Adshead and Yusra Barbar, highlights how the government's decisions will, and have, affected not only trans* individuals nationally, but trans* students studying at Warwick.

Unfortunately, Amy and Yusra's observations were not unfounded. Currently, the University's proposed code of conduct changes have caused massive uproar within the LGBTQ+ student body, sparking a boycott against the University's "Pride" celebrations for the month of June. This rallying of support for trans* students and employees at Warwick was inspiring and has helped bring the LGBTQ+ community at our University together.

However, youth action against transphobic policy did not begin at Warwick University: it has been exponentially growing over the last year on a national scale. This is largely thanks to the youth action network known as '**Trans Kids Deserve Better**' or TKDB.


I was able to speak to a long-term member of this network, known only as Isaac.

ISAAC'S PERSONAL JOURNEY WITH TKDB

Isaac's journey with TKDB started last summer when he took part in his first action - the occupation of the Department for Education. When I ask him about the process of getting involved, he describes how quickly he found community: "Basically knowing most of these people for less than three hours total, [I] ended up living with them, outside for a week." He later continues, saying that this "strong sense of community" and "family" helps drive his commitment to the network.

He adds: "Every headline you see that's about trans* kids being treated badly, or trans* people in general, you have two choices." He leans forward, emphasising: **"You can either accept it or you can fight back."** This strikes me deeply - that a person so young can shoulder so much responsibility. However, when I present Isaac with this concern, he states that the importance of youth action cannot be overlooked. He tells me of the "real demand for youth space", as currently both "activist" and "queer spaces" are "very adult-centric."





He explains to me how “any trans* action group has basically been ignoring the puberty blocker bans”, that “HRT is being taken away from young people”, and that there are “changes to the education guidance for schools.” He describes the feeling that, even amongst other queer and trans* adults, “no one was speaking up for us.” Once again, he emphasises: “We didn’t really have a choice.”

When detailing the network’s recent action, the occupation of the area outside the EHRC (Equality and Human Rights Commission) offices, and their action at the NHS offices where activists left “red handprints resembling blood” on the front of the building, Isaac describes the vast difference between actions and the effort they demand from members: “There was an action that I was involved in that I was pouring like hours and hours into [in one week I] ended up doing, like 40 hours of work on top of school.”

He has previously mentioned his commitment to school, education, and his future. The strain that the network has on him is impossible to ignore - it is clear, visible, and demanding. However, he is not in it alone. He says: “I think the [actions] that are most impactful are the ones where you spend a lot of time working with other people to make things happen.”

Isaac starts to light up when speaking about his community and support system. When I ask him about the impact of his work, he smiles and says: “A lot of people seem to be quite inspired by our actions. Our actions...bring them quite a lot of joy and hope. Especially for young trans* people who are able to join us.”

Although Isaac is very positive about his journey with the network and the joy that activism can bring, there is still a clear, underlying sense of burden. I ask him: “What does it mean to you to have to protest?”. He replies frankly and honestly that: “It’s really depressing at times...being in a community with so many people who are being torn down from so many sides.” He expands that obviously everyone in the action network is a young trans* person “but also we have people who are being oppressed and marginalised for so many other reasons.”

Yet, Isaac continues - and emphasises the importance of intersectionality - saying that the diversity within the network shows how “we do a good job of sticking together” and that although “you can really tell that the situation is dire”, this “can also be really powerful because it means that people will get creative.” He says: “People will put their heart and soul into the actions because they know that for a lot of people, it’s kind of their lifeline.”

**SPEAKING TO A
MEMBER OF ‘TRANS
KIDS DESERVE
BETTER’**

YOUTH, PROTEST, AND COMMUNITY

Isaac describes that within desperation, there is hope and community. He says that the network will “cover transport costs” and that they have “semi-regular meetups” which he thinks is “really important for maintaining that sense of community.” I ask him about queer culture, and finding space within that and he replies: **“I think a lot of queer adults often forget what it’s like to be a queer child. And, like, not be able to access community that you can then be a part of.”**

As a university student and young adult, this resonates with me. I think of all the different LGBTQ+ societies on campus, the club nights, the pub crawls. I try to think of what it was like before that, and I only remember sitting on social media, imagining a more open life for myself. Something queer people repeatedly say is that going to university was hugely helpful for them on their identity journeys. In 2021, Stonewall and UCAS did a joint study where 82% of student respondents said they were confident about being more open about their sexual orientation or gender at university. I would confidently place myself in that 82%.

Alongside this conviction, I was assured of Warwick’s diversity and inclusion. After all, on the Warwick University website they claim to be a “Stonewall Diversity Champion” (in 2022 ranked 122 out of 403 in the Stonewall Workplace Equality Index), and brag about being awarded Gold for “achieving high standards in specific categories of WEI, including those related to bi and trans inclusion.”

Yet, despite this reassuring 18-year-old me, this puts the University’s recent actions into an even grimmer perspective.

WARWICK UNIVERSITY

I read to Isaac Warwick Trans* society’s statement on the draft University policy changes. The change in code of conduct regarding trans* people, that the University claimed was following the EHRC interim update on single sex spaces - an interim update that has no legal weight. I explain to Isaac how previously the code of conduct permitted trans* people to use the facilities that they felt the most comfortable in, and how its most significant drafted change is that trans* people must use the facilities that align with their sex assigned at birth, or gender neutral facilities - of which there are very few on campus.

Isaac doesn’t look angry or agitated in the way I expected, but is instead calm, composed and when he speaks, clear. He says: “I mean, yeah, obviously this is just... encouraging an environment for transphobia to grow.” He continues: “It’s just bizarre [because] self-identification works in so many countries. People have been going to the bathroom that they feel is appropriate for so many years.

There are people who have been going to the bathroom of the gender that they identify as since the 70s, who are now, under these new codes, going to have to revert to using a bathroom they haven’t used in 50 years.”

“Do we really need to be making such a fuss about this? Or is this just distracting from the actual things that the politicians are trying to hide?”

His comment pulls an unexpected laugh out of me, and brings me to my next question for him -

“DO YOU HAVE ANY MENTAL WELLBEING TIPS FOR TRANS* PEOPLE, ESPECIALLY THE ONES STUDYING AT WARWICK DURING THIS TIME?”

Isaac recommends finding a group - "ideally a queer group" - especially within activism, like he has, as "activism can be a great place to build community". But he also says: "If the news is too much, turn off your phone, turn off the news. You don't need to read it." For someone so involved in activist work, so focused on bringing to light the political struggle young trans* people are going through, this is an unexpected comment. Yet Isaac continues: "It's not that deep if you miss one headline or three headlines or ten. The world will keep moving, and you can catch up later."

After hearing about Isaac's journey with youth activism, why protest is so important for our community now, and reflecting on the simultaneous disappointment trans* people have faced at our University, yet despite this, the hope that our student community has built, is not only thought-provoking but fills me with hope. Speaking to Isaac, and witnessing the LGBTQ+ community at Warwick mobilise, reminds me that my hope is not unfounded, it is tangible - in the protests we organise, the anger in our voices, the friends that we keep, and the smiles on our faces.

**"YOUR IDENTITY IS MORE IMPORTANT THAN
OTHER PEOPLE'S DISBELIEF"**

Isaac foregrounding the importance of trans people looking after themselves at this current moment in time is reassuring and reminds me of this very poignant truth.

He laments: "I think I feel like I spent a lot of my life being told that universities are a really progressive place where change happens, it's made it very clear to me that this is not necessarily the case for the institutions themselves, which is a bit disappointing." But when urged to continue, he says: "To be able to maintain that culture, and that [determined, queer] community, despite the University not wanting it to happen is such a hopeful thing."

**TRANS*
PEOPLE
DESERVE
BETTER -
OUR HOPE
WILL TAKE
US THERE.**

Doc Leaf

I sketched your face when I blinked
just then, it stung
when we walked between a row of nettles
and the day before you flirted with someone
I didn't approve of. Hate the way their fingers
have picked you open and you talk
about it to no end. I look at your lips
and away to some slumped over tree.
I feel that for years a black mould
has been growing up my spine
and crucified my tongue.
A small plague hangs in the air.
You keep mentioning the night you spent
with his shoulderblades and soft knuckles.
Do you feel my handprint etched on your back?

By Amy Adshead



Art by Oriel Baker



A REFLECTION ON

PRIDE IS A



PROTEST

BY NOAH GOWER-JONES

On June 11 2025, I headed out for the first protest I would attend since the nationwide COVID-19 lockdown, *Pride is a Protest*, organised by Warwick Trans* Action. I have been nervous of large public gatherings for a long time, instead working behind the scenes of movements on graphic design and logistics – but this was too important for me to skip.

The *Pride is a Protest* event comes after the recent 'For Women Scotland Ltd v The Scottish Ministers' Supreme Court case, which ruled

the definition of 'woman' under the Equality Act 2010 is based on biological sex rather than gender identity. The backlash on campus was a direct response to the University of Warwick's amendment to – and subsequent withdrawal of – their Trans Inclusion Code of Practice.

Although the recent Supreme Court ruling was an undeniable blow to the trans* community, it was not legally binding when the University made the decision to change their trans inclusion code.

The University did not sabotage the code out of legal necessity. It had a choice, and it chose exclusion. It chose bigotry.

Ultimately, it chose discrimination – and this is not an isolated incident. It is part of a recurring pattern of bureaucratic violence that has defined this university since its founding, and we must recognise that. *Pride is a Protest* also stood in solidarity with female students and staff affected by the university's long history of sexism, and with Palestinians who have lost their lives and the lives of their children at the hands of international arms companies such as Rolls Royce, who the University continues to work with while making attempts to hide it.

Following immediate backlash of their amendment to the Trans Inclusion Code, the University issued communication claiming it was published in error. Whether or not the publication of the updated code was truly a mistake, leadership at Warwick only compounded the harm done by then complete withdrawal of any code. Instead of issuing a formal apology and reinstating the previous inclusion code regarding access to gendered facilities, transgender students at Warwick are now left with a blank page, and that is not a solution. Students are now left vulnerable to inconsistent enforcement, personal bias, and bigotry at the ground-level of needing to use the toilet.

“THE UNIVERSITY (...) HAD A CHOICE, AND IT CHOSE EXCLUSION. IT CHOSE BIGOTRY.”

Institutions who truly pride themselves on ‘progress’ and ‘world-leading research’ do not only refuse to better themselves; they also do not place themselves at the forefront of an international decline in attitudes towards queer and gender-diverse people.

So, anxiety be damned, I made sure I was meeting a friend and, in the sticky June heat, made my way to the Piazza. I was met by a smattering of people draped in pride flags and extravagant make-up. This small collection of people quickly grew into a larger group, with *The Boar* estimating around 40 people attending in total. During the protest, I had the opportunity to speak to many attendees, some of whom work for the University.

The event took on an open-mic structure. One speaker treated us to an a cappella rendition of ‘Defying Gravity’, switching out the lyrics to instead sing ‘defying fascism’. The performer told us this was their first performance and stressed the importance of queer joy and creativity in the face of looming rollbacks to our rights.



As a writer and artist myself, hearing this from another queer person was encouraging. The last few years have seen the rapid escalation of the UK's culture war on trans* people and it would be a lie to say it hasn't taken a heavy toll on my own mental health. But, as our performer affirmed, creativity has been one of the ways I've been able to express both the pain and the beauty of being queer in the 21st century. A transgender staff member at the protest told me: "I have never received anything but love and joy from the campus community."

Like many of my trans siblings I no longer feel safe on campus and I wonder how long I will be able to continue working here. That is the responsibility of those who made these changes, without consultation and without considering the impact it would have on those affected by them ... Thank you to the wonderful student groups who organised the boycott of a performative Pride and the protest that sends the clear message to the University that we are not OK with this."

Another speaker shared their struggles engaging with sport as a non-binary person, despite their love for it. They pointed out how there is no provision at Warwick for non-binary and trans* students both in gendered sports teams and in neutral changing facilities.

A staff member who attended the protest told me they've "always felt [Warwick] was a welcoming community" but there has been a growing "shadow of discrimination" across campus that reflects growing right-wing perspectives nationally. They described the trans code of conduct incident as a "devastating body blow" to Warwick's trans* community: "We were all assigned 'baby' at birth, but that shouldn't mean that today we have to use the baby changing, right?"

The same staff member also informed me Warwick UCU has passed a unanimous motion in favour of protesting any change to university policy that would discriminate against trans, non-binary, and intersex people.

"WOMEN'S RIGHTS
TRANS RIGHTS

At the moment, it's very easy to imagine the whole world hates you – including the queer community, the very people meant to stand by you. For example, LGB Alliance is a prolific anti-trans charity here in the UK who claims to champion the rights of lesbians, gay men and bisexual people – but not trans and gender diverse people. In 2020, the mayor of my hometown, Andy Burnham, met with LGB Alliance to discuss 'women's rights'. When challenged, he defended the move as an effort to maintain a diversity of perspective. LGB Alliance celebrated the meeting on X (formerly Twitter) and claimed to have discussed 'child transition' alongside 'equal pay'. At 14, this made me feel incredibly disheartened. I wondered if I would still have a place in my city in a few years' time.



The work of LGB Alliance is, unfortunately, not on the fringe. There is a large and vocal community of cisgender queer people in the UK who reject transgender people as part of their community, despite trans* people often being at the forefront of queer liberation

ONE STRUGGLE ONE FIGHT "

movements
both
historically
and today.

But *Pride is a Protest* rejected this notion outright. As chants like "LGB WITH THE T" and "WOMEN'S RIGHTS, TRANS RIGHTS; ONE STRUGGLE, ONE FIGHT" echoed around the Piazza, I was reminded that there is still a loud, powerful network of queer allies who care deeply for their trans* siblings. I felt incredibly lucky to be part of such a passionate, inclusive and intersectional queer community during my studies.

When asked for a statement, a member for Warwick Trans* Action told me: "Pride is a protest; Pride has been and will always be about fighting for our rights, resisting bigotry, and demanding equality." They labelled the event "more proof that queer people will not back down, and are not willing to throw allies' rights under the bus."

"We will always stand against the fascistic acts of trans erasure that Warwick University attempted to execute. We successfully forced the cowards at the UEB – the board who decided on the policy change to cease recognition of trans people's existence on campus – to revoke their policy immediately; we successfully forced the University to cancel its sham, window-dressing pride events which existed not to celebrate queerness but to smile and wave away the intense queerphobia at the core of this institution. With more pressure and more events like these, we can force the University to commit to protecting the rights of all queer people on campus, and end their cowardly adherence to the genocidal cultural hegemony of broader society."

A spokesperson for the University of Warwick told *The Boar*: "Today's demonstration was managed in line with our legal duty and commitment to freedom of speech. We fully respect people's right to lawful and peaceful protest. Ensuring the wellbeing and safety of our community is our top priority and we continue to offer advice and help to all our students and staff through our support services."



IT'S JUST HAIR (BUT ALSO IT'S EVERYTHING)

Hair is more than just aesthetics: it's a tool for self-definition. Cutting, styling, and changing hair is an important avenue in expressing gender, queerness, and personal autonomy. It's also one of the few parts of ourselves that allows for flexible self-expression, unlike tattoos or piercings. It allows us to explore our identity in the moment, without permanent commitment or a huge price tag. Hair grows. Identity shifts.

Cut it, bleach it, go for the microbangs and the shaved sides. It's all a part of figuring yourself out.

"MY HAIR REPRESENTS ME."
-DAMIEN, 19
HE/HIM



Damien is a friend of mine from my course – and we met in part due to our unconventional haircuts! As a fellow queer person and barber specializing in gender-affirming cuts, he was the perfect person to discuss the relationship between hair and identity with.

"I'VE ALWAYS CUT MY OWN HAIR EVER SINCE I WAS 14. I LIKE TO HAVE FULL CREATIVE CONTROL OF HOW IT LOOKS BECAUSE I FEEL LIKE I CAN EXPRESS MYSELF FULLY WITH IT. IT ALSO CHANGES HOW MY FACE LOOKS DRAMATICALLY AND SO THE POWER TO ULTIMATELY CHANGE MY FACE IS AMAZING."
-DAMIEN

ROOTS OF RESISTANCE

Queer beauty often challenges conventional norms tied to the gender binary and heteronormativity. In this way, hair can be both a political act and a personal transformation. Non-traditional appearances are an inherent denial of societal ideas of what one should look like – and being proud and confident to stray from these expectations is a form of personal defiance.

"INITIALLY, MY HAIR ACTED AS A SHIELD ALMOST AS IF I COULD CREATE SHAPES AND MOVEMENT THAT WOULD DISTRACT FROM MY FACE.

AS MY CONFIDENCE HAS GROWN, WHICH HAS A LOT TO DO WITH MY HAIR ITSELF, I USE IT TO COMPLIMENT MY APPEARANCE AND CUSTOMISE MY FEATURES TO BE MORE MASCULINE WHILE STILL HAVING A SLIGHTLY ALTERNATIVE LOOK.

BEING ABLE TO BE CREATIVE WITH MY HAIR MAKES ME FEEL POWERFUL AND IN CONTROL OF HOW I LOOK WHICH IS SO IMPORTANT WHEN YOU'RE QUEER AS YOU FEEL AS THOUGH YOU ALREADY STAND OUT. HAIR CAN HELP YOU EMBRACE STANDING OUT OR IT CAN SHIELD YOU FROM THE ATTENTION AND HELP WITH YOUR CONFIDENCE."
-DAMIEN

AM I QUEER ENOUGH YET?

Some people feel pressure to appear visibly queer. I have personally dealt with the need to 'look more lesbian', and found that I felt more confident in that manner. In some ways, this form of outward signalling and instant recognition is important – it allows me to feel seen by the community – to be 'immediately clocked'. My hair is a statement to everyone around me, a statement that says 'I'm queer and I won't be quiet about it'. But navigating public spaces with visible markers of queerness is a delicate balance – one that can be very vulnerable depending on an individual, their situation, and their relationship with queerness. Whether you choose to 'look gay' or not, visibility is a tool for survival.

AFFIRMING SALONS

Queer people often feel unsafe or misunderstood in mainstream beauty environments, unsure how to move past conventional hairstyles. Some people don't know how to convey the look that they want, and some hairdressers struggle to break from the traditional patterns of masculine and feminine haircuts they are accustomed to. It is important to have stylists who support and understand non-traditional appearances, including queer-owned or queer-affirming salons and barbershops.

LOCAL SPOTLIGHT:

WHERE TO GET YOUR HAIR CUT NEAR CAMPUS

FINERY BARBERS

University of Warwick Atrium, CV4 7AL

JUST A HAIRDRESSER

Custard Factory, Gibb St, Deritend, Birmingham B9 4AA

MASARELLA & JONES

42 Clarendon St, Leamington Spa CV32 4PG

EXPRESSION WITHOUT PERMISSION

Hair might seem superficial, but for many queer people it is a revolution. It's a way to take control in a world that often tries to define you before you can define yourself. In a world where our existence feels like a fight, why not weaponize our appearance? Some days it's armour, some days it's art. Your hair doesn't have to be political, it can also just be. It's changeable, creative, and completely yours. Go grab those scissors.

TANNA

BY DIYA 28

BY JULIE
DERENNE

As a queer person, a student, and an artist, I seek queerness in everything. Queerness feels like home - a home that's messy, joyful, and compassionate like the people within it. For the past three years, this home was the one I found at University, one filled with queer academics and friends, seminars about my favourite niche queer subcultures, and events held by queer students. I learned so much from all these people who all felt like family, whether in class, in a friend's accommodation, or during protests. So when I got the chance to dedicate a whole year to a research project of my choice, I wanted to honour this queerness and share the possibilities it holds for academic practice.

It so happened that times darkened as I started this journey; headlines rhymed with oppression of trans* lives and painted our stories in words of hurt and fear even louder this past year. So in a world where queer people carry the burden of heart-wrenching daily news, I write this article as a strong commitment for resistance; because perpetuating the richness and joy of our community is an act of resistance.

SO HOW DO WE 'QUEER' RESEARCH? AND WHY?

Queering research invites us to question established practices that have slowly become ingrained in our ways of thinking. One example of this is the clear-cut distinction between scientific and sociological research, which deems one more valuable and tangible than the other on the basis that some forms of knowledge are more 'objective' and arguably 'more right' than others. When planning this research project, I wondered what 'truth' and knowledge I wanted to showcase, but really, there is no 'objective truth'. Our social world can be varied, complex, and unique, just like us, and so should research.

I aimed to encourage people to have fun with research and look for the 'live', messy, and unexpected. Hence why I investigated the practice of Live Methods, which offers new ways of collecting data by including artistic mediums in collaborative group interviews. Inspired by the work of Les Back, Nick Puwar, and one of my teachers, Cath Lambert, I picked a variety of craft materials for my focus group interview and prompted participants with questions about their transness. We pondered over them whilst handling flower stickers and watercolour paint, our own materialities blending in with the materials we created with.

Alongside painting, making collages, and drawing, we talked about how we all felt a strong connection between our queerness and art, and these mediums sparked personal and meaningful conversations. From vintage fashion choices to extravagant room decor and drag makeup, it seemed like 'queer' was in every colour and material we loved. Lost in conversation, I no longer felt intimidated by such vulnerable discussions, opening up more freely. I realised that during this interview, the barrier between 'researcher' and 'participants' seemed to have disappeared, and that we went from a group of strangers to members of a community that relate to each other.

"I DIDN'T REALISE HOW MUCH I MISSED THIS"

ABOUT

Queering

RESEARCH

With glitter-covered fingers, bags of colourful and messy art supplies, and beautifully unique art pieces in hand, I left the interview wearing the biggest smile on my face. Participants enjoyed this experience and I witnessed them notice how much they wished for more queer spaces like this. I couldn't wait to tell my partner and friends about this silly queer project of mine, and was yet to share my findings with a few hundred students and academics at a conference later on.

To capture all of these small bits, emotions, people, and colourfulness, I made a zine with vibrant pages and trinkets on every corner. Zines are fun, self-published, non-profit print publications that account for the people who've made them and the audience they hope to touch. They remain intrinsically focused on the materialities of the now and lived experiences to make knowledge and community accessible, which links perfectly with the aims of Live Methods in research.

By creating this space and time for queer people to connect, I wanted to allow my community to gather and share their own experience with transness—from sweet anecdotes to more bitter ones, to focus on the subjective and the personal. As part of my assignment, I hoped to add to existing research and prove that artistic mediums are crucial to innovative methods. But deep-down, and most importantly, I wished for more queer friends, more queer-led and queer-focused spaces, more freedom to creatively produce together. This project encapsulates all of these goals and - I hope - serves an activist role in this direction.

When looking back on my participants' artworks, I get a sense that I know them better than before, with each artistic choice made fitting their personalities and gender identities authentically. Such richness would not have been recorded with more traditional interview and research design methods with the same message. This pretty and collaborative process reflects queerness' ability to create engaging and generative knowledge that resembles the messiness of life. With more unconventional practices, art allows a social group to connect, support each other, and strengthen their community for and by them. Ultimately, this visibility is actively political and resilient, refusing conformity and any form of systemic oppression.

So be creative! Don't let academic conventions dictate the uniqueness of your community. By widening the limits of what we understand to be research, we can redistribute fairer access to shaping academia. We can further ask, "How can we best accommodate our classrooms, teach-outs, interviews, and conferences to reach wider groups?" Art is, I believe, a medium that allows a move towards inclusion and diversity in research practice; it knows no boundaries beyond discipline, gender, ethnicity, or class.

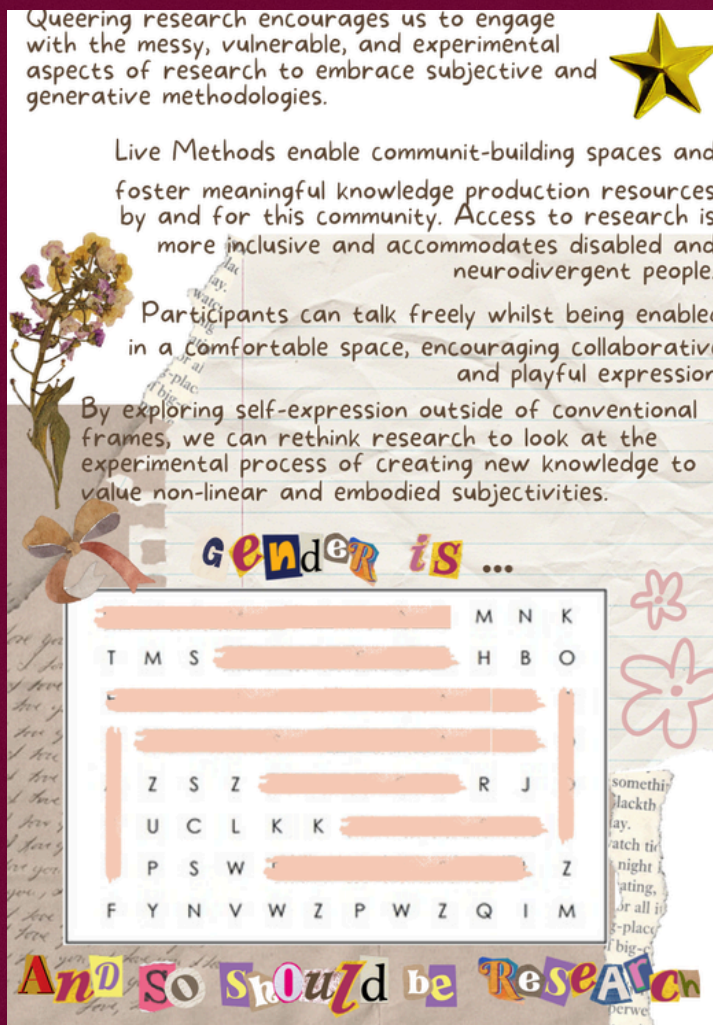
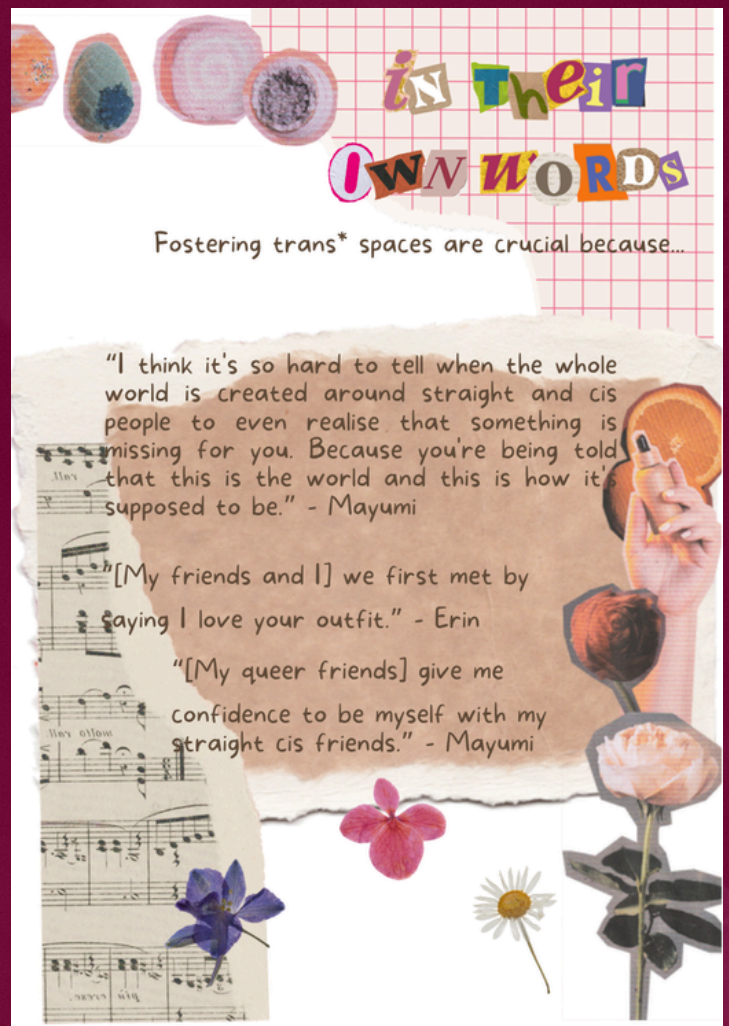
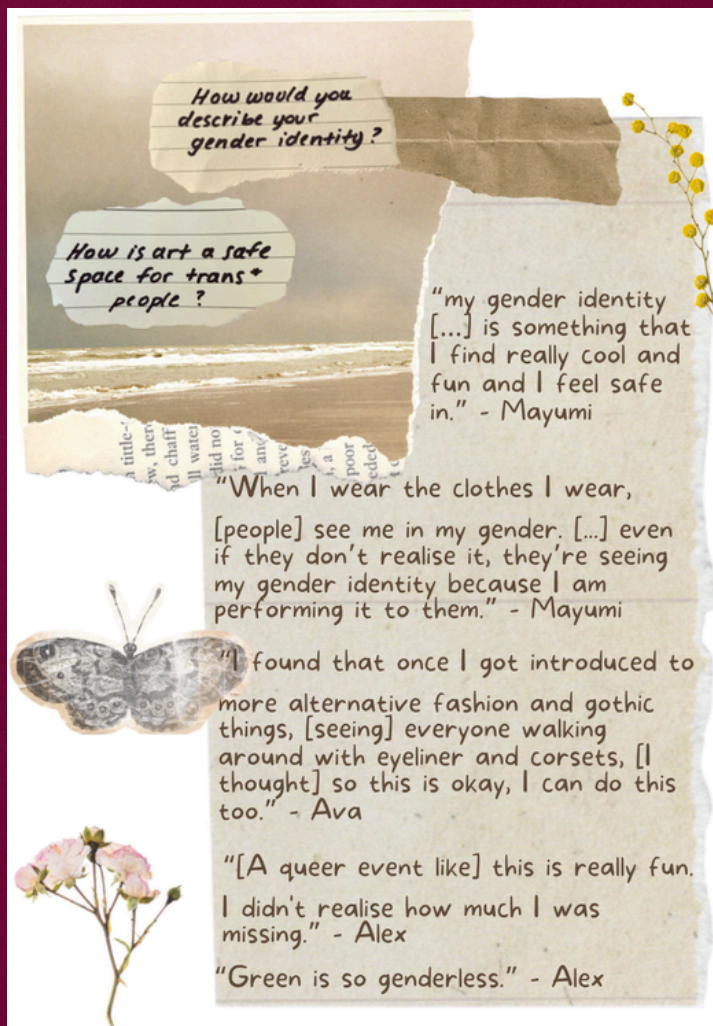
"HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE YOUR GENDER IDENTITY?..."

"-I LOVE THE COLOURS YOU CHOSE!"

"-CAN YOU PASS ME THE SQUEEZY GLUE?"

"HOW IS ART A SAFE SPACE FOR TRANS* PEOPLE?..."

**HERE'S TO QUEER AND TRANS*
ART CHANGING THE WORLD!**



MAGAZINE

BY MEGAN GEALL

"QUEER ART, JOY, AND EXPERIENCE DESERVES TO BE DOCUMENTED WITH INTEGRITY."

Whether it was organizing protests or soliciting a suitor, print publications have a long and storied history within the LGBTQ+ community. Culture, community, and communication were distributed around the world, connecting people and sharing information - *Planorama* is one of many queer magazines continuing this tradition in the current era. In the digital age especially, having physical spaces to lend witness to our existence is more important than ever. It is these, not the online, that will survive for decades to come. Queer art, joy, and experience deserves to be documented with integrity.

Here are ten print and digital magazines you should take a look at for politics, fashion, and cultural discussions surrounding the community and intersectional groups:

1 *ebony Tomatoes Collective*

This radical tri-annual publication is a testament to the black queer experience through art, commentary, and literature. It offers free works on their website as well as a print publication.

2 *Polyester Zine*

A current cultural conversation in the intersection between LGBTQ+ and feminist identities. Trend and commentary converge through online articles and seasonally published zines.

3 *Sanctuary Magazine*

This radical tri-annual publication is a testament to the black queer experience through art, commentary, and literature. It offers free works on their website as well as a print publication.

4 *Bricks Magazine*

An independent queer magazine that publishes seasonally, focused on arts and culture. It also includes online articles, and sponsors a book club focused on building community through a love of literature.

5 *Snatch Magazine*

For all the sports lovers - Snatch is for you. This new magazine focuses on women's sports, and highlights amazing LGBTQ+ athletes.

Ebony Tomatoes Collective



Sanctuary Magazine

6 Curve Magazine

Founded in 1990, Curve is geared towards empowering queer women and nonbinary individuals to share their stories. It offers free online material that documents important cultural ongoings and stories.

7 Malice Girls

Malice is a new music, film, and culture zine based in queer experience.

8 Chapstick Magazine

A lesbian-specific magazine focused on building community and highlighting lesbian culture. It is digitally based out of LA and features a wide variety of submissions from lesbians of all walks of life.

9 Archer Magazine

Focusing the experiences of transgender individuals especially, this Australian magazine is available online and twice yearly in print.

10 Xtra Magazine

Launched in Toronto in 1984, Xtra is now a digitally based magazine committed to the advancement of queer liberation. There's something for everyone, from politics and lifestyle, to culture and history.

Sanxtuary Magazine

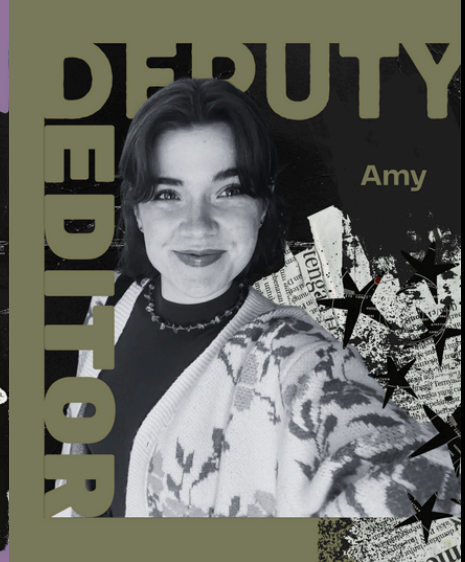
Polyester Zine

Snatch Magazine

These magazines are not only amazing reads- they also offer opportunities for queer creatives to submit and share their voices! Many are UK based and throw pop-ups and events for the community. Consider checking them out for yourself and supporting the growth and distribution of queer culture.

"ALL OF THESE ARE FOR QUEER PEOPLE, BY QUEER PEOPLE, UNDERSCORING THE IMPORTANCE OF LGBTQ+ SPACES IN PRINT. WE CANNOT AND WILL NOT BE ERASED."

MADNESS



CURRENT INITIATIVES

Become a rep for PLAN!



Interested in becoming a Freshers/ Postgraduate Representative for Warwick PLAN?

As a Junior member of the PLAN executive committee, you will work to promote events, engage your cohorts in the society's activities, collaborate with exec members and, of course, get your own coveted purple exec hoodie!

Keep an eye on our Instagram for applications :)

PLANORAMA PODCAST



Hello fellow queers and other funky folk. It's Maya (she/her) and Ben (he/him), coming at you through the page, to compel you to listen to the Planorama Podcast - THE QUEER STUDENT. We've got everything you could possibly need and want thrumming in your ears: culture, careers, community and plenty of charisma. All clear, here and most importantly - queer! Come join us, the more the merrier. Let's make Warwick, and the world, a better and queerer place!!



WHO IS WARWICK PLAN ?

If this is your first exposure to PLAN, welcome!

At PLAN, with sponsors from multiple industries, exclusive spring weeks and our annual conference, we offer plenty of opportunities for our LGBTQ+ community here at Warwick. We also run workshops, speaker events and more to help you build your employability skills and support you through university into your career.

We also host an array of socials, trips and club nights to provide a supportive, welcoming environment for Warwick's LGBTQ+ community and allies.

When finding internships and learning about companies, students with minority sexual orientations and gender identities have the added issue of discovering how open and accepting firms are of LGBTQ+ professionals. By highlighting upcoming events put on by companies that are committed to providing a safe working environment for their LGBTQ+ staff, we hope to help our society's members in their endeavour to find an accepting workplace.

PLANORAMA IS ALWAYS LOOKING FOR NEW VOICES!

Planorama is our very own magazine, established to provide a platform for the queer voices of the University of Warwick. We cover both university and mainstream topics in our print magazines and online stand-alone articles.

We print 3-4 issues every year, with our online articles posted regularly on our social media pages and website. At Planorama, we always want to hear more points of view. If you would like to submit to us, join the Planorama Writers and Artists group chat! You can find the link in our instagram bio.

No prior experience is necessary!

ARE YOU A FRESHER? JOIN PLANORAMA AS A FREP!

warwickplan.co.uk/planorama



[@warwickplanorama](https://www.instagram.com/warwickplanorama)



Warwick PLAN Society



WARWICK PLAN'S

LGBTQ+ MAGAZINE

