

Spring 2022, ISSUE 2

GENARZINE

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The Social Science Magazine by the students, for the students

Editor's Letter



Welcome back to the second edition of Genazine! It was amazing to hear the feedback from the first edition and lovely to hear many readers congratulate myself and my team on the hard work we put into it. For this edition I was approached by many eager to get involved and it was good to further develop and establish a team.

On behalf of myself and my team, we just want to say a huge thank you. We were able to reach many of our aims for this magazine, and have created something we are really proud of. This edition explores the consequences of Covid-19, as well as fast fashion and the success that was the release of Shang-Chi as well as its implications.

I hope readers enjoy this edition of Genazine and I look forward to hearing your thoughts!

How can I get involved in the magazine?

Come and speak to me in person or email me on 15-oaki@shsg.org! Currently we are looking at making a team of year 12's to continue the magazine so just let me know if you would like to get involved.

- Dami

The Front Cover

Racism is a constant battle we are trying to eradicate. This picture aims to shed a light on the importance of remembering the battles the black community face as well as other ethnic minority groups because of something as simple as their skin colour. Recently in the media we have seen how black lives are being treated as other or not important, from police brutality to brutal murders due to racism. It is essential to talk about this in addition to black cultures and history, especially in the UK where we do not talk much about the history of black people in this country and their accomplishments and achievements. This front cover photograph reflects the dark history that black people from all different corners of the earth experience, seen with the shadow, whilst with the light reflecting on the other side we see all the great things about black history and culture and more. It serves as a light of hope for the future.

- Ayaah

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How Trans-Exclusionary Feminism in Bathrooms, And in General, Damages Feminism Overall

By Ben

Whether transgender women should be allowed in women's facilities such as bathrooms is a common point of discussion and debate, particularly in feminist spaces. Transgender individuals face marginalisation and discrimination in many aspects of their lives, so potentially denying them of using something as basic as a bathroom safely is questionable, if not immoral. The justification for this exclusion is usually attributed to women's fears of men abusing transgender friendly bathrooms for the purpose of sexual crimes.

“Trans-exclusionary fears are not accurate”

Feminists are all too familiar with hearing arguments that try to claim women should simply wear more modest clothing if they do not wish to be assaulted. It has been proven many times that a rapist will have no preference for what a woman wears, and it can be easily concluded that the victim's clothes don't cause rape, rapists do. In the same vein, whether or not someone identifies as male or female has no influence on whether they commit a sexual crime.

A 2018 study that investigated rates of sexual assaults and related crimes in gendered and gender-neutral bathrooms in Massachusetts found that there is no link

between trans-inclusive bathrooms and sex crimes. In fact, the study found that shortly after introducing gender-neutral bathrooms, rates sexual crimes began to fall slightly. Evidence like this shows that trans-exclusionary fears are not accurate.

This belief also ignores the fact that cisgender women are equally able to sexually assault other women. By just preventing anybody with a penis from entering bathrooms, this does not eliminate the threat of sexual assault. A man could sneak in while others aren't looking, and a cisgender woman could commit an assault with nothing stopping them from entering. This is because there is no way of telling a predator cisgender woman apart from others; the same can be said for transgender women. The discrimination lies purely in that one is transgender.

‘I cannot stress the importance of supporting women's spaces being open to all women’

Still, however, let's consider that trans-exclusionary feminists are correct in their fears of the threats that transgender individuals pose. If they

insist that transgender women should be banned from women's bathrooms, how exactly do they hope to achieve this? Checking to see if everyone who comes into the bathroom has a penis or a vagina is hardly practical and most definitely worse of a sexual assault than what trans-exclusionary women fear.

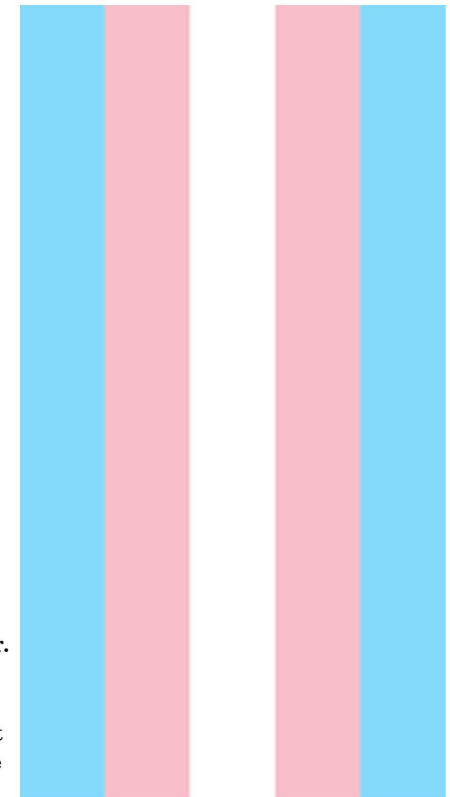
The only other option then is to make it so women who “look” transgender aren't allowed in. In practise, this would just mean that any woman who doesn't meet the social expectations of what a woman should look like isn't accepted. Firstly, there is no “look” to being a transgender woman. All this idea does is force them to “pass” as looking like a cisgender woman, which encourages unhealthy stereotypes onto them. Secondly, this potentially causes some cisgender women who don't meet social standards for a woman's look to be excluded for no reason whatsoever.

“The discrimination lies purely in that one is transgender”

This became a viral issue in 2016 when cisgender Aimee Toms was harassed by other women as they believe she was transgender. Cisgender women would also feel pressured to appear more feminine and socially acceptable. In their efforts to protect women, trans-exclusionary feminists have enforced patriarchal standards onto all women and failed the primary goal of feminism.

After discussing all the arguments, the debate over whether transgender women should be allowed in women's bathrooms is much clearer. Those who wish to allow transgender women are promoting equality and helping to affirm people's struggle with gender, those who don't are contradicting their own goals purely in the name of bigotry and unsubstantiated fears. If

you are a feminist or at all care about women's and LGBTQ+ rights, I cannot stress the importance of supporting women's spaces being open to all women.



Hidden British Black History

With Kali

Black History Month, specifically British Black History Month, is celebrated in the month of October. Something I had recently realised is that British Black History Month never seems to centre around BRITISH black people. We learn all about Martin Luther King Jr, the Civil Rights movement, Rosa Parks, the Black Panther Party, all things I would argue are very important to learn about and should be taught in the school curriculum, although what do we know about BRITISH Black History? Movements such as Black Lives Matter, originating in America, have also led to a focus solely on black people within America and their struggles. The struggles of Black Britons may be different, but struggles, nonetheless. Why is this not taught in the school curriculum and in history lessons? Black British history IS British history, and it is essential that we acknowledge that.

There are many Black Britons who have been important figures through history and important historical events about which many of us have not heard. You might have heard about Rosa Park being a pioneer and causing the Montgomery bus boycott but what you may not have heard of is the Bristol Bus boycott of 1963. After WW2, people from commonwealth countries were asked to help



rebuild the country and they often worked in the public sector such as the NHS and driving buses. However, Omnibus Company in Bristol, which was ran by the council, refused to employ any black or Asian drivers. At this time, it was not illegal to discriminate on the basis of race, and the first Race Relations Act 1965 did not include discrimination in housing or employment. The brains behind the boycott, Paul Stephenson, Roy Hackett and Guy Bailey were inspired by Rosa Parks in the US for refusing to give up her seat for a white passenger. Blockades and sit-down protests were organised by Hackett to prevent buses getting through the city centre. This was successful, with the Omnibus company changing its policy and in mid-September they hired their first non-white bus director, Raghbir Singh and further black and Asian crews followed. This was a step forward for equality in Britain, despite being on a small scale, it made all the difference and is dubbed as the country's first black-led campaign

against racial discrimination and was the beginning of the struggle for racialequality in the UK.

Many Black Britons who played important roles throughout history are not learnt about such as the influential Mary Seacole. Mary Seacole, of Jamaican and Scottish heritage, was a nurse and businesswoman. From a young age she had always been interested in medicine, a passion inherited from her mother who used traditional Jamaican medicines. She travelled the world, absorbing medical knowledge everywhere she went. She then asked to be an army nurse for wounded British soldiers in modern-day Ukraine - The War Office refused this request. This did not demotivate her. She funded the trip herself and set up the British Hotel - a place of rest for wounded British soldiers. She also nursed British soldiers who were wounded on the battlefield. She was dubbed 'Mother Seacole' in Britain and is seen often to be overshadowed by Florence Nightingale and her contribution is gored by history books. Her



leadership ended up paving the way for diversity in nursing within the UK and her legacy should be recognised and celebrated. This being said, Mary Seacole and her contribution is being more recognised now and a memorial statute has been built in the gardens of St Thomas's Hospital and is the UK's first in honour of a named black woman.

Sir Trevor McDonald OBE is a Trinidadian-British newsreader and journalist and became a news presenter. In the 1970s he was one of a few black faces in broadcast television and interviewed many figures, from Mandela to Hussein. He also went on to become the first sole presenter of News at Ten. He retired in 2008 and by this time had received more awards than any other news broadcaster in Britain. He then received an OBE in the Queen's Honour List in 1992, followed by a knighthood in 1999. Studies have shown that there is a strong correlation between low self-esteem and a lack of portrayal of a particular group. Having only a few Black people on television, this was an issue for Black people in Britain, particularly from the 70s through to the 90s in which they faced harsh and overt displays of racism regularly. Trevor McDonald was a glimmer of hope for them, showing that despite all the hardships they were facing, they could still achieve anything they wanted to achieve, although this would be more difficult due to the institutional racism that was and

still is, evident in society. Due to the negative black representation in the media and television, young black children would also need help to avoid internalising these stereotypes. Black representation was derogatory and demeaning and so could be damaging to people, posing another problem and making this idea harder to achieve.

Another issue I had noticed was that people seem to forget slavery was not only taking place in the Americas but was also taking place in Britain, continuing into the late 18th century. It is important therefore, to acknowledge the lasting impacts of things such as slavery on systemic racism within the UK. Olaudah Equiano, born in the Kingdom of Benin in 1745 (modern Southern Nigeria) was a slave, forced into slavery from a very young age. During his eight years with his first master, a Royal Navy Officer, he learnt how to read and write, and after being traded a few times, was able to save enough to buy his freedom. Afterwards, he dedicated his life campaigning for the abolition of slavery and became a member of the Sons of Africa abolitionist group, publishing an autobiography, depicting the horrors of slavery, in 1789. This book went on to become a best-seller and aided the abolitionist cause. Britain's role in slavery is usually brushed under the rug and ignored but doing so erases the history of over 3 million Africans being traded on British ships, the negative impact this had on Caribbean countries centuries later, and the hardships they faced, as well as the fact it erases the history of people like Olaudah who helped to end slavery.



Image: brycchancarey

Overall, black Britons, from both African and Caribbean backgrounds played a crucial part of British history for centuries, often with their contribution being ignored or overlooked. The school curriculum still teaches history focusing on white figures and their achievements and traditional events, and if black history is brought up it is usually understated in its significance. The school curriculum as it is currently is ethnocentric and is in dire need of change. It is essential to talk of Black British, from the more sensitive topics such as colonialism and slavery but also topics worth celebrating, celebrating black excellence and the rich of history. Black history is an opportunity to talk of black British people and I hope, soon, to learn about these figures and events within the school curriculum and not having it secluded to one month a year.

'The Devil Wears Prada Zara'

Written by Mercy

The precarious existence of the planet, and this being largely the fault of its inhabitants is a bitter pill to swallow. Popular action in retaliation to this has been on the up – from pressure group protests and increased veganism, to using reusable cups and planting trees - you name it, someone's done it. Progressive measures, namely the 2016 Paris Accord, and global cooperation in events such as the COP26 evidence genuine desire to remedy the hurt done to our world, to which we applaud.

However, it appears that our wardrobes have not seen the same overhaul and critique. Clothing, of course a prerequisite to leaving the house, has moved from a mere necessity to a symbol of identity and status. But at what cost?

One beyond your bank balance.

People's fashion choices have an immense impact on the planet, with much of this blame donned to fast fashion consumption, and rightfully so. Boohoo, PrettyLittleThing and Stradivarius to name a few have a cult clientele particularly amongst us secondary school children. Though their low-price points make them a universally attractive choice, their negative impact on the Earth cannot be ignored. Such companies are perpetuating the climate crisis, using greenwashing as a vehicle to deceive the climate conscious into remaining a slave to the beat of their drum. And it's working. With these industries growing, well... fast, how much longer can unsustainable shopping habits reign supreme?

Albeit illustrious and adorned, the fashion industry also has an ugly side. Fashion Checker concluded in 2020 that 93% of brands surveyed were not paying garment workers a living wage. Bangladesh, India, China and Indonesia, developing nations alike, provide a cheap workforce for these fast fashion brands. For all their hard work and for endless hours in subpar conditions, they are not even able to enjoy a fair wage.

The Ellen MacArthur Foundation found in 2017 that 'more than \$500 billion of value is lost every year due to clothing underutilisation and the lack of recycling'. It's a sad reality to know that being seen in that jacket more than once is a worse price to pay than the preservation of our planet.

Fortunately, there are some labels which are taking genuine steps to mitigate the problems of climate change and reduce their responsibility for the destruction of the globe. If this brief article can teach you one thing, it is that the fashion industry still has a long way to go regarding the planet, and its beauty cannot blind us to its negative impact on our home. It starts with us to make meaningful change.

For more info and a brand directory, visit here: <https://goodonyou.eco>

THE TEA ON SHANG-CHI: A WIN FOR ASIAN REPRESENTATION?

DEAR HOLLYWOOD, NOT ALL OF US DO KARATE – SINCERELY, THE TIRED ASIAN COMMUNITY

Sitting in a fully booked cinema with my little sister, I watch as her face delights at the big screen. She sees dragons, swords, armies, rings and more importantly, she sees herself. It delights me that the next generation of Asian children get to experience what most of us older ones didn't get the privilege to. Watching an entire feature film of people that look like friends and family, being powerful and loving rather than a small cut-away scene where Asian characters are strict, cold-hearted and alienated.

Hollywood's infatuation with Asian culture has been omnipresent throughout the industry, so much so that it's embedded into the very infrastructure of your favourite films. That karate scene in The Matrix, the stereotypical characterisation of Long Duk Dong in Sixteen Candles, the mocking of Japanese accents in Breakfast at Tiffany's, the white-washing of Tilda Swinton's originally Asian character in Doctor Strange. The list is sadly, but not shockingly, mountainous. Time again we have seen Asian characters tossed to the side of the white protagonist, tokened only for their 'oriental' culture, mocked and violently killed, fetishized and restricted to the dichotomy of 'model

minority' or samurai-karate god.

Being tired of this recycled characterisation, my ecstatic self was anticipating a fresh renewal of Hollywood representation with Shang-Chi only to feel... deflated. Whilst I am not at all dismissing the film for its monumental (although late) contribution to Asian audiences and creatives alike, it disappointed me that a franchise as supposedly 'conscious' as Marvel walked right into the very stereotypes that Asian people are trying to combat.



Image: marvelcinematicuniverse.fandom

“Society and media are so intrinsically linked”

Take for instance when protagonist Shang-Chi who shares that he was called “Gangnam Style” by non-Asian classmates as a child, only to reply that he “is not even Korean”. This reductionist take on the matter, belittling the Asian immigrant experience to a mere pop-culture reference rather than attempting to tackle the brutalization of growing up in a Western hegemony, was met with flatness by Asian viewers. Many were alluding this to the corporatized nature of Marvel, sticking to the formulaic structure and extensive use of CGI as a means of appealing to the mainstream audiences; the same Western audiences they cater to in order to keep 'safe'.

“Time again we have seen Asian characters tossed to the side of the white protagonist”

Many criticized the film for being a 'Hollywoodized' version of everything that Asian watchers will already be familiar with, just providing the financial needs to make it 'blockbuster quality'. Just one example would be the fight scenes that strongly attribute to 'wuxia'



Image: marvel

(“A Chinese fiction and film concerning the adventures of... chivalrous heroes”) which has been ever-present in East Asian cinema with the likes of the iconic Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon (2000) and Hero (2002).

“It shapes our beliefs and outlook to the world”

Shang-Chi is, therefore, nothing new to those who are even lightly acquainted with East Asian cinema, and yet it still brought in tons of millions of dollars during its opening: \$139M globally – to be precise. So the question stands – What does Shang-Chi actually bring to the table to make it this commercially successful? Although Shang-Chi utilizes the many boxes that Asian characters and actors have been constantly limited to (such as kung fu masters and even underground 'Asian Baby Girls') it flips the stereotype on its head. With the majority of the crew from API (Asian, Pacific Islander) descent, representations avoid hollowness or ignorance; this is just one testimony to the importance of media plurality in creative industries today.

Take for example the likes of Xialing, Shang-Chi's younger sister. On surface level, she seems to resemble the archetype of the 'Dragon Lady' as Lucy Liu stereotypically embodied in Kill Bill with her hyper-aggressive and cruel stance that attribute to her sex appeal (a predominant image in the fetishization of Asian women due to media). This re-imagining of a successful Asian woman to a 'Dragon Lady' is not only depreciative of Asian women everywhere but fuels the notion that women of colour are empty vessels that are incapable of human sensibility or unworthy of empathy.

“It fuels the notion that women of colour are empty vessels that are incapable of human sensibility”

But we slowly unravel the many depths to Xialing's characterisation, proving that she goes beyond mainstream Orientalist tropes. Her power is not just 'given' to her but rather earned through motivation to prove that she is just as worthy a child as her brother. The Chinese idiom hong nan qing nü (“heavy male, light female”) neatly summarises her predicament of the struggles that Asian daughters face, being overshadowed by their brothers. Her anger and frustration is justified by her internal trauma, rather than being

an empty attribute put on top of her due to her genes. Despite her cold first impression literally beating Shang-Chi to oblivion, her sensibility is evident in her warming up to her brother's best friend, played by Awkwafina. Furthermore, the homosocial adoration that is shared between the female characters is an image not oftenseen in new media representations. Exemplary in the image of Xialing's mother who is maternal and loving rather than the excessively tyrannical Asian parent (take for example Lane's mother in Gilmore Girls).

How is this ACUTALLY significant though? Those who may be oblivious to the importance of media representation – especially in a medium as reality-mirroring as film - may be asking this. Short answer is that representation is important : it shapes our beliefs and outlook to the world, inherently affecting our behaviours and prejudices to other people in real life.

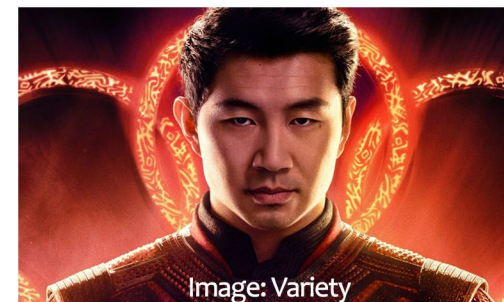
“The homosocial adoration that is shared between the female characters is an image not oftenseen in new media representations”

Sadly, with the pandemic in motion, Asian hate crimes have been at an all time high. Some American states have estimated a 1200% rise in anti-Asian crimes within their county. Derogative names such as “China Virus” erupted on social media and in the past year, the sad incident of the Atlanta

killings occurred where eight Asian women were brutally murdered after an attack. The killer used the defence that he interpreted Asian women as sexual objects : a mindset which has prevailed through hyper-sexualised representations of Asian women on film. Society and media are so intrinsically linked that it is almost painful to hear the ignorance and obnoxious takes that films such as Shang-Chi are not a win.

“Asian women filmmakers are being put on the global map with the likes of Lulu Wang”.

On a more hopeful note however, Asian excellence in the West is at its cinematic peak. Chloe Zhao recently being the first Asian woman to win the Oscar for Best picture and Best screenplay and Minari star Yuh-Jung Youn becoming the first Korean woman to win best supporting actress. Additionally, in the Romance genre, Asian leads are shown to be desirable partners with Lana Condor leading the teen franchise To all the Boys. Behind the scenes, Asian women filmmakers are being put on the global map with the likes of Lulu Wang.



I must add that Korea has been the arrowhead in the surgency of globalised media with its k-pop and k-drama industry respectively breaking the internet. Although Shang-Chi does have its issues on a micro-scale, it's macro-impact to Asian representation is commendable. Watchers should keep in mind, however, that this small win is just a single step towards re-writing the discrimination, racism and hate that POC communities have experienced under the last century. The same discrimination that the Hollywood industry has benefitted and profited from. And it is with this in mind, Reader, that we should collectively strive towards better inclusivity and representation of marginalized groups both on the screen and beyond it.

A discussion by Arabella

A Scramble ✈️ for Travel

By Alex

Holidays and overseas travel are a reserve for a lucky few. International tourism has fallen 85% since the pre-pandemic level. Just under 1/3 of the world's borders remain entirely closed. Nearly 280m people living outside of their home countries were barred in 2020 – some forced to bid farewell to passing loved ones over Zoom. Is it time to reclaim normality and allow people to live and travel freely?

October almost felt like a fantasy to some, with international travel being arguably the most free since the pre-pandemic level. Within the span of a week, the UK's three-tier traffic light system on travel was entirely scrapped, 'non-essential travel advice' for Brits was no longer advised, and 169 countries were open to UK travellers with minor restrictions. It seems that other European countries were feeling just as optimistic too, with Spain and France both easing travel restrictions and allowing minorly restricted travel between the UK and other neighbouring countries. So, that's it right? If developed countries in Europe are opening up and encouraging travel abroad, it must mean that this COVID-19 situation is nearly over, right? Well, not really.

As the UK lifted domestic COVID restrictions in the hope of reclaiming normality, the next step would've naturally been to open their borders to the world once again. Holidays became hopeful, and travellers scrambled to book long-

awaited flights out and into the UK. Tourism data collected by VisitBritain estimated that inbound UK flights would total 31.7 million by the end of 2022, and although far off from the pre-pandemic level, normality takes time. However, from a critical point of view, this scramble to open borders and re-liberalise the tourism industry is nothing but a desperation for economic recovery whilst neglecting the UK's constantly existing COVID threat. I agree, tourism will benefit all of society as it means tourist expenditure in the local economy, and thus more money means the country gets richer... and hence a richer country assumes a better material quality of life for its citizens. However, we need to re-evaluate by looking at the figures.

Just in November, the UK saw over 600,000 new cases and over 3,400 new COVID deaths. A study by The Lancet Public Health revealed that over 10% of UK cases are transmitted from international travel. Meanwhile the ONS estimates that over 20% of UK and overseas travellers arriving into the UK in 2021 don't deem it necessary to take a COVID test to keep others safe, which represents roughly 1.48m inbound travellers – and considering the rising trend of tampered lateral flow tests in Europe to dodge COVID restrictions and vaccination mandates, and a recent October scandal where a UK lab mistakenly mis-processed thousands of PCR-tests and gave out 'false COVID results', these figures should be quite concerning to the UK's health security.

The COVID threat in the UK is still quite blatantly present, and in spite of constant NHS warning and advisory on the pandemic, it seems that the UK government favours economic growth over proper health procedures to protect the country. Fortunately, as of November 30th, the UK government has set out new measures to combat the emergence of the Omicron variant, with mask mandates in communal spaces and all international arrivals to undertake PCR tests and self-isolate. Although this will be a huge hit to the barely recovering travel and tourism industry, I believe it's necessary to slow the spread of the variant. Moreover, uncertainty over the new variant has unravelled a Plan B for England, which hopes to slow and combat the rate of spread which is estimated to triple by the end of 2021.

Meanwhile another tourist hotspot on the other side of the world, Hawaii's COVID story is a little different. The pandemic battered Hawaii's economy, particularly tourism which contributed 21% to the islands' entire economy. Since April 2020, unemployment rates peaked and poverty rates rose by 1.5% as of November 2021. However, these short-term sacrifices are mutually agreed by Hawaiian locals to be necessary to curb infections, and in doing so, the state has achieved one of the lowest infection rates in the USA.

In July 2021, Hawaiian officials relaxed domestic travel restrictions from the mainland and throughout the Hawaiian state in hopes of rebuilding the economy, but locals remained on edge. Cheap flight tickets and a post-lockdown ecstasy poured thousands of travellers into Hawaiian airports, ready to embrace local culture. Restaurant and bar restrictions were relaxed, and the tourism industry welcomed travellers with open arms.

Only a month later, restrictions were abruptly back-pedalled after infections rose by 63% and hospitalisations surged by 78%, putting immense pressure on Hawaii's healthcare system and a strain on the island's already limited resources. The new delta variant ravaged Hawaii, and State Governor David Ige pleaded for travellers to stay away from the islands and only travel if necessary. However, whether people listened was another issue, and travellers from the US mainland continued pouring into Hawaiian airports at around 700 new inbound landings per week. As of November 2021, Hawaii welcomes unvaccinated travellers so long as a negative PCR test is presented, however there is a rising trend of travellers being arrested in Hawaiian airports due to faking vaccination documents or COVID test results out of desperation for a sunny vacation.



Image: kindpng

Mental Health Awareness, and the Art of Listening

By Koyinsola

TW: mention of eating disorders, and mention of self-harm / suicide. This article contains discussion of mental health disorders throughout, so please read at your own discretion.

World Mental Health Awareness Day was on Monday the 10th of October this year. As a result of lockdown mental health has really come to the forefront lately. So, I decided to write an article about the misconceptions surrounding mental health, fuelled by the media and ignorance, and how they can easily be debunked.

Take eating disorders, for example. When the phrase eating disorder (ED) is said, restrictive disorders like anorexia (intense fear of gaining weight) and bulimia (consuming large amounts of food to later purge to avoid gaining weight) come to mind. Alongside this, there is a specific type of person that unconsciously comes to mind when eating disorders are mentioned; the image of a dangerously skinny girl who avoids eating at all costs. This image is due to the media's constant inaccurate portrayal of EDs. You can literally search up TV show characters with eating disorders and 99% of them fit this description. This is not to say skinny girls can't have eating disorders, because they can. Anyone can, which is exactly why we must change the way we view EDs.

“No one should have to prove their mental health issues”

First and foremost, anorexia and bulimia are not the only eating disorders out there, and not all EDs are restrictive. Only around 10% of those with eating disorders suffer from anorexia, and 40% from bulimia nervosa whilst the rest have binge eating disorders (BEDs). Yes, that is a real thing. When people binge, they literally lose control and eat large amounts of food in a short period of time, unable to stop. This experience is very distressing, yet people often invalidate the struggle those with this disorder face, by telling them to eat less. They cannot simply “eat less”, just as people with restrictive disorders cannot “just eat”.

Saying phrases like this is extremely invalidating. But because being fat (which is not an offensive word unless you use it offensively) is seen as the individual's “gluttony” or “laziness”, people struggling with BED aren't paid attention to. Actually, any fat person with any sort of ED is often ignored. So next time you see someone online discussing their struggle with an ED and trying to bring attention to this, do not instantly invalidate their experience because you view them as overweight, and they don't fit your idea of someone with an eating disorder. LISTEN to them

Secondly, it is not only skinny girls who struggle from eating disorders! 25% of those diagnosed with a restrictive ED are male, but I'm sure the figure would skyrocket if we began to assess those

gym rats who eat a scarily finite number of calories and over exercise daily. This phenomenon is not nearly talked about enough, and in fact is seen as normal because of toxic masculinity and outdated gender stereotypes that don't allow men to openly discuss their struggles with mental health issues, let alone their struggles with a ‘girly’ mental health issue like an ED. Male mental health awareness, specifically when it comes to eating disorders is disgustingly sparse. We are in desperate need of a safe space where men can discuss their struggles without being shamed or viewed as less manly, in order to bring down the frighteningly high male suicide rate. Gym rats, and men in general, need to be told that it's okay to struggle with mental health and body image. Men need to know that there's countless people here that they can open up to, that will LISTEN to them.

“We see issues like depression and anxiety addressed as being common”

I will give credit to our generation; mental health issues are becoming less demonised which is clearly a positive. However, as we see issues like depression and anxiety addressed as being common in today's society, the severity of them is so understated that people need evidence shoved in their faces to accept that someone is struggling. It should not take videos of depression rooms or anxiety attacks posted on social media for you to believe that someone is facing an issue. In fact, these videos, despite their “informative” nature, are often damaging to those silently struggling with similar mental disorders. Not only is the person

in the video having to document and display their pain in order to be validated, but those with ‘high functioning’ mental health disorders often feel as though their struggles aren't valid and that they are faking their mental illness because it's not displaying itself like that.

“Male mental health awareness, specifically when it comes to eating disorders is disgustingly sparse”

Let's clear a few things up before we go further. There is no such thing as ‘high functioning depression’ or ‘high functioning anxiety’. Depression is depression and anxiety is anxiety, no matter how it displays itself; the phrase high functioning is irrelevant. That being said, mental illnesses like these are different for every individual as we know – for some it's not physically being able to get out of bed, whilst for others its constantly being inside their own head. Just because you can't see physical symptoms doesn't mean they're not there, only the person with those symptoms can tell whether they're there or not.



Another downside and one of my biggest pet peeves is the misuse of medical terms. It's like we forget that people are allowed to have normal emotions and that sometime sadness and nerves are just that, not depression or anxiety. If you feel nervous right before an important test, that is normal. You do not have anxiety. If you go on to do horribly on this important test and find yourself in a period of sadness, that is normal. You do not have depression. Obviously, I am not a licensed mental health professional so I cannot diagnose or undiagnose you, but please stop using these terms lightly. Using these terms so flippantly makes it harder for people suffering from these illnesses to be listened to. No one should have to prove their mental health issues to you with painful evidence in order to be validated.

“Just because you can't see physical symptoms doesn't mean they're not there”

If a friend or family member goes “Hey, I'm really struggling”, don't invalidate them for not showing symptoms (we often forget that many people struggling with their mental health feel a sense of shame and try to hide their symptoms wherever possible). It was probably really difficult for them to work up the courage to tell you, especially if one of their symptoms is self-harm. Don't wait until it gets to the point of no return and end up regretting it. LISTEN to them.

With OCD, the idea of the disorder has become normalised, but not the actual disorder, just the misconception of it. OCD ≠ having a fear of germs and being obsessed with cleanliness, it's so much

more than that. Many people with OCD do in fact have an aversion to germs, but you're not “so OCD” if you must make sure everything is super clean, once again this is normal (particularly after the pandemic), or maybe you may have germaphobia. People with OCD have uncontrollable compulsions they must complete to avoid negative consequences, usually involving harm or death, they feel will happen. If you don't feel these compulsions, odds are you don't have OCD. People with OCD are also aware that their thoughts are irrational hence the disorder is shrouded in shame; if someone tells you about their compulsions, irrational or intrusive thoughts, don't make them feel even worse. LISTEN to them and reassure them having OCD isn't shameful.

The main victim of the media is not nearly spoken about enough or as normalised: personality disorders i.e., bipolar disorder or borderline personality disorder (BPD). In TV shows and movies, the antagonist is often portrayed with a personality disorder, even if it's not explicitly stated. This fuels the villainisation of and the idea that people with these disorders are dangerous or incapable of receiving/giving love. None of this is true. Many personality disorders are formed as a response to childhood trauma, making blaming the individual victim blaming, which is completely unacceptable. In these cases, the only one to blame is the cause of the trauma, and if the disorder is a result of biology, then no one is to blame. People with these disorders are not dangerous or unlovable, demonising them as such is totally unfair.

“Don't wait until gets to the point of no return and end up regretting it.”

Moreover, with bipolar and BPD mood swings are a big part of it, but mood swings in general are not exclusive to personality disorders – you are not “so bipolar” for having them. Bipolar or BPD mood swings are more intense and to more extreme highs and lows, plus the disorder is more than just mood swings. Living with these mood swings, unstable relationships and affective dysregulation (emotional instability) is hard enough as it is, without being made to feel dangerous. If you actually LISTEN to someone with a personality disorder, you will see they are the same as those without; they aren't dangerous or incapable of loving.

“Listen to them”

If you only get one thing from this article, let it be that we need to stop invalidating one another by using our own skewed ideas of what mental illness should look like; there is no one way to be mentally ill. Instead, we need to LISTEN to one another and create a safe, trusting space for all.

Where to get support:

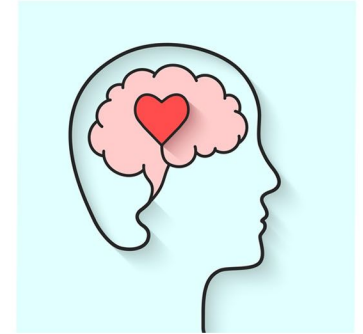
For eating disorders call BEAT at 0808 801 0677
or email help@beateatingdisorders.org.uk

For depression and/or anxiety visit MIND
or call your local NHS helpline

For OCD visit TOP-UK or OCD-UK

For general mental health support call your local NHS helpline

For emergencies call Samaritans or NHS 111



Images:
ish.org
seekpng.com
bravecamp.github.io

Prison for some, Hell for others

Lockdown. A noun. Defined as a state of isolation or restricted access instituted as a security measure. Something was all aware and are currently living through, however, to some the second meaning is more befitting of what the word "Lockdown" really means to them, the confining of prisoners to their cells typically in order to regain control during a riot. Well in some way it does reflect our current situation, were imprisoned within our houses preventing the riot (covid) from spreading. But that's the first interpretation just from the surface, reading deeper, for some it really is a prison, a facility in which inmates are forcibly confined and denied a variety of freedoms under the authority of the state. Or in this case their partner or guardian.

Domestic violence calls have risen within this pandemic, by 11 percent back in 2020 July compared to the same period in 2019. (information provided by (The Independent) Its unfathomable when the person that supposed to love and care for you abuses that trust and molds your perspective on life itself. Maybe in some way this pandemic was a blessing in surprise, without being confined to our houses the increased third-party calls wouldn't have been apparent. The study, which was carried out by the London School of Economics, said police have seen around 380 more domestic violence calls per week on average as a result

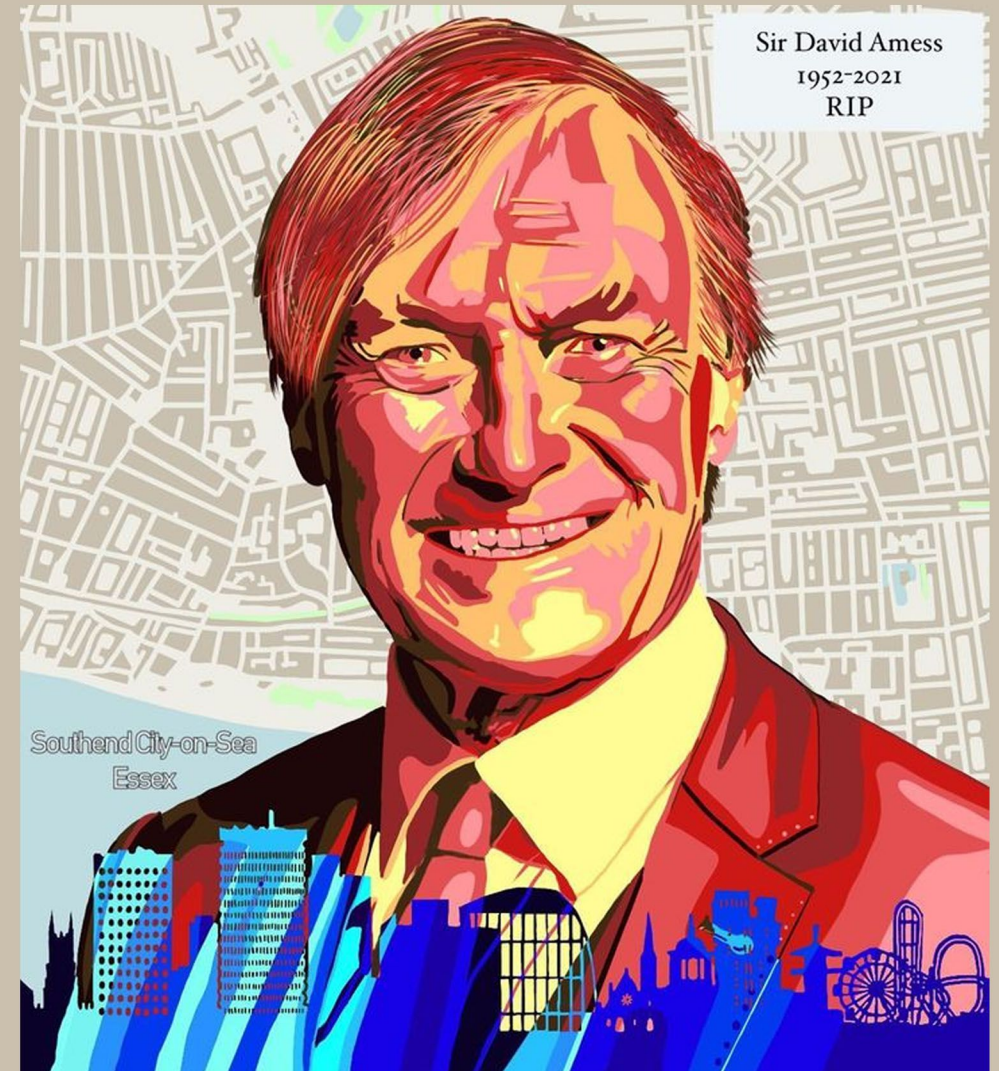
of the lockdown. Researchers said the surge incalls is "almost exclusively" due to a rise in calls from third parties such as Neighbors or family members. Yet, we can't really rejoice at this new revelation, because it's an issue that shouldn't even have third party calls, an issue that shouldn't even have figures that are constantly updated. It shouldn't even exist. Point. Blank. Period.

In more recent news, the sun made light to the fact that the pandemic fueled a 10 per cent annual rise in domestic violence, it emerged yesterday as MP's heard of a looming crisis in services for victims. (extract from The Sun). Though it's decreased by 1% it doesn't necessarily mean it's a good thing, the abuser could have become better at hiding the abuse or neighbors and friends have just given up caring. But what shocks me the most about the research Ive done into this, is that I never knew prior, maybe I'm just not as cultivated as I thought I was or maybe it's because it isn't as broadcasted as it should be, I'm not sure if people are also in the same boat as me but hopefully this gave you some insight. To really understand what hell these people are going through I watched the BBC true story "Murdered by my Boyfriend" which I believe captures the nightmare people are going through but please be wary it contains strong language and violence.

But to end things on a lighter note, if you know anyone or think someone's going through abuse don't feel scared to contact the police, the same goes for those going through the unimaginable right now. Seek help. Life is worth living especially yours, it's not a life meant to be under the control of others. But it's your choice at the end of the day, do what feels right to you. Lockdown. Prison for some and hell for others.

By Blessing

A Tribute To: Sir David Amess



Credit: Imy Moon

Ask the Editor

For this year's edition of the Social Science Magazine we are integrating a section called 'Ask The Editor' so please send ANY questions you may have regarding social issues, political issues, the magazine in general etc. If you had any questions that I couldn't answer here, ask me in person and I'll let you know !

1. *Why do you think that so many people these days can't take a joke?*

I don't think it's a matter of people not being able to take a joke, instead I think it is about the how views have changed with the progression of time. Now in 2022 we have a better understanding of what we deem acceptable. Let us use the example of the LGBTQ+ society. In 1987 9/10 people in UK households disapproved of same sex relationships. Societal attitudes towards members of the LGBTQ+ community were overwhelmingly negative and the community was met with hostile and rude energy. But now with Same sex marriages being legalised in the UK under the same sex marriage act passed in 2013 we are seeing a positive change in the attitudes towards the LGBTQ+ society. Therefore, making this relevant to the question posed, if one was to make a 'joke' about gay men for example that is, in its essence insulting, now we would recognise this as wrong and call it out whereas years ago this would have been considered acceptable.

2. *Do you think it's important to include all opinions regardless of whether you agree with them or not?*

I do think this is quite important. Regardless of whether you agree with someone or not listening to the points they pose is vital. I find it allows members of society to then go on to form and update their own opinions and look at things differently to how they would have before. Having knowledge of other opinions also works to create better well informed decisions and anticipate how others may react for example to certain social policies coming into place.

3. *Should the voting age be lowered?*

Personally I feel the voting age should be lowered to 16. Often an argument that rebukes this would be that 16 year olds are nowhere near educated enough to be able to make informed political decisions but I feel as though the same argument could be made for 18 year olds and is a sweeping and assuming statement that does not stand wholly true. 16 year olds already contribute to politics in a variety of ways (take Greta Thunberg for example) as well taking on 'adult' responsibilities. This is in the sense that they can be employed and be primary carers for family members yet they are still denied the 'adult' right of voting. Through allowing young people to vote I feel as though this would enhance the ability to create a society which more accurately reflects a changing world.

4. *Do you think that sets in schools inhibits the potential performance of students?*

I do. At the beginning of year 12 in a mini study for part of my sociology course, I anonymously asked students this question to which out of the 122 participants 74% said they felt sets limited their ability to achieve. This I believe can partly be explained by something called The Labelling Theory where the label that teachers give to their pupils will eventually lead to the student accepting that label and it becoming true. So if students are seen as bottom set and 'underachievers', they could then as a result place a cap on what they believe there are capable of achieving and find themselves limited in their performance. Sets also have the ability to effect students' self-worth because students could feel lesser in comparison to their peers or they are not capable of achieving high. However, on the alternate side an absence of sets within schools I see could also pose many issues. Let's look at one. Absence of sets means everyone regardless of academic ability would be placed in the same set, which could result in individuals feeling as though they are the 'dumbest' person in the class - a feeling that can be isolating and demoralising not only effecting students' performance but also their mental health. So I think this debate leads to a new question, if we were to remove the process of setting and streaming in schools what would the alternate be?



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