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LGBTQ+ HISTORY MONTH EDITION

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Letter from the Editor

Dear Planorama readers,

Happy LGBTQ+ History Month! This month is a great opportunity to look towards the changemakers that have paved the way for queer youth today and to stand in solidarity with those in the community that need both our advocacy and attention in the present moment. LGBTQ+ history month in the UK first began in schools and universities in 2004, with campaigners looking to shed light onto the queer voices that have been buried over time. Now, as the tradition of celebrating LGBTQ+ histories extends into our own time at university, it is more important than ever to educate ourselves and remember that queerness has always existed and will continue to exist far beyond us.!!

For this issue we have given special attention in connecting the dots between the past, present and future of queer culture. From the intersection of LGBTQ+, Feminist and Civil Rights movements to F**k it fashion, this edition is packed with empowering stories and valuable insights into queer expression over time. I am also delighted to announce that the winners of our poetry competition are featured centre-fold, with Amelie Chadwick's poem 'Young Words' taking our first place prize.

On a more personal level, this is also the last issue for many of our exec, including mine as Editor-in-Chief. For a more detailed farewell, you can flick to the last few pages, but I would like to quickly take this moment to thank every single person who has contributed to Planorama over the past year. Having your work printed in our pages has been the highlight of my time as EIC and the greatest privilege. Keep making history.

And on that final note, I wish you all a wonderful read!

All my love,
Amy.
Editor-In-Chief

RIOT!
OUT OF YOUR CLOSET INTO THE STREETS
PROTEST
QUEER
POWER TO THE PEOPLE
COME OUT!
PROTECT TRANS LIVES
LESBIANS UNITE

INTERSECTIONALITY IN ACTION

SOFIA DRAKE-PERELLO (SHE/HER)

Social movements demanding justice, equality, and rights for those identifying as LGBTQ+ began as a response to church, state, and medical persecution of the queer community dating back centuries. Paths of oppression against homosexual activity and deviances in gender roles have alerted populations across the globe to the existence of difference. As the growth of public media and ideals of human rights drew together in the late 19th century, queer movements were underway, abetted by the social climate of feminism and new anthropologies of difference. Despite over 150 years of queer social movements having existed, these very movements often struggled to address all members of the LGBTQ+ community, remaining exclusive to the struggles of white, male, Western activists whose groups gained leverage against homophobia but did not represent the range of racial, class and national identities complicating the broader LGBTQ+ agenda.

THE INTER-WOVEN HISTORY OF LGBTQ+ FEMINIST AND CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENTS

Social movements spanning hundreds of years continue to reshape society; they are not static moments in human history, but rather fluid, everchanging currents (a testament to the word, 'movement') that rely on a culture of intersectionality and inclusivity for them to truly fulfil their purpose. Not one movement in history has operated in isolation, and it is that very solidarity across struggles that strengthens the push for societal change. In short, without LGBTQ+ movements, society would not be as we know it today. Different social movements may focus on unique struggles, however they often share common goals, such as equality, dignity, and freedom of oppression. This shared foundation creates opportunities for collaboration between the LGBTQ+ rights movement and other social justice causes.

The Civil Rights Movement in the US witnessed an unprecedented mobilisation and fight for equality for black Americans between the 1950s and 60s following centuries of devastating prejudice and oppression, especially in the South. A key human rights activist, and one of Martin Luther King Jr.'s closest advisors, Bayard Rustin, was an openly queer man who was arrested early in his career for "moral cause". Rustin's work in The Civil Rights Movement is much less known due to criticism and discrimination towards his sexuality, and because he never wanted his sexuality to have a negative effect on the Movement, he had a more background role. Rustin and many other black queer activists began bridging the gap between racial justice and LGBTQ+ rights, highlighting the intersectionality between the two marginalised groups. It soon became clear that a racial movement that does not fight for equality for its LGBTQ+ persons will never achieve true equality and inclusivity.

A big similarity between LGBTQ+ and feminist movements is that of the fight for freedom and autonomy over one's own body and identity.

FIGHT FOR FREEDOM AND AUTONOMY

As previously mentioned, many LGBTQ+ rights movements were headed by white, Western men which excluded women and failed to represent lesbian and trans voices. When the first lobotomy (a surgical procedure in which surgeons drilled a pair of holes into the skull and pushed a sharp instrument into the brain) was performed in 1935, it was viewed as revolutionary in the medicinal world and in the treatment of mental illnesses. Lobotomies were used to treat a variety mental illnesses, but with over 60% of lobotomy patients being women, the leading cause for this treatment was to 'cure' homosexuality and female hysteria, thus curing "deviant sexual tendencies". Lobotomies were an inhumane, visceral violation of the female body and mind and were built on a foundation of misogyny and homophobia, reinforcing the bridge once again, between feminist and LGBTQ+ rights movements: one cannot come without the other. Conversations around feminism cannot exclude LGBTQ+ voices, however there is still conflict and tension within feminist spaces and their aversion to including transgender women.

In a moving article, Rebecca Solnit addresses women labelling themselves as feminists who fail to include transgender women, excusing their exclusivity with lurid 'what ifs'. Solnit's response is simple: "trans women do not pose a threat to cis-gender women, and feminism is a subcategory of human rights advocacy, which means, sorry, you can't be a feminist if you're not for everyone's human rights, notably other women's rights". Science has advanced immensely in the past few decades, proving that gender does not adhere to a binary and is not defined by genitalia: it is a complex interplay of chromosomes, hormones, and primary and secondary sexual characteristics. This complexity and fluidity can be a blessing, and it is something feminism embraced when it demanded that 'woman' not be a category so tightly defined by roles, relationships, appearances and limits set upon our options. Thus, feminist and LGBTQ+ rights movements are truly fighting for the same causes, and excluding one or the other is just as damaging as the groups who are enforcing segregation and oppression in the first place.

LGBTQ+ communities have existed, whether accepted or persecuted, in every documented culture. The queer experience is not exclusively human, either, for countless species in the animal kingdom also display traits of homosexuality and polyamorous relationships. Gender binaries are specific to humans as they were created to confine and restrict anyone who differed from what the church, state, or medical world deemed as 'normal'. LGBTQ+ social movements are intertwined into our everyday lives; the fights of hundreds of thousands before us have allowed women, transgender people, people of colour, immigrants, disabled people, and the working class to have voices in conversations that were created to ostracise them. Through collaboration and solidarity, social movements are able to align and create powerful waves of change, but not without intersectionality and a true culture of inclusivity, with no exceptions.

NO EXCEPTIONS.

"Her look, Her voice. Her presence.": Remembering The Vivienne

By Jasper Young

In the summer of 2022, my friends and I first started to go out clubbing in London. In one of our first nights out in Heaven, we were lucky enough to be graced with a performance by The Vivienne. She must have been close to 7ft tall with 6-inch platform heels and a platinum blonde wig that climbed to the sky. She performed a rendition of Cher's "Walking in Memphis", a favourite of the drag queen, playfully jesting with the crowd and waltzing around the stage. I was a huge fan of The Vivienne and her work, and there were many things which will stick with me from seeing her that night. Her look. Her voice. Her presence. She truly lived up to my expectations in every way and I feel so privileged that I was able to experience her brilliance first-hand.

News of the loss of James Lee Williams earlier this year had a profound effect on me and my community. The Vivienne was more than just a drag queen, she was at the forefront of British drag. Her television appearances in recent years were a testament to her wit, charm and natural talent that could speak to anyone, regardless of age, sexuality or gender. As a visibly queer person who was so confident, funny and effortlessly at ease with herself in the mainstream media, The Vivienne was someone we could all look up to. Someone who was unabashedly themselves in everything they did. Someone who assured us that one day we could be as fabulous, as comfortable within ourselves as her.

Speaking on the first series of RuPaul's Drag Race UK, The Vivienne stated how she thought she was the bridge between the old and new styles of British drag, fusing together the humour, dry-wit and stage presence of the more traditional queens, with the poise and flawless looks of the modern queens. She certainly lived up to this statement, both in her winning run in the show and her wider career. Drag Race provided several iconic moments for Viv, from her legendary Donald Trump snatch game and Queen Elizabeth runway (that's her nose!), to cracking up RuPaul on the set of acting challenges and leaving the judging panel in stitches with viral comedy routines – she was a queen who truly had it all, making her one of the most beloved names to the Drag Race fandom.

> "The Vivienne's legacy will be one which extends far beyond the context of Drag Race."

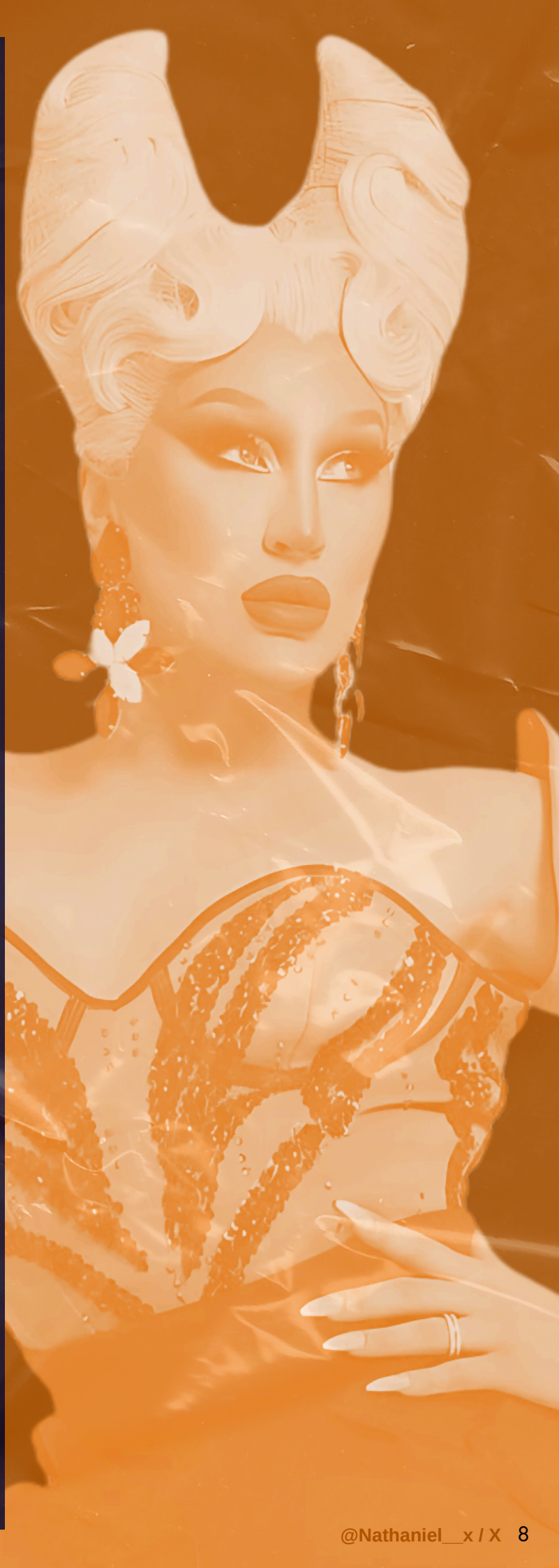
Viv was an advocate for drag in its entirety – an artform she truly loved in all its queer glory. She was the perfect ambassador for UK drag, speaking at every opportunity to platform the artform which she rightly recognised didn't have to conform to one set standard or idea. The beauty of drag, for me, is its queerness – its ability to take whatever weird and wonderful form we aspire it to, a belief The Vivienne also seemed to share and celebrate. The immense outpour of love from queens around the world not only testify to this but also speak to the joy James had to offer to everyone around them, to their kindness, generosity and sprit.

That was also The Vivienne's gift to me and the many others who took great pleasure in their television, online and stage appearances. From finishing third as the first drag queen contestant on ITV's Dancing on Ice, to causing havoc alongside Monét X Change in their many Netflix challenges, she brought so much joy to all who enjoyed her glamour and razor-sharp quick wit. One of my personal highlights of hers was when she went on the run as part of Channel 4's Celebrity Hunted, evading the hunters with tricks involving a gaggle of drag queens and elaborate diversions, before unceremoniously being snatched in the middle of a Sainsbury's carpark. Her West-End debut as the Wicked Witch of the West as part of the touring musical production of The Wizard of Oz was also praised by audiences and critics alike. She truly threw herself into everything that she did, and this passion and light shone through at every opportunity.

Whilst rightfully much has been made of the homophobic abuse she faced in the wake of her Christmas appearance on Blankety Blank, notably from her DRUK series 1 sister Crystal, this vitriol will never hold a candle to the expressions of appreciation and love from the many lives The Vivienne touched with her work. A vigil held in James' memory decorated the Liverpool sky with dozens of green balloons, released to a poignant rendition of Somewhere Over the Rainbow, as hundreds gathered to pay their respects. Fellow Drag Race royalty Danny Beard described her as a "shining beacon of light for the LGBT community", an accurate measure of the joy and magic she gifted us.

I will remember The Vivienne for many things. For her breathtaking looks. For her humour and electric wit. Her voice. Her beauty, inside and out. Whilst her death may have come as a shock to us, in time we may celebrate a life that left such an impact on so many people in such a short space of time. As Jinkx Monsoon so excellently put, "It's too soon for a curtain call, but I know it's a standing ovation."

Thank you Vic for ererything you gave to us.



There's A Monster Under My Bed

Days melt into each other.
The way gum turns into molten dust in your mouth
when you chew it for too long.
I can't breathe -
so, I recite my affirmations over and over and over
again until I realise that
I do not know how long I have been standing
Naked with my back pressed against my shower wall.

I think there's a stranger living inside my home.
A woman most likely.

She leaves lipstick stains on satin pillows,
dirty dishes overflow in the sink,
a lace thong draped on the living room couch,
nicotine loud, it sticks to my walls.

No - I know that there's a woman living in my home.
I'm sure of it.

She buys herself cheap wine with money she steals from my purse.
condoms discarded on my wooden floor,
candy wrappers stuffed in jean pockets,
a chunky gold hoop sits, lonely on my bedside table.

She watches me.
Her presence is a heavy silence -
an itch I can't seem to reach at the back of my throat.

The clock above my head is tired.
Slow clicking, a heavy tongue.
Beneath thin silk,
My fingers are numb and sweaty,
cheeks dry sticky,
lips crack like pavement in summer's heat.
slowly, I crawl out from beneath the fabric,
chipped nail polish makes contact with thin carpet.
The night is ice-cold,
Its silence fills my lungs -
my room is a chlorinated pool,
water when you inhale on accident.
I sink to my knees
braids mop the floor as I peer underneath my bed

and eyes the colour of burnt oil stared back at me.
I scream and recognize that they are mine.

By Stephanie Okeyo

'Hymns For A Guilty Communist'

by Thom Lea

"the fence; as natural, as, the trees" said a-
priest, to (a (queer)).
-rambled something about: dialectics
- I was taking off his belt
(while mixing voices). naughty-

In play there's choices:
[belt hits floor] and [exit inhibition]
, , followed by the thud of washed, denim

you could swear there were patches of blood.
or wax (i suppose)

"You can decide", either way they were stained

i am interjection in a non-space

"It's easier. to. focus, on one, sodden.
patch: of grass"

1. to stop paralysis
2. stops the vomit- blocks it))

- "less teeth..." Hesitation
"actually, more teeth" -

You could've sworn he was floating.
or wearing heels

"Stop giving me your decisions"
the queer spits out-

i am immobile luxury, drawn from circumstance

"...what else can I give you?" same hesitation,
bare. aside. twitches, hesitancy twitches, lingers on a line

"nothing"

iff. alone, defile, straddle
meaning making comes in pairs.

two gods merged, but- but for the white p[icket], bearing, its teeth
"they didn't speak another word"
they chose not to

"i want to tell you a story"

about the first fence post

the rock that stuck it there

i want to... about one,

lost the chance

1. choosing hurt. still hurts y'know.
2. it just feels. good (for a change).

young words

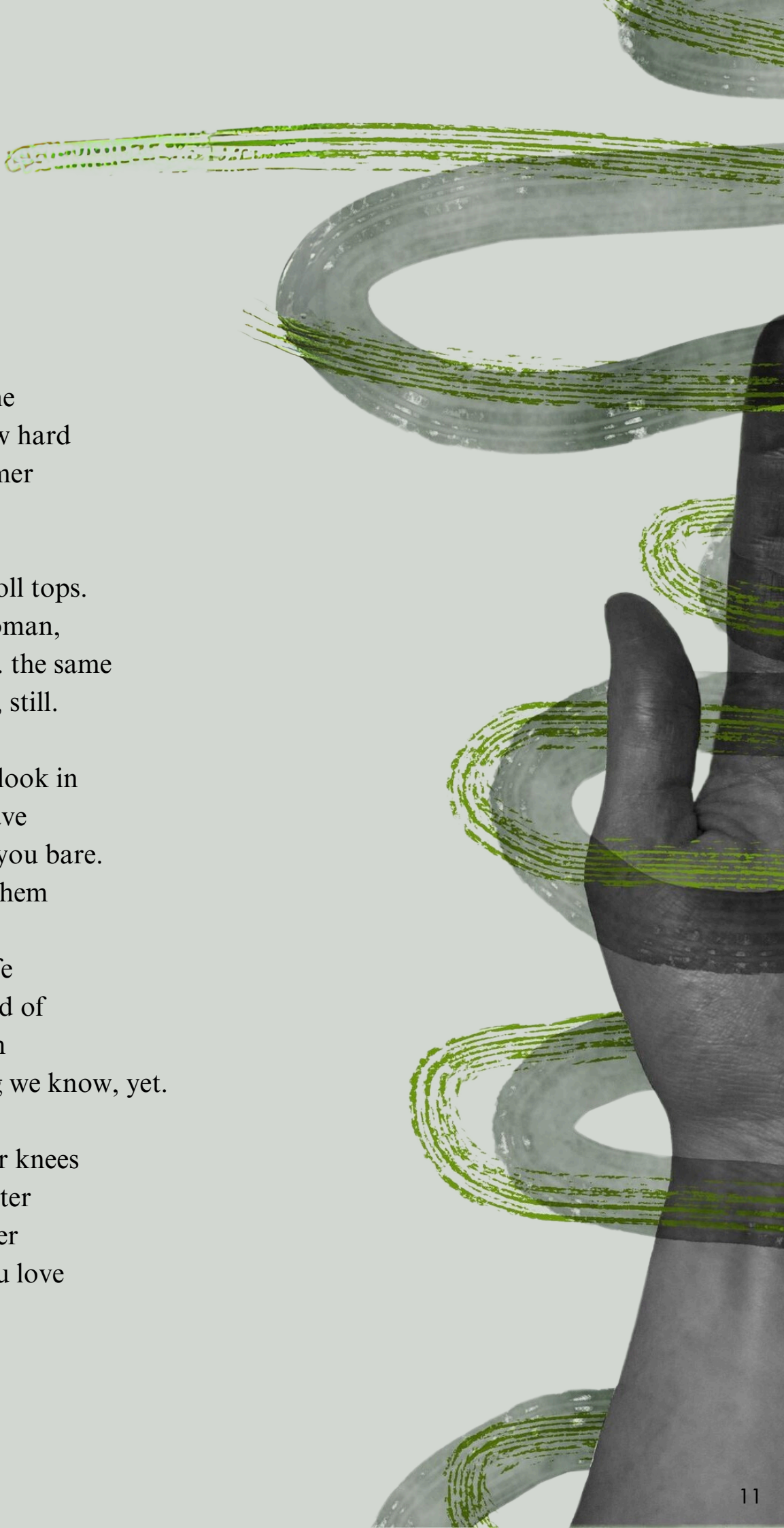
my mother, a line
on the wall. how hard
she had to hammer
to get it to stick.

green wire for doll tops.
make believe woman,
small hands wet. the same
purple knuckles, still.

oh how fingers look in
cold air. like brave
hearts, they lay you bare.
be careful with them

the lick of a knife
will bring the end of
lunchtime. death
is not something we know, yet.

if you graze your knees
i'll kiss them better
just as my mother
taught me. if you love



me, i'll hold your hand
and dig up the dirt
for you. we drew shapes
for hours. i still would,

if you wanted to,
i think. be patient with
me, it's different now.
we made promises

reading palms in the
playground. fifteen days
is a lifespan, for
some creatures. what a

breathless existence
that must be. hold on
to me, please. we won't
have forever. i

am going to go
far away, one day.
my mother, a line
in the sand, for now.

by amelie chadwick

Embracing Your Queer Identity Through "F*ck You Fashion"

Queer communities have recognised the significance of fashion in cultivating community for decades, with clothes not only being representative of identity, but acting as counter-cultural resistance to heteronormative fashion and lifestyle trends that have historically tried to exclude queer people.

The use of fashion for resistance by queer people was especially prominent during the 1950s, when postwar ideals of the white, 'all-American' nuclear family were at the height of popularity. It was in this period that LGBTQ+ youth fought forced conformity through their outward presentation. For example, post WW2, many queer women started adopting more masculine modes of dress- wearing suits, ties and boxy silhouettes- to directly combat the ideal of them as 'feminine objects' being pushed by post-war media.

And despite the fact we're not wearing 1960s counter-culture psychedelic robes to our lectures any time soon, we can definitely still embrace and maintain that idea of community through the way we dress, and say a big "f*ck you" to the boring fashion foisted upon us by money hungry fast fashion brands. With this in mind, here is a 5-step guide to embracing your queer identity through "f*ck you fashion".

cottonbro studio / Pexels

STEP 1:

RE-EVALUATE YOUR STYLE

Getting inspiration from the people around you is one of the best ways to build a fashion identity- and it's exactly what queer people have done in the past. In the 1890s, Oscar Wilde wore a green carnation to symbolise his LGBTQ+ identity, and this later became a discreet symbol of being a gay man. Queer clothing and fashion has always been about establishing community, camaraderie and safety with each other. Ask yourself: What do your friends wear that you really like? What do celebrities or influencers or role models of yours wear- why do they wear it, how do you think it makes them feel?

One downside of the recent rise in corporate "pink-washing" is that big brands often try to commodify queer identity by narrowing it down to specific aesthetics. Just because you're bisexual, it doesn't mean you have to cuff your jeans, and just because you're a "butch lesbian" doesn't mean you can't wear a dress when you feel like it. By drawing these lines and barriers within queer aesthetics, we disregard what our queer ancestors did to get us the fashion freedom we take for granted now. We owe it to them to experiment - to put random garments together, ones that don't conventionally 'work together' or 'match'.

AND SO, THIS BRINGS ME TO MY NEXT STEP...

BY MAYUMI STAUNTON (SHE/THEY)

STEP 2: AFFORDABLE EXPERIMENTATION

Something that was absolutely essential to upgrading my style was layering and upcycling. If you don't have any crazy patterns or designs already sitting in your wardrobe- layering, texture and silhouette can be massive game changers. Fast fashion brands may advertise a skirt as 'only to be worn by woman alongside a cute small top'- but part of embracing queer fashion is quite literally saying "f*ck it" to these heteronormative clothing conventions. I, for one, love layering a more masculine clothing item like a collared shirt with a tie over a more feminine dress or skirt.

Second-hand clothing shopping is also incredibly beneficial to the gender-fluid shopping experience. With such a vast array of styles, colours, cuts and patterns- this is exactly how the clothing is categorised- and the divide between 'feminine' clothing for women and 'masculine' clothing for men is far more blurred. Some great ways to grab some second-hand clothes include charity shops, clothing swaps (I recommend the @warwickpride or @warwickclothescircuit events) or online markets such as Vinted and Ebay. Not only are you getting great clothing for a fraction of the price and saving the environment from further waste- but you're also saying a "f*ck you" to the gender binaries that attempt to dictate who should wear what clothes.

But if you're still unsatisfied with your wardrobe options...
have you ever thought about accessorising?

DMITRY NAUMOV / Canva Teams

STEP 3:

RADICAL ACCESSORISING (LIKE SERIOUSLY, WEAR WACKY SH*T)

Sometimes wearing 'strange' accessories can feel even more daunting than wearing 'strange clothes', because accessories are easier to remove and to hide. However, I have found that accessories act as interesting focal points for your outfits and can be as intensely creative as you want them to be. They also work great as conversation starters and can be a unique and stylish way to express your passions and interests to other people. To the rest of the public, a carabiner is simply for carrying keys, but amongst the queer community, it screams "one of us!"

To find cool accessories, I would really suggest looking at sites like Etsy where people sell handmade, unique jewellery, or creatively crafted belts and ties. However, the amazing thing about accessories is that almost anything can be one - and there are many ways to easily DIY your own at home.

Umut Sarıalan/ Pexels

William Thome / Getty Images

marsian / pixabay

Elias Jara / Pexels

STEP 4:

HAIRCUT AND MAKEUP

Makeup has been historically used to oppress marginalised people and force them into conventional, racist, sexist, homophobic and transphobic beauty standards. However, it can also be used as an extremely creative form of expression. One of the best and clearest examples of this is drag. Drag makeup has been a vital tool for LGBTQ+ performers for years to help support self-expression and artistry for all types of people.

Shann Daniels / diversifylens

Wearing extremely colourful eyeshadow has been a go-to for me. Even with limited makeup skills, it often makes me feel a lot more confident, brighter and overall comfortable in my own skin. Similarly, it wasn't until I got my hair cut short, and in an androgynous style that I felt was more authentic to me, that I started feeling comfortable enough to wear more alternative and androgynous fashion alongside it.

Getting a drastic haircut, or completely changing your makeup style, is not a step that everyone needs to take. But if you're feeling unsatisfied with your fashion and presentation, they can be very affirming to experiment with.

STEP 5:

I HATE TO SAY IT... BUT IT'S ABOUT YOUR ATTITUDE

Ultimately, the most important step to embracing your queer identity through "f*ck you fashion", is quite literally saying "f*ck you" to fashion and the conventions that come along with it- and instead have so much fun, that people are going to ask what pills you've taken.

NickyLloyd / Getty Images Signature

Not only does embracing your queer identity through fashion help you feel more comfortable and confident in yourself, but it helps connect you to other queer people that feel the same way. Fashion is so incredibly powerful when yielded correctly, and every queer person deserves to feel creative, comfortable and empowered.

Also, you'll look cool as f*ck.

GOVERNMENT BAN ON PUBERTY BLOCKERS POSES 'TERRIFYING'

CONTENT WARNING: MENTIONS OF SUICIDE, DEPRESSION AND SELF-HARM

On Wednesday 11 December 2024, the UK government announced an indefinite ban on the use of puberty blockers for people under the age of 18 suffering from gender dysphoria. Puberty blockers (also known as GnRH analogues) are a type of hormonal drug used to pause puberty, prescribed in the past so that trans children wouldn't have to undergo a puberty that didn't align with their gender identity.

Following an 'emergency' ban made by the Conservative government back in May of 2024, the decision to halt the prescription of puberty blockers to under 18s suffering from 'gender incongruence or dysphoria' was renewed twice by the new Labour government before Wes Streeting, current Labour Health Secretary, informed MPs the decision would be made indefinite and not reviewed until 2027.

The ban also applies to Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland, with gender clinics across the UK continuing to supply puberty blockers to a select number of patients who were prescribed the treatment before the introduction of this ban. Puberty blockers also continue to be licensed for the treatment of precocious puberty in cis-gendered children.

WHAT HAS PROMPTED THE BAN OF PUBERTY BLOCKERS FOR TRANS YOUTH?

The UK government has cited 'patient safety' as the main concern in regard to the use of puberty blockers to treat individuals with gender dysphoria, with uncertainty over whether they are an effective treatment for trans children. An NHS trial has been proposed in the future to gather further evidence for 'a better understanding' of the impact of the drugs. Yet, a lack of information on how the clinical trial will take place has caused many medical professionals to voice their concerns, with the Council of Europe criticising the proposed trial as potentially breaching "the fundamental ethical principles governing research".

The highly contentious Cass Review, an independent report assessing gender health care for children and young people in the UK, forms the basis of the reasoning behind the ban. The report was originally commissioned by the UK government after a huge increase in referrals for the treatment of gender dysphoria in young people and advises 'extreme caution' in prescribing puberty blockers. TransActual UK, an organisation working to improve trans and non-binary healthcare in the UK, responded to the Cass report shortly after its publication, naming it 'fundamentally flawed' and based upon 'the idea that being trans is an undesirable outcome rather than a natural facet of human diversity'.

At the start of the new year, LGBTQ+ Labour councillor, Zoe Hughes, resigned from the Labour Party due to the ban, stating that:

"The national party has ignored the mounting criticism of the Cass Review's methodology, independence, and expertise by established and respected research centres and universities, medical professionals/organisations as well as advocacy groups."

PUBERTY BLOCKERS

As a response to the ban, local community group, Coventry Trans Pride, staged a protest outside Coventry City Council on Dec 15th. UK action network, Trans Kids Deserve Better have also staged multiple protests calling for the UK government to respect the lives of trans children.

WHAT DOES THE BAN MEAN FOR THE TRANS COMMUNITY AT WARWICK?

The language surrounding the ban is paradoxical for many trans students at Warwick. With the Cass Report considering care from a perspective that encompasses "all aspects of a child's identity, not just their gender," the implication is that trans people seeking gender care should look towards treatment in other areas first. Examples given in the Cass review are the assessment of potential learning difficulties such as ADHD and Autism, or the treatment of mental health issues. Highlighting other conditions before addressing gender dysphoria as a primary concern completely undermines the significance of trans healthcare for young people.

"To me, it feels almost like a weaponized extension of the age-old 'it's just a phase' argument" admits Elliot, a second-year history and politics student at the University of Warwick.

Extreme NHS waiting times continue to exacerbate the challenges faced by Trans youth seeking support. Waiting times already stretch to more than five years for some young people just to be seen at a gender identity clinic. Even if the indefinite ban is reviewed by the 1st of October 2027, and subsequently reassessed every four years, its current form raises important concerns about the impact on the lives and deaths of Trans youth.

For Trans children unable to access puberty blockers during this period, the consequences can be drastic and devastating, with a serious effect on their quality of life. The implications of delaying healthcare are profound, as it can lead to severe distress. Being forced to undergo the wrong puberty can be an intensely upsetting experience, contributing to existing mental health struggles. The lack of timely intervention could significantly increase the risk of self-harm, mental health issues, and, in the worst cases, suicide. In 2018, Stonewall's 'LGBT in Britain: Health Report' found that 46% of trans people (including 50% of non-binary people) have considered taking their own life.

At Warwick, many students have expressed deep concern over the ban's life-threatening risks posed to the Trans community. Autumn, Warwick Trans* Society's Protest and Safety Officer, emphasised the extremity of the situation:

"Trans healthcare is already segregated from others, where Cis women can get Estrogen from their GP for menopause, cis children can get puberty blockers for precocious puberty."

Fotosalberto / Canva Teams

FUTURE FOR TRANS STUDENTS

These inconsistencies, easily dismissed within cis-centric healthcare, perpetuate stigma and contribute to further violence. Autumn urges that

"Being able to transition as a child can be easier and help with passing, which can make life significantly safer"

and stresses the importance of accessible trans healthcare for young people as a means of reducing discrimination later in life.

LESS TRANS STUDENTS AT UNI, THOSE PRESENT WILL STRUGGLE.

The accelerated rate at which trans healthcare has cropped up in political debates over the last few years has resulted in a "terrifying" reality, as one student notes, in which basic healthcare rights for trans people has become a question of political opinion.

These barriers to basic, human care reinforce harmful narratives. The ban is dehumanising; it paints trans lives as less deserving of dignity and support. The effects are not limited to healthcare but extend into how the larger society perceives and treats trans individuals. Many students expect that recent government decisions will result in a direct rise of transphobia in the local community, with more students afraid to present as their true gender identity due to increased harassment.

"I haven't started medically transitioning yet, partially because of the political environment," another student comments.

Autumn reinforced that in light of the ban, it is necessary to honour every kind of trans experience:

"Not everyone will want to medically transition, not everyone will want to pass, but listen to people and give them the space to exist."

Their advice for the community is to:

"Find good friends and stick together. You're not alone. Give each other time and comfort. We all process things differently, but that's okay. Take time to rest and don't push yourself. Prioritise your safety and happiness."

Sarah Maslen, Executive Director of Trans in the City, also wrote to us, expressing that:

"To all Warwick students who may be struggling with the news of the extended ban on puberty blockers: please know that your feelings are valid, and you are not alone. This decision is deeply unjust, but your identity, experiences, and needs are real and deserving of care."

"Find your tribe and speak with those you trust. Your community is here for you—lean on those who affirm and uplift you. You are seen, you are valued, and you deserve to thrive."

A reminder that **IF YOU ARE IN NEED OF SUPPORT** please reach out to:

- Wellbeing and Student Support: warwick.ac.uk/services/wss
- University of Warwick Health Centre: https://www.uwhc.org.uk/
- Or FREE national organisations such as **Switchboard LGBT** (0800 0119100 - 10am to 10pm) or **Samaritans** (116 123 - 24/7) or text SHOUT to 85258 (24/7).

BY AMY ADSHEAD (THEY/THEM) & YUSRA BABAR (SHE/HER)

Recognise the ARTISTRY OF Your QUEERNESS.
Find pride in the way you hold yourself,
Your BOLDNESS is an ART FORM.

‘We’re sick and tired’

A call for lesbian representation in the media

LILITH MATTHEWS
shE/hER

Amid the epidemic of death, infidelity and evilness tropes, the glaring absence of positive lesbian representation in TV begs the question: **WHEN WILL THE MEDIA GIVE QUEER WOMEN THE STORIES THEY DESERVE?**

Problematic representations of lesbians are nothing new, but in today's world, where young people increasingly engage with queer communities online, the invisibility of lesbians within media is being ever more questioned. As a linguistics student, this prompted me to explore how lesbians navigate the construction of their identity while confronting and challenging outdated tropes through their language use. I conducted a study focusing on a group of young lesbians, centring around their experiences of representation in the media. Participants seized the opportunity to share their thoughts and experiences, exploring the often-overlooked voices of queer women:

A VOICE THAT BOTH DESERVES AND DEMANDS TO BE HEARD.

The cultural exclusion of lesbians begins with a simple pronoun:

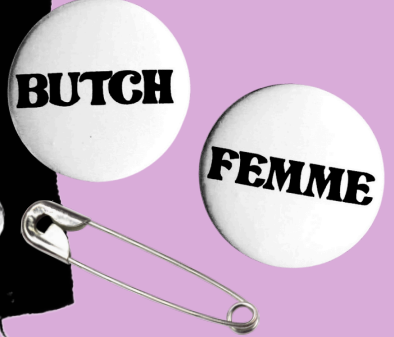
ThEY

Again and again, queer women have been cast as outsiders, their stories dismissed for the same tired tropes. The participants in my study, exhausted by the erasure of queer voices in the media, flipped this narrative on its head by presenting themselves as the ingroup.

“WE” EXIST, “THEY” CHOOSE NOT TO SEE US. “WE” HAVE IDEAS, “THEY” CHOOSE NOT TO SEE THEM.

Therein lies the problem: media creators have the autonomy to hire queer staff, queer writers and queer actors and insert accurate representation, but with the continuous disappointment of seeing your favourite lesbian characters die, break up, or be written off, it is clear that the lack of focus on queer representation is part of an ingrained structural issue. Representation isn’t a matter of possibility, but priority. The participants in my study, who represent many other queer women, were tired of this exclusion, and decided to reclaim the narrative using inclusive pronouns, “we” and “us”, to create their own in-group. One thing is clear:

queER WoMEN REfUsE To bE ERASEd.



Despite the progress in LGBTQ+ visibility, heteronormative ideals still weave themselves into everyday language, even within the lesbian community. Labelling can open the door to a likeminded community, but it can also be restricting, forcing individuals into categories. The struggle of finding a label for your sexuality is a difficult one, often forced through societal expectations to fit into a box. For the lesbian community, these boxes are characterised by the widely used terms butch and femme. While these terms have history, strengthen identities and encompass important aspects of lesbian culture, they have become too generalised to the binary of

Masculinity versus femininity.

It is difficult for people to break out of these boxes, continually reinforced by societal norms. Society's binary views of gender can often be so rigid that they perpetuate the harmful misconception that butch lesbians try to mimic men in heterosexual relationships, erasing the complexity of queer identity. My participants seemed to be aware of the complexity of butch and femme, but still used them as reference points to describe themselves. In a world where queer people constantly find themselves explaining their identities, leaning on widely understood stereotypes of butch and femme can be a strategic move. This makes their identities

MORE PALATABLE

for straight people to understand, avoiding the exhausting cycle of self-explanation.

But why is this explanation necessary - and a lot of the time expected? The answer probably lies in representation, or rather the lack of it. Not seeing any diverse, intersectional representation on our screens surely leads to limited understanding, and thus questioning. Participants were

"sick and tired"

of being the educators but equally felt responsible to portray queerness positively and accurately and not have this job fall to the wrong hands. Inclusive representation would take the burden from the hands of queer people onto a wider cultural platform. Proper representation wouldn't just alleviate the discomfort that often comes with exposing one's sexuality, but also provide a sense of security. Using a character that you wholeheartedly identify with as an example of how you view yourself, being able to say,

"They're like me"

removes the directness that comes with being questioned about your identity. So not only is representation important for visibility, but it is also important for protection, education and validation.

NORMALISING INTERSECTIONAL IDENTITIES ON A LARGE SCALE PROTECTS THE PEOPLE IT REPRESENTS AND EDUCATES THE PEOPLE IT DOESN'T.

24/25 EXEC GOODBYES

(THEY/THEM)
AMY ADSHEAD

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

My year as EIC of Planorama has been filled with chaos, creativity and joy. I've been so lucky to engage so deeply with the LGBTQ+ community on campus during my time at uni. All of you are amazing. Thank you for giving me the privilege to publish your work!

(SHE/HER)
SOFIA SALAM

DEPUTY EDITOR

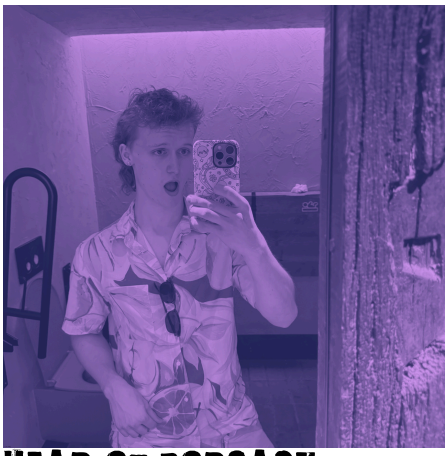
I've enjoyed being a part of Planorama so much. I've met so many cool people, and gotten to help make some awesome magazines!

(SHE/HER)
HEATHER GIAM

DEPUTY EDITOR

Being a deputy editor for PLANORAMA has been such a heartwarming experience. The editing team are phenomenal, & I loved judging the poetry competition with them. I'll miss the laughs!

(HE/HIM)
JASPER YOUNG



HEAD OF PODCAST

I've absolutely loved being part of such a wonderful publication and having the privilege to interview some really inspirational and successful LGBTQ+ people. It has been one of the highlights of my time at university!

(SHE/HER)
YUSRA BABAR

HEAD OF PODCAST

Producing "The Queer Student Podcast" with Jasper has been a monumental experience in my final year. The podcast has given me the opportunity to conduct inspiring interviews. My favourite moments have definitely been asking our guests the question: 'what would you say to your young queer self?'

(HE/HIM)

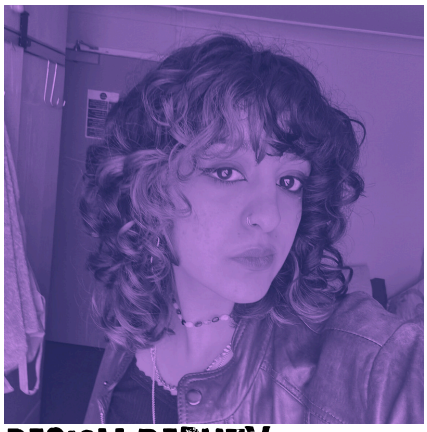
EJAY R.

HEAD OF DESIGN

3 amazing years with PLAN+Planorama—being part of the magazine has been one of the most fulfilling and meaningful experiences I've had and I'll always be grateful!

(THEY/SHE)

DIYA



DESIGN DEPUTY

i love being part of the design team and working on the submissions we get each issue. its so rewarding to see my hard work in print- and winning at the regionals was a dream come true!

THANKS TO EVERYONE WHO HAS SUPPORTED OUR MAG OVER THE PAST YEAR.

LOVE, PLANORAMA TEAM 24/25

(SHE/ANY)

ORIEL

FRESHER'S REP

It's been so lovely getting involved! I've really enjoyed the creative environment, particularly the open mic night and opportunities to contribute to the magazine design process. Thanks for having me!

(SHE/THEY)

MAYUMI

← *Our new Editor-In-Chief!!!*

FRESHER'S REP

Being a Frep for Planorama this year has been an amazing experience! I can't wait to continue uplifting creative LGBTQ+ individuals, writing, and creativity more next year :)

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