

PLANORAMA

WARWICK PLAN'S LGBTQ+ MAGAZINE
OCTOBER 2022



FEATURING ARTICLES ON:

- THE COMMERCIALISATION OF PRIDE
- HEARTSTOPPER
- HOMOSEXUALITY IN FOOTBALL
- QUEER TYPECASTING
- ALLYSHIP DURING PRIDE

PRIDE EDITION

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EDITOR'S NOTE

Being able to not only witness but be a part of PLAN's growth from strength to strength this year has truly been one of my favourite parts of life at Warwick.

Despite some major milestones such as being named Bright Network's Diversity & Inclusion Society of the Year and runner-up for the overall Society of the Year, to hosting Warwick's first-ever LGBTQ+ careers conference, there is plenty more to come from PLAN.

With this edition of our magazine, marking its second full issue, as well as the newly launched podcast series, which you can find more about on the next page, plenty is happening with Planorama too.

So stay tuned!

This 'Pride' special edition was written during Pride Month, and after a summer of hard work behind the scenes, we want to release this edition now to remind ourselves what Pride is all about - celebration. This is not limited to just the 30 days in June, but all year round. This edition features a celebration of multiple aspects of our community and what it means to us here at Warwick Plan, but also we have some other fascinating pieces that shine a light on those aspects where work is still to be done.

We want to continue to expand the scope, size and reach of the magazine over the coming months, so if ever you are interested in writing for us, or simply want to become a part of our fast-expanding PLAN community, then don't hesitate to do so!

I hope you enjoy this magazine and keep an eye out for more to come in the future.

Zach Roberts
- Planorama Editor in Chief



INTRODUCING "PLANNING AHEAD"

Warwick PLAN's new podcast series featuring interviews with LGBTQ+ professionals and allies



PLAN-ning Ahead is a monthly podcast series run by Planorama Editor in Chief, Zach Roberts

New this year, 'PLAN-ning Ahead' is a podcast series set up to provide an insight into the lives and careers of LGBTQ+ professionals and allies from a range of fields, corporate and otherwise.

Our latest episode with CEO of the Inclusion Imperative, **Geffrye Parsons**, is now available on Spotify, where you can also find previous episodes with the global law firm, **Shearman & Sterling**, historian and author, **Dr Jane Traies**, CEO of Career Accelerator, **Mayur Gupta** and **Carole Mehigan** from Reed Smith, mental health advocate and speaker at our recent PLAN Conference.

WHAT DOES 'PLAN' MEAN TO YOU

At our recent LGBTQ+ Careers Conference, we asked our members what PLAN means to them



At PLAN, we are all SO proud of what we've been able to achieve in such a small amount of time, and so much of that is down to you, our members.

As you will find out throughout this magazine, we have so much to celebrate from this last academic year, and even more to look forward to!



DEPARTING WORDS



OUTGOING PRESIDENT AND VICE PRESIDENT, KIAN CUSHMAN AND THOMAS FRY TALK ABOUT PLAN'S CREATION AND OUR JOURNEY OVER THE LAST ACADEMIC YEAR

WHAT INSPIRED YOU TO CREATE PLAN?

DESPITE THE RECENT UPTICK, THE LGBTQ+ COMMUNITY IS STILL WOEFULLY UNDERREPRESENTED IN VARIOUS PROFESSIONAL SETTINGS. KIAN AND I NOTICED THAT, WHILE TARGETED CAREERS SUPPORT WAS AVAILABLE FOR OTHER LIBERATION GROUPS AT WARWICK, THERE WAS A 'GAP IN THE MARKET' FOR SUCH A SERVICE CATERING TO OUR COMMUNITY. IT WAS FROM THIS REALISATION THAT PLAN WAS BORN.

WHY WAS/IS IT IMPORTANT THAT SOCIETIES LIKE THIS WERE CREATED?

LGBTQ+ STUDENTS OFTEN ENTER UNIVERSITY STILL ON JOURNEYS OF SELF-DISCOVERY, TRYING TO ESTABLISH THEIR PLACE IN THE WORLD, PERHAPS AFTER YEARS OF REPRESSING THEIR AUTHENTIC SELVES AT HOME AND/OR SCHOOL. SOCIETIES LIKE PLAN EXIST TO PROVIDE A SAFE SPACE FOR THEM TO SHARE EXPERIENCES AND GROW PERSONALLY, ALL WHILE DEVELOPING THE KEY EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS NECESSARY FOR THEM TO REALISE THEIR POTENTIAL AFTER UNIVERSITY FROM A MINDSET OF SELF-LOVE, DRIVING DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION IN THE WORKPLACE OF TOMORROW.

WHAT ARE YOU MOST PROUD OF THIS YEAR?

FIRSTLY, I'D HAVE TO SAY I'M MOST PROUD OF HAVING BEEN ABLE TO HELP SO MANY OF OUR MEMBERS AND SOCIETY EXEC GROW TOGETHER AND SECURE OFFERS FROM LEADING EMPLOYERS ACROSS A RANGE OF SECTORS. THIS WAS ONE OF THE CORE, FOUNDING OBJECTIVES OF PLAN SO TO SEE OUR HARD WORK COME TO FRUITION IN THIS WAY FEELS INCREDIBLE.

I AM ALSO VERY PROUD OF THE COMMUNITY WE'VE BUILT FROM THE GROUND UP THIS YEAR. IT HAS GONE FROM STRENGTH TO STRENGTH THIS YEAR IN A WAY THAT HAS SURPASSED ALL MY EXPECTATIONS AND IS A TESTAMENT TO THE COMMITMENT OF OUR WONDERFUL EXEC.

A SPECIAL SHOUTOUT HAS TO GO TO OUR OUTGOING EVENTS OFFICERS, TASHA AND KHUSH, FOR ORGANISING SUCH A FABULOUS ROSTER OF SOCIALS THROUGHOUT THE YEAR.

WHAT IS NEXT FOR PLAN?

WE HAVE BIG PLANS (PARDON THE PUN) FOR THE FUTURE OF THE SOCIETY AND HOW IT CAN CONTINUE TO MAKE A POSITIVE IMPACT ON CAMPUS AND BEYOND. WARWICK PLAN IS IN EXCELLENT HANDS UNDER THE LEADERSHIP OF JOEL, FRANCESCA, NARKIZ AND BAILEY SO MAKE SURE YOU RENEW YOUR (FREE) MEMBERSHIP NEXT YEAR AND STAY TUNED TO OUR SOCIAL MEDIA FOR WHAT'S TO COME!

DEPARTING WORDS

WHAT INSPIRED YOU TO CREATE PLAN?

FIRSTLY, PLAN NOW IS NOT WHAT TOM OR I HAD ORIGINALLY PLANNED FOR IT TO BE. ORIGINALLY, WHEN IT WAS WLPN (EMBARRASSING I KNOW!), WE HAD IMAGINED IT AS MORE OF A RESOURCE/ NETWORK OF CAREER-MINDED INDIVIDUALS.

BUT, WE QUICKLY REALISED THAT THERE WAS A HUGE APPETITE ON CAMPUS (AND ACROSS THE COUNTRY REALLY) FOR A SOCIETY LIKE PLAN. IT BECAME A SOCIETY FOCUSED SOLELY ON CAREERS, TO A SOCIETY THAT CULTIVATED A NEW COMMUNITY AT WARWICK, ONE FOCUSED ON INDIVIDUAL DEVELOPMENT BUT ALSO ON DEVELOPING OUR INDIVIDUALITY.

IN MY VIEW, PLAN WAS SET UP TO FILL A GAP AT WARWICK. QUEER INDIVIDUALS DESERVE TO HAVE THE CONFIDENCE TO ENTER THE WORKING WORLD, BUT MANY DID NOT HAVE THE RESOURCES TO GAIN THAT CONFIDENCE. THUS, PLAN WAS SET UP TO PROVIDE EDUCATION, COMMUNITY AND INDIVIDUAL DEVELOPMENT TO QUEER INDIVIDUALS TO PUSH THEM TO PUT THEIR BEST FOOT FORWARD.

WHY WAS/IS IT IMPORTANT THAT SOCIETIES LIKE THIS WERE CREATED?

SOCIETIES LIKE PLAN ARE, AND CONTINUE TO BE, VERY IMPORTANT. PLAN IS A SOCIETY FOCUSED ON INDIVIDUALS, WHO IN TODAY'S SOCIETY, HAVE BEEN MADE TO FEEL ALIENATED OR CONTINUE TO HAVE THEIR EXISTENCE DEBATED. THE TRUTH IS, QUEER RIGHTS ARE NOT WHERE THEY SHOULD BE. DISCRIMINATIVE ATTITUDES ARE PREVALENT AND STILL EXIST ALMOST EVERYWHERE.

SO PLAN ALSO EXISTS TO WORK WITH COMPANIES TO IMPROVE THEIR LGBTQ+ INCLUSION, WORKING WITH COMPANIES WHO HAVE PROVEN THEMSELVES TO RECOGNISE THE IMPORTANCE OF HAVING A WORK CULTURE OF ACCEPTANCE AND OPENNESS.

WHAT ARE YOU MOST PROUD OF THIS YEAR?

I THINK FOR ME, I'M MOST PROUD OF SEEING THE AMOUNT OF CAREER-RELATED OPPORTUNITIES MANY PLAN MEMBERS HAVE SECURED. THERE IS TRUTH IN NUMBERS AND IT IS CLEAR THAT PLAN HAS HAD AN IMPACT ON MANY PEOPLE'S LIVES. ANOTHER THING I'M VERY PROUD OF IS WITNESSING THE ENTHUSIASM OF OUR MEMBERSHIP AND SEEING THE COMMUNITY WE HAVE BUILT.

I REMEMBER SITTING IN ONE OF OUR FIRST CIRCLES FOR POP AND THINKING THAT THIS IS MIND-BLOWING. LASTLY, PLAN IS EXPANDING! OTHER UNIVERSITIES ACROSS THE COUNTRY ARE TAKING UP THE PLAN NAME. THE CHANGE FROM A LITTLE RESOURCE PROJECT TO A NATIONAL MOVEMENT HAS COMPLETELY BLOWN ME AWAY! OH, AND THE MULTIPLE AWARDS TOO!

WHAT IS NEXT FOR PLAN?

FOR WARWICK PLAN, YOU HAVE JOEL AT THE HELM FOR THE NEXT YEAR AND I AM CERTAIN HE WILL CONTINUE TO TAKE PLAN FROM STRENGTH TO STRENGTH. IN TERMS OF SPECIFICS, I GUESS EVERYONE WILL HAVE TO WAIT AND SEE, JUST KNOW WE'VE GOT LOTS IN THE WORKS...



HEARTSTOPPER: FEEL-GOOD ROMANCE FOR THE MODERN AGE

Kieran Barry explores why Netflix's recent LGBTQ+ 'coming of age' drama has captivated audiences

You may have heard the “I’ve been going out with Nick Nelson since I was 14” sound on TikTok recently; you may have even read the Heartstopper webcomics or books or watched the Netflix TV adaptation. Either way, you will likely have heard the names Nick Nelson and Charlie Spring, Heartstopper’s two main characters who fall in love, seen and appreciated by every viewer.

The Netflix adaptation rose to popularity in the UK as audiences became infatuated with the positive, feel-good energy often lacking from queer romance stories. Where the genre has pushed for realism and stories which end on bittersweet notes, a gap appeared for



'Heartstopper'. CREDIT: Netflix

something positive that audiences could use to escape the monotonal reality that many coming of age stories fall victim to, especially those that include LGBTQ+ leads. The first season of Heartstopper was exactly the medicine needed to heal the wounds from mainstream media.

Starring Kit Connor as ‘Nick Nelson’ and Joe Locke as ‘Charlie Spring’, prepare to become attached to every character, story, sub-plot, and stylistic choice you can find on the small screen. Just like Alice Oseman’s original Heartstopper comic and book series, leaves are used to transition scenes, the light strings and electronic music following in the background of the main characters and the cheesy indie music played around the group of friends are all subtle stylistic choices that resonate with this deliberately light-hearted tone. There are so many details added on-screen which collect to make Heartstopper a beautiful experience to feel a part of.



'Heartstopper Comics'. CREDIT: Alice Oseman

While at times things can feel a little too good to be true this is occasionally disrupted by homophobia and transphobia reflecting real-life experiences, you can tell in many ways that much of the writing is deliberately light-hearted yet realistically grounded. It helps the viewer escape from their own reality for half an hour at a time – or more realistically around 4 hours in one long binge-watch (as was my own experience). There is something beautiful about allowing queer audiences to finally see a love-story-gone-right and view this joyous kind of utopian reality. I personally think that Heartstopper was a well-needed push for the media to show more of these essential stories.

Representation: a media revolutionised?

One of the most crucial parts of Heartstopper is providing a positive representation of a community inundated with narrow, often negative, mediatic conceptions of what it means to be LGBTQ+. The characters involved – a black trans woman, an interracial lesbian couple, and a bisexual character who initially finds it difficult to accept himself – feel real and genuine. They demonstrate the power of being able to break away from judgement and be authentically yourself, and for far too many young people this is needed.

This is what we as a post-teenage generation can celebrate: that younger members of the community can see themselves reflected in stories on screen and educated on issues affecting their own lives. I know that, personally, I can resonate with Nick’s story. I have never seen a more eloquent, sensitive, and accurate foretelling of the journey to accepting oneself as bisexual. This is

personally what Heartstopper means to me, and why I believe it to be such a powerful tool for a happier future for our community. There is a true depth to each story that makes it so possible to see yourself in one of these characters, and the nature of the show makes this a good thing just for once.

In many ways, even if you are a few years, or even decades, older than the characters, you can laugh and cry with them as you realise just how relatable their stories are. More than anything, this is a show that is an important way to navigate identity and sexuality, in a way that does not make it taboo or tokenistic, but authentic and embraceable.

So, what next?

Firstly, if somehow you haven't already, check Heartstopper out on Netflix. Very excitingly, two more seasons have been announced to continue the stories of Nick, Charlie and friends as told by Alice Oseman.

A really powerful moment for me, having given time to reflect when writing this article, was Nick's coming out to his Mum at the end of the show. It is a product of a journey which he goes through as the series progresses, and a truly beautiful, unique moment of acceptance which provides hope and love which too many LGBTQ+ youths do not feel themselves. I remember on Twitter seeing a post saying that Nick's coming out to his Mum in the show had inspired the watcher to do the same. Empowering LGBTQ+ youth to accept themselves and speak about their identities is such an important effect of the Heartstopper series, and seeing Nick admit his bisexuality to round off the season was a truly *heartstopping* moment.

After watching the whole season, I would encourage all viewers, as I did myself, to reflect.

While it is primarily a teenage romance drama, it is also a unique opportunity for introspection and how we can offer ourselves the same love which the characters gave to each other and ultimately themselves. Our community has long been exposed to stories of grief and despair, and yet the essential focal point of living is – like Heartstopper suggests – surrounding yourself with love. Whether this is from partners, family, or friends, and is ready to take on the world from there.

Personally, it was this reflection that was my "Heartstopper" moment. There is a high chance that you will find a similar or different powerful message which resonates with you in these stories. I encourage you all to watch and find that moment for yourselves.

Kieran (he/him) is a third-year PPE student

"THERE IS
SOMETHING
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JAKE DANIELS: BEING GAY IN BRITISH FOOTBALL

PLANORAMA Editor in Chief, Zach, looks at the story of Jake Daniels, the first active male professional footballer in the UK to come out as gay in over 30 years.

"I hope that in sharing who I am, I can show others who identify as LGBTQ+ that they are welcome in the football community."

Those are the words of Australian professional footballer, Josh Cavallo, who in October of 2021, made international headlines by publicly declaring that he was gay - an incredibly significant moment for the sport as he is the only openly gay male footballer playing professional top-flight football.

Many LGBTQ+ people will remember their own coming out process, and most would agree that making such a public announcement would be their worst nightmare - but for Josh, and football as a sport, and as an institution, it was incredibly important.

Cavallo's wish that he would spark a cultural change in football appears to have begun, with Blackpool youth player, Jake Daniels, becoming the first active male professional footballer in the UK to come out as gay in over 30 years at only 17 years old. Daniels personally cited the Australian as the influence behind his own decision, and since the two have become committed to aiding those in the sport who want to do the same.



Josh Cavallo (left) and Jake Daniels (right). CREDIT: Marca

They are also keen to send a message to the next generations of players:

"I struggled to find someone to look up to... [and say]: 'Oh, he's successful, and he's gay, and he plays football.' That's something I didn't have growing up."

With sexuality so marginalised within men's football, the presence of successful role models will no doubt have a monumental impact on how being LGBTQ+ is perceived within something as heterosexually dominated as football.

Daniels will play a pivotal role in British football and recognises the immense burden that will come from such a simple announcement of his personal identity. He follows in the footsteps of Justin Fashanu, who was the UK's first 'out' professional footballer but met a tragic ending as he was ostracised by both the press and his own family before taking his own life at just 37 years old.

Admittedly, 30 years have passed between the eras of Fashanu and Daniels' announcements, however, while the general acceptance and embrace of sexuality has seen great progress, unfortunately, the microcosm of football, its media, and its fans, has not.

As recently as 2019, 80% of those interviewed in a survey by 'Outsport' were recorded as having witnessed or experienced homophobia in sport, with 50% saying this had come at a live football game.

Similarly, 50% of LGBTQ+ males and 35 of LGBTQ+ females said they had been personally targeted at games. This does not even begin to discuss the prominence of transphobic slurs and discrimination that persists just as much too.

Just 37% of fans think that football is a safe space for LGBTQ+ people, while disgracefully, over 20% of other interviewees said they had no problem at all with the discriminatory culture and abuse of LGBTQ+ fans.

As I discussed in a similar article this time last year, there are many reasons why football lags so far behind, but players like Cavallo and Daniels will hopefully at least be able to tackle one of them.

Research into homophobia in football shows that it often stems from the 'feminine' assumptions of homosexuals. Thus, homophobic slurs or accusations that someone is playing 'like a sissy' or 'like a girl' are inherently linked to the same misogynistic issue. This of course raises concerns about football's institutionalised sexism too, but one step at a time eh....

Over time, therefore, this culture has developed the assumption that because of this, gay people simply can't play football. Of course, they can't, if their bodies are only as 'strong' as a woman's then how on earth could they? This point of view is laughable, but sadly all too prominent within the culture. Sport, in general, is still struggling with the fact that athletic ability is not

determined by gender, as we see all too often with the toxic, transphobic debates about participation in sport at both youth and professional levels.

But for football, this still also includes being gay. That it somehow makes you inferior, both in your ability to play and support the game. It is only through people like Cavallo and Daniels that these false assumptions can be directly challenged. The fact that Daniels is the only 'out' current professional does not mean that he is the only gay British man playing professional football, it just means that the rest are not disclosing their identity.

Of course, each person is entitled to handling their identity and its publicity individually, but hopefully these recent instances will give those close to having the confidence to publicly own their identity, a much-needed push in the right direction.

Similarly, it will prove that being gay means nothing when it comes to one's ability to play football. In the last season, Daniels made his first-team debut at 17, scored 30 goals for the youth team and signed his first professional contract for Blackpool FC - not bad for a gay trying to play football huh?

It would be premature and naive to say the end is in sight, I must be realistic and say that, truthfully, football still has a long way to go with its acceptance and embrace of the LGBTQ+ community. But it is these important milestones that are the catalyst for change.

In the past week, 2 professional Scottish football referees have also come out as gay, again citing Cavallo and Daniels as their inspiration. Hopefully, this will be the generation that sees the proper, and deserved, evolution of football culture, finally bringing it into the 21st century.

Just 37% of fans think that football is a safe space for LGBTQ+ people

Pride Month is a vital time for not only celebrating our community, but also raising awareness of the vital issues and persistent threats to the safety and livelihoods of LGBTQ+ people.

Advocation and Allyship



Many corporations, and celebrities alike, are guilty of using this time and increased opportunity for a platform to share tokenistic and sometimes outright offensive marketing campaigns and messages. Many of us will already be familiar with the questionable menu items promoted by Burger King Austria, the 'rainbow bullets' in a Pride post from the US Marines or the Pride edition of Vaseline that is twice the price of its regular range!

In recent years, the foundations and core values of Pride have been shaken by shallow attempts across the world to boost profits or offer insincere messages of support.

But it is also important, and reassuring, to look at those who have positively used their platform, to embrace the community and the importance of Pride, as we will explore in this article.

Formula One:

Recently, FIA president (Motor Sport's Governing Body) Mohammed Ben Sulayem questioned whether drivers, such as Sebastian Vettel and Louis Hamilton should speak on their personal views of public issues such as LGBTQ+ and environmental concerns, saying that drivers should not "impose their beliefs" onto others.

Thankfully, Hamilton and Vettel say they will continue to speak out.

Both drivers spoke of their "pride" in their teams for using logos on their cars at the Azerbaijan Grand Prix to promote Pride month, with Hamilton adding: "I encourage all the drivers to be more outspoken and use their platform."

Lewis Hamilton:

"It's important the sport continues to be a platform to spark more conversations."



'Sebastian Vettel at the Hungarian GP'. CREDIT: Attitude

Vettel, the front cover personality for July-August's edition of Attitude Magazine, said in his interview for the issue that he acknowledged his actions were 'deliberate, and might be seen by some as provocative', but he was unrepentant. In response to discriminatory comments from Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orbán, he said:

"I find it embarrassing for a country who is in the European Union to have some laws like this [banning the adoption of children by same-sex couples and preventing people from legally changing their gender] as part of their legislation.

I just think we've had so many opportunities to learn in the past, and I can't understand why you are struggling to see that everybody should be free to do what they like, love whom they like, and live how they like. It's along the lines of 'live and let live.'"

Corporate Contributions:

Fabletics has launched an all-new "United in Pride" collection in partnership with GLAAD, which is a lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer advocacy organization. The capsule line features gender-neutral picks and has been designed with lots of vibrant colours and geometric prints. Additionally, Fabletics is making a \$25,000 donation to GLAAD in support of the LGBTQ+ community.

Apparel brand Bombas has pledged to donate an item to someone in need within the LGBTQIA+ community through organisations such as The Ally Coalition. For every Pride item purchased, one item will be donated.

Tinder is working with the Human Rights Campaign (HRC), the US's largest LGBTQ+ civil rights organization, to end the nation's 40-year-old policy that bans blood donations from men who have sex with men. The law, originally set during the AIDS crisis, has received widespread criticism and calls for repeal amid the nationwide blood shortage, according to officials.

In a campaign called "Feel Heard," American footwear brand Ugg and design shop Pink Sparrow have collaborated on a storefront design effort to support the crucial support line serving LGBTQ+ youth, The Trevor Project.

Ugg's flagship store in New York City, and 20 other stores across the nation, have been adorned with colourful faux fur and phone booths to echo Ugg's new all-gender Pride collection and The Trevor Project's importance, through the month of June. The shoe brand is also donating \$125,000 to The Trevor Project and on 7 June, hosting a free Q&A event with three-time Emmy nominated actress, writer and speaker Laverne Cox.

McDonald's is releasing a wholesome ad that features members of the nation's largest Queer+ recreational sports league, LA's Varsity Gay League, and hosting two virtual events with LGBTQ+ media outlet RevryTV. The burger chain's newest ad, "No judgement," spotlights Varsity Gay League team members enjoying chicken nuggets together after a game of kickball, during which players say, "Our friendships may have started on the field, but this is our happy place."

Skittles is marking Pride month by releasing custom-branded packs created by six LGBTQ+ artists in a show of solidarity with the community. Developed in partnership with campaign group GLAAD, the branded packs bring a modicum of colour back during the month for the eye-catching packaging, part of an effort to draw attention to the rainbow pride flag.



'Lewis Hamilton (left) and Laverne Cox (right)'. CREDIT: Britannica, Hollywood Life



Liverpool FC's display at Liverpool Pride). CREDIT: Liverpool FC

Grooming brand, Harry's, have continued their collaboration with Albert Kennedy Trust into its fifth year, supporting AKT's work to provide safe homes and brighter futures to vulnerable young people.

English football team, Liverpool FC's Red Together campaign is their overarching approach to equality, diversity and inclusion; where the club embraces its responsibility to champion important topics and lead the way on and off the pitch.

Focusing on four key strands of diversity; disability, gender, LGBT+ and race, the campaign aims to raise awareness and talk about the biggest issues, collaborate with partners to challenge all forms of discrimination and fight for equality, diversity and inclusion.

Network Rail have released the short promotional film, 'Do I offend you?' The film is designed to show what Pride means to employees at Network Rail, and stresses how important it is that they are their 'whole selves' at work as part of the Railway Family. It also recognises the history of Pride and the lived experiences of their LGBTQ+ colleagues.

It is important to stress here, that while these various showings of support and commitments to charitable campaigns are encouraging, it is important to recognise the low bar that is set by societal and corporate expectations.

Pride has been, and always should be about celebration and continued support for the LGBTQ+ community, and while it is important to use the enhanced platform of Pride month every year, the issues and challenges that remain do not go away simply through the array of marketing campaigns and shows of support in June alone.

These issues are ongoing, and they are year-round, and any substantial effort to actually enact change needs to reflect that and transcend the 30 days of Pride month. As Kian will explore later in this magazine, even organisers of events such as Manchester Pride are guilty of succumbing to this rise of commercialism in Pride, and thus it is vitally important that Pride remains intact in terms of what it has, and always should stand for.

If you want to hear more about the importance of allyship, check out our podcast episode with Reed Smith's Carole Mehigan on 'Intersectionality and Allyship'.

"PRIDE HAS BEEN, AND ALWAYS SHOULD BE, ABOUT CELEBRATION AND CONTINUED SUPPORT FOR THE LGBTQ+ COMMUNITY"

QUEER STEREOTYPES AND TYPECASTING: IS IT MORE HARM THAN GOOD?

An anonymous contributor discusses their experience growing up with inaccurate and stereotypical portrayals of their culture

As a person of colour, I have grown up with inaccurate and stereotypical portrayals of my culture in the media from an early age. The character of Ravi in the children's show Jessie demonstrates this stereotype. He had an over-exaggerated Indian accent and a water-python lizard as a pet, all attributes made to add comedy to the show.

Looking back, I realise that this caricature of an 'Indian' person is a stereotype created by the West through shows like the Simpsons with Apu and films such as Disney's Aladdin. You may be wondering how this relates to the LGBTQ+ community; I started to think about how the Western media has also presented members of the queer community in a stereotypical manner for so long. Stereotypes that have created a misconception of how a queer person is meant to present themselves to others.

I had an experience on a night out to Loud and Proud that brought these issues to the forefront of my mind. I identify as pansexual, and was chatting to a girl at the club, however she thought that I was straight. I corrected her and explained my sexuality, however she responded saying "that's really weird because you don't give off any pan or gay vibes at all". I didn't take offence or think about what she said any further that night. However, the next day once I sobered up I started wondering what counts as 'gay vibes'.



The more I thought it over, I realised that on TV and in films, members of the LGBTQ+ community tend to be presented with overly-dramatised characteristics, such as being extremely camp or overly butch. There are, of course, queer people who possess these traits, however, these portrayals perpetuate a homogenous narrative - that all queer people are the same and have no distinguishable personalities or experiences. Doing so leads the public to generalise this community by associating them all with these few exaggerated stereotypes.

One example would be James Corden's portrayal of the character Barry Glickman in the Netflix musical 'The Prom'. The character is a gay man, and Corden came under much scrutiny for both his casting and his portrayal, which was reliant upon outdated tropes that reinforced the overly flamboyant, 'camp' stereotype.

Some may argue that any queer representation is progressive because it promotes diversity. However, unless handled and presented correctly, it sends the wrong message by creating a false image of how a queer person should act and be viewed in society.

'Friends' is one example of a classic show that makes this mistake. It does have members of the LGBTQ+ community in the show, which is arguably a great platform to promote inclusivity due to its popularity. However, Ross's ex-wife Carol, who comes out as a lesbian, is not presented in a great light. Her relationship with Susan is used as the butt of the joke on multiple occasions and Joey often sexualises their relationship unnecessarily - reinforcing the typical 'girl-on-girl' fetish and undermining the validity of their relationship.

By presenting queer characters in this manner, it continuously dismisses the normality of queer relationships. It can be argued that times are changing, with more modern films and shows addressing these problematic portrayals. Rebel Wilson's Netflix film 'Isn't it Romantic' which is a parody of the Rom-Com, also encourages the audience to think about these offensive stereotypes.

The character Donny is a one-dimensional 'gay best friend' to Wilson in her fantasy world based on a rom-com. However, when she comes back to the real world, Donny is not overly flamboyant or 'camp' and is in a relationship. Wilson's character is made to look foolish when she questions why he isn't gay anymore, and he responds by putting on a sassy voice and asks 'why, do you think all gay guys talk like this?' and says she's being offensive. This interaction in this film highlights just how ludicrous and inaccurate these stereotypes being pushed by the Western media are.

"CREATING CHARACTERS WITH THESE PERSONALITY TRAITS DOES NOT PROMOTE DIVERSITY. INSTEAD, IT PROMOTES A ONE-DIMENSIONAL IMAGE OF WHAT IT MEANS TO BE QUEER."

Creating queer characters who conform to these personality traits on a public platform, such as television, does not promote diversity. Instead, it promotes a one-dimensional image of what it means to be queer. This is harmful because it sends the wrong message to anyone growing up who identifies as a member of the LGBTQ+ Community. From personal experience, I can say that it instead makes you feel as though your queerness defines who you are as a person. You feel pressured to centre your whole identity around your sexuality when it should only help to shape who you are as a person. Thankfully, the media is changing for the better, slowly but surely. Shows such as 'It's a Sin' and 'Sex Education' present multiple queer-identifying characters, without relying on stereotypes to do so. These shows are paving a way for a new era of queer representation in the media, and hopefully, one that dismisses one-dimensional portrayals of the LGBTQ+ Community.



Rebel Wilson on the poster of 'Isn't it Romantic'. CREDIT: IMDB



The cast and crew of *The New Girl*, featuring director and creator Morgan Brame (far left)

THE NEW GIRL

MTW's 'The New Girl'
Created by Morgan
Brame

"Stupidly Hilarious and Magnificently Heart-Warming" - 'The New Girl' is a masterpiece of original student theatre

Life as a student in North Valley Shake Shack Wildcat St Petersburg High is just about as bizarre as it sounds. Parodying the classic chick-flick and coming-of-age genres to brilliant effect, we join Everett (Eleanor Orford), the titular New Girl on her first day in a new town, in a new school who instantly bonds with Kieron (Sam Riley).

Revealed to be ostracised for his sexuality, Riley superbly tells Kieron's tale, one far too familiar for many LGBTQ+ people, as he navigates the school's narcissistic antagonist, Mercedes... Benz (Ruthie Banks) and her two inept sidekicks Nina (Freya Rowson) and Tina (Ellie Stiles).

We also watch Kieron have to tackle his relationship with his mum as Everett inadvertently 'outs' him, and explores both his identity and the challenges of his friendship with someone like Everett, perfect in intention but naive in her execution, exemplified by her clumsy attempts to 'set up' Kieron with the school stud, Andy (Aaron Shelton).

Orford perfectly characterises the loveable, albeit overbearing, Everett - the type of personality any queer person has encountered at least once in their life, as Kieron begrudgingly educates her on the problematic stereotypes that she is guilty of. The characters' conversations about Everett's tokenistic attitude towards Kieron and his sexuality, especially the issue of the 'GBF' label, as well as her blasé attitude towards his choice to keep his sexuality private both hit close to home for many watching, but equally demonstrates the importance of discussing subjects that would often be overlooked.

Riley and Orford work together perfectly, forging an on-stage friendship that entails its fair share of ups and downs throughout the show with moments of both wit and emotional maturity.

The work of the superb ensemble cast has to be recognised, all multi-rolling throughout the show, to hilarious effect. Rowson and Stiles make a side-splitting duo, with superb comedic timing and improvised moments that had the audience erupting. Banks displayed impressive versatility with her seamless transitions between school villain Mercedes and her other character roles, including Kieron's mother - not to mention her fantastic vocal performance throughout too. Shelton is hilarious as both the school's eye-candy, Andy and the dorkish Brian rounds up a brilliantly talented cast that gelled both on and off the stage.

Of course, a great deal of respect is owed to Morgan Brame, without whom there would have been no show at all, writing all of the show's book, score and lyrics over Christmas of last year. In his first foray, into leading a production at Warwick, a brilliant debut left everyone intrigued about what is next to come. Alongside Assistant Director, Gemma Higley, the duo led the show expertly and perfectly executed Brame's artistic vision for the piece.

We must also pay tribute to the rest of the incredibly talented team including:

- Nim Jenkins: Musical Director
- Josh Maddocks: Movement Director
- Ellie Dickens: Producer
- Georgie Lagden: Assistant Producer

The show's story was perfectly accompanied by a fantastic score, brilliantly taught by Jenkins, while Maddocks' goofy choreography suited the show's comedic moments to a T.

The Tech, Stage and marketing team of Adam Skrzymowski, Alice Gregory, CJ Howard, Ella Horne, Ellie Beesley, Georgia Lock and Lucy Clay ensured smooth performances every night, whilst the staging perfectly suited the show's aim of letting the cast and story shine.

Finally, a special mention must go to the show's brilliant charity initiative in partnership with AKT - a UK charity that specialises in supporting homeless LGBTQ+ youth, coordinated by the team's D&O officer, Anya Idrizi.

Before it opened, the show promised 'belly laughs' and 'ugly cries', and it sure delivered. Brame perfectly balances the deeper moments with hilarious dialogue and songs: of which my personal favourites must be the 'Drama Queens' Rap' and the brilliantly stupid number from the, sadly fictional, Fruit Salad the Musical - perhaps this should be Brame's next project?!

A huge congratulations, and thanks, to the cast and crew for creating such a wonderful piece of theatre, and charming every single person that had the joy of watching The New Girl!



Eleanor Orford, who played the titular 'New Girl' Everett

We also spoke to Eleanor Orford (Everett) about her time in the role:

What attracted you to the project?

The thing that immediately drew me to this show was the chance to elevate queer voices. I thought that twisting those usual character stereotypes was amazingly clever! And, of course, bringing an original piece of work (from our very own Morgan) to its feet was an incredible prospect for me.

"THE NEW GIRL CREATES AN ENVIRONMENT WHERE WE SEE EVERYONE BELONGS. AND IT'S IMPORTANT TO REMIND THE WORLD OF THAT SOMETIMES."

What lessons did your character learn through the show and her relationship with Kieron?

Everett starts incomprehensibly ignorant. But the difficulties she creates for both herself and Kieron allow her to learn that there is so much more to people than the labels given to us by the media we consume. By seeing how Kieron is treated, she sees how difficult life can truly be for queer people, and learns how to use her voice to enable positive change. She goes on a journey with the audience, which I love. The audience can learn along with her.

What makes a good ally?

Everett makes mistakes so the audience does not have to. Ultimately, the ally she becomes by the end of the show does not undo the pain caused by her earlier behaviour. And hopefully, the audience can see that. Hopefully, it may prevent people from making those same mistakes in the real world.

Why was The New Girl an important story to share?

This story is wonderful, because it's so entertaining, but has so much meaning. It flips everything society tells us on its head. The openly queer character is the only real human being in a sea of exaggerated, flamboyant (though granted hilarious) stereotypes. And the troubles faced by members of the LGBTQ+ community are explored - mindfully and realistically. The New Girl creates an environment where we see everyone belongs. And it's important to remind the world of that sometimes.



THE COMMERCIALISATION OF PRIDE

and the global movement to reclaim it...

Outgoing President, Kian Cushman, explores the return of post-covid Pride celebrations and the risks it faces

The basic story and progress of LGBTUA+ rights are relatively well-known. Whether it's the progressive tale of the Stonewall Riots, led by black trans activists, such as Marsha P. Johnson, or the regressive media villainisation in the wake of the HIV/AIDs epidemic, the Pride movement has been underpinned by the empowerment of a community, once shunned and criminalised. However, can the same be said about the Pride movement in its current form today? In this short article, I will explore the current state of the movement, highlighting how Pride events have become exploited as a profit-making endeavour, and how its current form is a complete betrayal of its original purpose. While this is a huge topic to cover, in this piece I will mainly focus on UK Pride events, more specifically, the Manchester Pride "charity".

Late Summer of 2021 saw the return of Pride events, having been postponed or cancelled in the wake of the COVID pandemic. I had the pleasure of attending Manchester Pride last August, supporting local queer businesses, and getting involved in the 'Reclaim Pride' march.

In the weeks leading up to Manchester Pride, the charity came under (well deserved) fire following its decision to cut funding of a joint project with the LGBT Foundation that distributed free

condoms in the Greater Manchester area to combat HIV infections. While this happened, the CEO of the charity Mark Fletcher gained a £20,000 increase, bringing his salary to nearly £100,000. This scheme has existed since 1994, and the Manchester Pride charity has supported it for the last 27 years, so the question that must be asked is: what changed?

This year, Manchester Pride charged a whopping, £84.50 for 'Weekend Rainbow Passes'. While the organisation allows for discounted tickets, based on a means-tested, first-come-first-serve approach, it is simply not enough. While the parade is one of the only free events left, this year it was cancelled due to COVID concerns, despite the festival and club nights being given the go-ahead. It is becoming increasingly clear that Pride is now a privilege.

You must be able to pay for your tickets, your accommodation, and your transport, which totalled up, can cost hundreds of pounds per person.

The simple fact is, as a community we are statistically more likely to endure financial insecurity. Manchester Pride have positioned themselves as gatekeepers allowing only those privileged with the money to be able to enjoy a celebration that was once accessible to all.

It could be asked to what extent can it be argued that this is on Manchester Pride themselves? For me, the answer here is, completely. While Manchester Pride can be said to have simply responded to customer demand by providing things like the festival experience, to do so at the cost of potentially excluding some in the community is a betrayal of its roots.

There is nothing wrong with having the festival, the exclusive Canal St 'street party' access, however, these extortionate costs associated with attending Pride and making the most of the experience borders on outright exploitation. In the context of the fact that it only donated 3% of its revenue to LGBT+ charities and the cutting of ties with crucial HIV-preventing initiatives, it is becoming increasingly clear that the focus now is not about empowering a community. Instead, Manchester Pride seems to wear the façade of doing this, whilst also exploiting the community, giving very little back to the organisations that need it most.

Manchester Pride is a fantastic experience, and I truly would encourage everyone to go. There are fantastic local queer venues and artists that are in dire need of custom and support following the effects of the pandemic. All the events the organisation hosted this year were fantastic, however, there are structural problems which must be addressed. Going forward, Manchester Pride has agreed to allow a 'transparent' review of its finances. However, this is not a localised issue. The same exploitation and commodification of Pride has taken hold of many Pride celebrations across the world. The 'reclaim pride' movement has sought to fight against this, by protesting the organisations and holding them accountable to the community. For me, Pride has and always will be about empowering the community and taking a stand against injustice. It is inevitable that the focus will shift, especially in the face of injustices against the black community and trans individuals. However, the focus should never be about the money, and while Manchester Pride is just one example, it is already clear that it is time to reclaim pride.

Kian (he/him) is a final-year Law student



WARWICK PLAN'S

LGBTQ+ CAREERS CONFERENCE 2022



On May 7th 2022, PLAN hosted Warwick's first LGBTQ+ conference and the UK's only non-London LGBTQ+ Careers conference

After months of planning, rearranging and obstacles, PLAN were finally able to host our flagship event of the year, the LGBTQ+ careers summit, in-person!

The event was attended by 80+ students and staff from Warwick and beyond, including the likes of Bristol, Manchester and Sheffield.

With talks from panellists representing major firms such as the Financial Times and Reed Smith, workshops from BCG and a careers fair with American Express, Accenture and more!

Many thanks to all of our amazing panellists and sponsors for helping make this day such a success, which we were all able to celebrate with a chance for some networking and some prosecco!



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