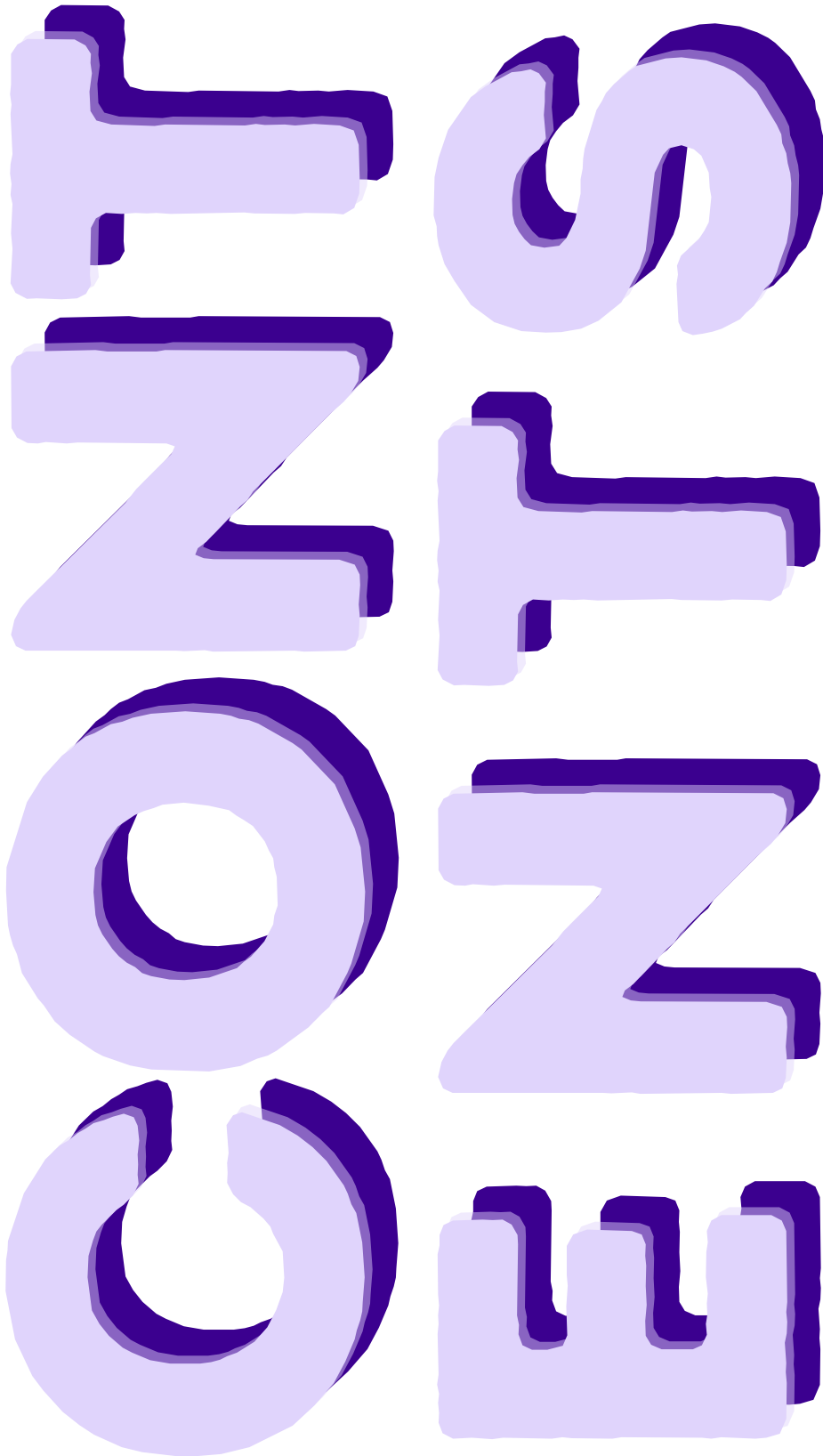


WARWICK PLAN'S LGBTQ+ MAGAZINE



OCT 2024

PLANORAMA



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Oct '24
Fresher's edition

a letter from the editor

Dear Planorama readers,

Welcome to Warwick! Or, if you're elderly like me... welcome back! Though for many of you this will be your first time reading our magazine, we hope that it won't take you long to get to grips with who we are. As a small introduction, we're Warwick PLAN's very own LGBTQ+ magazine written by and for queer students.

PLAN, in case you're wondering, stands for Professional LGBTUA+ and Allies Network. We're a society dedicated to preparing and empowering queer students in the world of work as well as on campus, hosting everything from socials to study sessions to our infamous domestic tour (where we tend to grace the dancefloor of Heaven with unbeaten style).

This issue is a celebration of new starts, whether you're returning from a lusciously long uni summer or you're fresh as a daisy. Beginning the year is no easy thing, with student fees soaring and the backlog of unfinished summer reading looking daunting. But not to fret, you are not alone. There is a whole community waiting for you here at Warwick.

So as the trees on library road slowly take on the colours of Autumn and first term gets underway, I hope you can find a quiet moment to take a breather amongst the pints of purple to enjoy this latest issue.

*All my love,
Amy*

WELCOME TO WARWICK



**An Interview with Ria Chopra,
President of PLAN society,
Professional LGBTUA+ and Allies
Network (PLAN).**

The beginning of the academic year is full of questions, especially the inevitable: What's your name? What course do you study? Though, being honest, these questions don't exactly tell you much about your fellow students. So, here to give you a perhaps more clear idea of the type of community you can expect at Warwick is our president, Ria, interviewed by our very own editor-in-chief, Amy.

A: As a quick start, off the top of your head, what is your first piece of advice for Freshers starting out at Warwick?

R: Don't put too much pressure on freshers week. Being in a new environment, surrounded by new people is scary enough without having to worry about doing every single thing possible during your first week here. A lot of events repeat throughout the year, and you'll have endless opportunities to integrate yourself in a society (for example, I joined PLAN at the end of the first term!).

freshers advice

A: In my case being a fresher was a huge mix of fear and anticipation, what would you say your own experience of welcome week was?

R: It was incredible and, without sounding ancient, I would love to go back to it. The excitement surrounding all the events, meeting the people I had spoken to over the freshers group chats, and just setting up my new room, was immeasurable. Note that this is obviously in hindsight. It was also very nerve-racking to face such a big change and I found that keeping busy helped a lot.

A: For people unfamiliar with the society, what does PLAN represent for you?

R: Over the years, PLAN has been a pillar of support to me, introducing me to an incredibly supportive community. To me, PLAN has my perfect balance of career and social events. I have gained as much from networking events as I have from Warwick Drag Race, and wouldn't dream of trading one for another.

Q&A



**AN INTERVIEW
WITH
RIA CHOPRA.**

'24/'25

A: PLAN is all about helping LGBTQ+ people access great opportunities, what would your advice be for freshers looking to get career opportunities?

R: Network, with both students that are aiming for similar careers, and at career events. But also, to actually keep in touch with that network. A lot of professionals at these events will gladly help you edit your CV, or improve your applications to their field.

A: Now more onto the uni lifestyle, what's your go-to for balancing workload with uni life?

R: I've found becoming friends with people who have the same degree/modules as you to be the most helpful. Of course, I don't mean having no friends outside your degree, just that staying on top of things becomes easier when you're getting through it together.

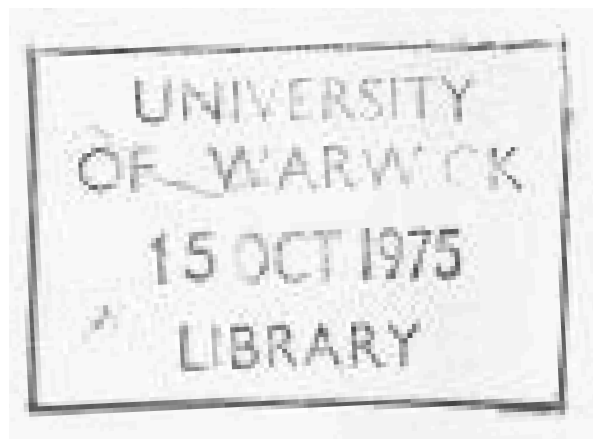
A: What has been your go-to night out?

R: I have loved circling despite being absolutely terrible at it. The thing is, you drink if you mess up the rules of a game, and I always mess them up too much to remember them!

A: First term can be intense. Where would you recommend for freshers to catch a quiet moment in their first weeks at Warwick?

R: The field by Cryfield can be very peaceful and generally makes for a great picnic spot too.

The MyWarwick App has a useful map of campus and tells you the best routes to get around!



A: Any tips for LGBTQ+ students specifically on joining societies?

R: Most societies are very supportive. As long as the society focuses on something you're passionate about, or even interested in, you'll likely find other people in the community and allies to work with.

A: Out of all of the LGBTQ+ events held throughout the year, which is your favourite?

R: Although biased, PLAN's Drag Race is definitely my favourite. With incredible performers and judges, it's become a PLAN tradition, and one I'm now very excited to host.

A: Finally, what's been the best part of your university experience so far?

R: I think it's been the freedom to explore different aspects of my personality. With the variety of societies on campus, I had the opportunity to try things I never would have otherwise.

A: And above all else, what's your top tip for LGBTQ+ people joining our uni?

R: Join PLAN! :) We have a great set of career and social events throughout the year, and are always looking for new event ideas.

If you're interested in knowing more about PLAN check out our Instagram to see our upcoming events! @warwickplansociety

CAN CELEBRITIES 'queerbait' YOU?

BY MAE HARDMAN
(SHE/THEY)

There are many reasons why a celebrity may find themselves face to face with accusations of queerbaiting. Whether that be using queer aesthetics, acting queer (whatever this means), or even playing queer characters - celebrities who undertake such roles without being openly queer find themselves under criticism. But what exactly is queerbaiting? Where can it be applied? Dictionary definitions claim that the term refers to media which uses LGBTQ+ characters and relationships in an ambiguous way to draw in queer audiences and capitalise from them.

A perfect example is BBC's Sherlock. The hinted-at romance between characters Sherlock Holmes and John Watson gave the show traction amidst the queer community. This is a perfect example of how this deceptive technique can grow an audience and

maximise profits. The term queerbaiting is undeniably useful when it comes to calling out capitalistic techniques such as this, however, when it is applied to real people, it can become damaging.

"Accusations against real people have real consequences"

Anyone with access to online queer spaces in the last few years will have witnessed the queerbaiting allegations against numerous celebrities, most notably Harry Styles, Billie Eilish, and Kit Connor. What the public fails to realise is that these accusations often rely heavily on stereotypes and make harmful assumptions about celebrities' private lives. Accusations like these not only create a new and unhelpful definition of the word 'queerbaiting', which was originally intended to call out capitalistic techniques which exploit queerness, but also perpetuates and encourages heteronormativity.



The reason why celebrities cannot queerbait is simple – they are real people. Accusations against real people (as opposed to fictional entertainment) have real consequences on actual lives. In 2022, Kit Connor was accused of queerbaiting when the actor, renowned for playing Nick Nelson, the bisexual love interest in *Heartstopper*, was seen holding hands with co-star Maia Reficco. God forbid two people are seen holding hands! And before this, in 2021, Billie Eilish was accused of queerbaiting after she danced with girls in a music video and captioned an Instagram post with “I love girls”. Whilst, notably, both celebrities have since publicly come out, it is important to acknowledge that this occurred not completely on their own terms. This explains exactly why we shouldn’t be accusing celebrities of queerbaiting. We quite simply do not know their sexuality – nor is it any of our business.

However, we mustn’t fail to acknowledge the cases where celebrities utilise queerbaiting in ways which harm the queer community. In 2002, pop duo t.A.T.u sang the iconic queer anthem ‘All the things she said’. The controversial music video, which features the duo kissing, led to queerbaiting accusations when it was later revealed that the duo was never actually in a relationship. The controversy then escalated when one member of the duo made homophobic comments condemning gay men. From this event, a debate arises: whilst it was wrong of t.A.T.u to exploit queer imagery to attract a queer audience with one of the members holding homophobic views, in using the term

‘queerbaiting’ to ascribe their actions, we assume their sexual orientation to be straight. It is clear that we should criticise their hypocrisy and homophobia, but do we have the right to assume that they are not queer?

On a societal level, claiming that celebrities can queerbait perpetuates heteronormativity. If someone who has never explicitly labelled their sexuality can queerbait, this means we are assuming they are straight. We’ve come such a long way in embracing fluidity in both gender and sexuality, as well as embracing people who choose to leave their sexuality unlabelled. So why are we holding celebrities to a higher standard?

An argument often used to justify accusing celebrities of queerbaiting is that it is important to have queer representation in the media. Loud and proud queer representation is vital. However, celebrities are real people with real feelings. It is also important to consider that, for many consumers of media, the celebrities who embrace a lack of a label will be a validating form of representation, too.

So, we understand sexuality as being fluid for some people, and we understand that some people may not wish to disclose or label their sexuality. Thus, the question that we are left with is why do we still not understand that celebrities do not owe us their sexualities?





WHAT DOES THE

BY MAYA SGARAVATO-GRANT
(SHE/HER/ANY)

RISE OF THE

The night after the first round of the French elections, in which the far-right National Rally (Rassemblement National) party came out ahead, four young men were arrested for a homophobic and transphobic attack in Paris. Despite the gravity of the incident, the far-right students were anything but repentant upon arrival at the police station. "In three weeks," one of them sneered, alluding to the anticipated far-right victory in the second round of the elections, "we'll be able to beat up all the f*ggots we want".

The National Rally- outmanoeuvred by the left which, despite long standing disagreements, swiftly banded together to form a coalition with the centrists and block the far-right - ended up coming third in the second and determinate round of the elections, to the shock and relief of millions who had considered their victory certain. Yet they now occupy more seats in the French Parliament than a far-right party has ever won before.

**“THIS REFLECTS A PHENOMENON
WHICH HAS REACHED EVERY
CORNER OF EUROPE”**

This reflects a phenomenon, which has reached every corner of Europe, and came to a head in June, when the far-right gained a record number of seats in the European Parliament. Authoritarian anti-immigrant parties, often with neo-fascist and neo-Nazi roots and connections, have been becoming mainstream or even dominant forces in countries in which until recently their supporters only dared speak of them in hushed tones. These parties are united by their conviction that the (idealised) traditional 'nation state' must be defended from 'outsiders'. As longtime outsiders, LGBTQ+ people are a target.

Unsurprisingly, given the heterogeneity of Europe, the positions taken by the leadership of European far-right movements towards LGBTQ+ rights seem, at first glance, to differ. Some parties have continued unashamedly in their attempts to strip away, or block progress in, LGBTQ+ rights and protections, at times drawing from traditional conservative rhetoric, at others leaning into their extremism, parroting increasingly absurdist homophobic conspiracy theories such as 'globohomoism'. On the other hand, others, whilst broadly retaining their hostility towards trans people, have become increasingly aware of the benefits of surface level 'pinkwashing' when courting a more centrist electorate. They have discovered that false concern for our wellbeing both adds to their respectability in the mainstream and gives them another weapon with which to take aim at their main target- Muslim immigrants and their families- who are now painted as the greatest threat the LGBTQ+ community faces.

FAR-RIGHT MEAN

FOR LGBTQ+ PEOPLE?

The insincerity of these self-styled allies is evident. Admiration for Orbán—the infamous Hungarian Prime Minister who in recent years banned ‘gender propaganda’ (that is, any information that is deemed to ‘promote’ homosexuality or gender transition) for under-18s—is a staple of far-right groups in Europe, including those who are most fervent in their proclaimed allyship. Indeed, the rank-and-file of these parties tend to characterise LGBTQ+ and progressive movements in a similar way—as constituting the primary proponents of a malignant ‘gender ideology’, a conspiracy to undermine the nuclear family by encouraging people to stray from traditional, ‘natural’, gender roles, be this in the form of women’s quotas, abortion, same-sex adoption, or gender self-recognition.

Amidst an increase in support for far-right parties in Europe, the outlook for LGBTQ+ people in Europe is uncertain. Far-right parties are currently in government in seven EU countries and threaten to take charge of one more before the end of the year. However, of the governments in which the far-right are currently represented, six are constituted of coalitions with more moderate parties, often constraining room for radical political manoeuvre. Even in countries such as Italy, where the dominant far-right’s alliance with an ostensibly more moderate party did not prevent it from imposing homophobic ordinances, individual regions have resisted, voting to impose their own laws against homophobia.

**"THAT BEING SAID, IT IS
IMPORTANT TO NOTE
THAT THE FAR-RIGHT IS
NOT THE ONLY
POLITICAL FACTION TO
POSE A THREAT TO THE
LGBTQ+ COMMUNITY."**

Others, particularly conservatives, have been content to use trans people as a 'political football' across the continent- a phenomenon which will be familiar to members of the UK trans community. Indeed, whilst countries governed by the far-right are few and far between in Europe, their growing popularity has imbued them with more influence, as centrist and centre-right parties adopt more socially conservative policies to try and win over an electorate increasingly favourable to the far-right. This can be seen at the international level as well as the domestic. Within the EU, the centre and centre right's need to prove themselves legitimate in this new context, alongside the upsurge in the number of far-right representatives and ministers in the European Parliament and the Council of Europe, has already led to anti-outsider measures such as the draconian new migration bill, and has raised fears amongst the LGBTQ+ community that the EU's 'watchdog' role and funding for LGBTQ+ organisations may come under threat. In any case, an intensification in 'culture war' politics at the EU level is certain.



Yet, there is reason for hope. Despite an increase in homophobic and transphobic hate crimes, support for LGBTQ+ rights is growing around Europe. This is true even for countries such as Hungary, in which support for LGBTQ+ people is at an all-time high. The far-right may be emboldened, but their rise in the polls has not translated into, nor is indicative of, increasing homophobic sentiment among ordinary people.

Furthermore, the far-right remain divided, and therefore weak, within EU institutions, with the two irreconcilable party groupings that existed in the European Parliament before the most recent European election splitting into three. At the same time, the 'cordon sanitaire'- the traditional agreement among parties to not collaborate with the far-right- is holding strong for now, with no member of the 'Patriots of Europe' group being elected to a vice-presidential or vice-chair position, despite holding legitimate claims to such posts.

For now the forward moving march of the far-right across Europe appears strong and steady, in the UK as much as on the continent. However, if the results of the French elections in July prove anything, it is that no defeat is inevitable.



The daffodils

by Millie Hatfield-Grossova (she/her)

In the garden again,
And you say the daffodils are budding
The snowdrops as well.
Touch your fingers to the crook of my elbow,
Ask if I'm really okay.

I sit on the grass and tell you the sun is lovely
While you rub lotion over my collarbones
Drift your fingers by my mouth.

I tell you that this is what I'll miss:
You and the sun
And the roses that overgrow the courtyard
White stained with red.

Sestina For Someone You Love

By Millie Baldwin (she/her)

In the next years I don't want anything
but you sipping through the glass straw in your
jam jar concoction, sitting on the short cut
grass beneath our bums, sun dripping onto skin,
touching elbows, talking turtles and growing
backbones, my sneezes interrupting your lips.

In the next years I only want your lips
and bad weather blocked by windows, nothing
but back to bed by 2pm where we enact growing
babies our bodies can't have. I like your
knees because they aren't mine, body so full of skin
they told us should feel like orange peel (cut

and paste.) In the next years I only want home haircuts,
piles of mismatched dishes, creases in our t-shirts, lips
so busy with vaseline and promises - me and my skin
will stay here until you get bored of us or until everything
ends. You are hungry so you bite my ear, metal on your
mushroom tongue. Today we've decided to stop growing.

In the next years I only want to start growing
a garden - we'll have basil, bay, beans, carrots, chilis cut
fresh for the kitchen table, littered with mugs and your
jigsaw, we have half finished cigarettes on lips,
I do not ask you to die with me but you do, everything
is medicine when we're young, there's time to fix skin

and lungs. In the next years I only want skin
on chips, a dog and odd socks - does this mean I'm growing
older? I've told you I'd let you do anything
you want to me - tattoo as colouring book, cut
nails dug deep in hips, teeth caught in cracked lips.
Future me will go as far as to replace her lungs with yours.

In the next years I only want to be yours.
I have cursed you with knowing all of me - imagine onion skin,
imagine ball of wool, imagine jellyfish sting, imagine unopened lips,
imagine whisking water, imagine forever growing
into a new creature who will tell you all the things
unheard. In the next years it'll only be you until the film is cut.

TO GATEKEEP OR NOT TO GATEKEEP?

QUEER MUSIC AND LGBTQ+ ARTISTS AT RISK OF HOMOGENISATION.

Prominent queer artists often have a very dedicated queer fanbase, many of whom were fans of them when they were less well-known. When these artists inevitably begin to gain popularity, there is a tendency for queer fans to try to gatekeep the artist, arguing that their songs are primarily for those in the LGBTQ+ community and should not be co-opted by straight people. This has happened with artists such as Girl in Red, Chappell Roan and Renee Rapp. As someone who was a fan of Chappell Roan before she blew up on the internet, I understand the instinct to gatekeep previously obscure queer artists, especially when they are becoming more popular among straight people. While straight people being fans of queer artists is a comparatively minor issue, the co-option of queer artists by straight people is symptomatic of a wider issue: the willingness of straight people to consume our media and utilise our aesthetics to appear trendy, while doing little or nothing to support our community in a meaningful way.

What most queer people who try to gatekeep artists have an issue with is not straight people simply listening to or enjoying music by queer artists, but rather straight people twisting the meaning of queer music to reflect their experiences. Straight people are perfectly entitled to listen to and enjoy music by LGBTQ+ artists, and it creates unnecessary division to try and stop this. However, the problem comes when straight people try to claim queer songs as their own and ignore the queerness inherent within them.



The instinct to gatekeep queer music is likely to stem from the lack of overtly queer music in existence until recent years. When there are only a few songs which are explicitly about queer relationships, it is understandable that queer people want to keep these songs for themselves. Several people on the internet have argued that there are thousands of songs about heterosexual relationships for straight people to, for example, post a TikTok about their partner to, so their use of queer songs to do this is unnecessary. It's very unlikely that straight people are intentionally 'stealing' our music, but through doing this they indirectly claim our music for themselves, which is interpreted by many queer people as taking away music that belongs to us. When mainstream culture and entertainment media is dominated by heterosexuality and queer artists are sidelined, it is understandable that LGBTQ+ fans want to protect the small proportion of songs which they see as their own.

“THIS DEMONSTRATES STRAIGHT PEOPLE’S DESIRE TO RELATE TO THESE SONGS AS LONG AS IT MAKES THEM APPEAR ON-TREND”

There is also a tendency for straight fans of queer artists to ignore the inherent queerness within lyrics when discussing their music. For example, many straight people online have used Chappell Roan’s song ‘Good Luck, Babe’ to talk about their experiences with situationships, while ignoring that the song is about the queer experience of dating someone who cannot accept their queerness and chooses a heterosexual relationship instead. This demonstrates straight people’s desire to relate to these songs as long as it makes them appear on-trend, but continuously refusing to acknowledge the queerness within these songs, which cannot be detached from their meaning. While there is nothing inherently wrong with straight people relating to only certain parts of queer songs, the tendency to completely ignore the queer elements of these songs may be indicative of the reluctance of many straight people to associate themselves with queerness beyond just aesthetics and trends. This is likely to be a product of homophobia and the demonisation of queer people in wider society.

Although the co-option of queer music by straight people is a product of homophobia, and is disheartening to many, it is a comparatively insignificant issue in comparison to the material discrimination and violence faced by many LGBTQ+ people. This should accordingly not be focused on as one of the primary issues faced by queer people, but rather as a manifestation in popular culture of homophobia and heteronormativity.

Although there are certainly bigger issues in society, and more significant issues faced by queer people, the appropriation of queer music by straight people is part of the homophobia ingrained in society on a larger scale. Therefore, gatekeeping queer music is not an inherently bad practice, but should instead be viewed as an attempt by members of the LGBTQ+ community to protect queer music and culture from homogenisation by straight people.

BY MIA DALTON (SHE/HE/THEY)



ADRIENNE RICH: STUDIES IN FLUIDITY

AN ESSAY ARTICLE BY MILLIE HATFIELD-GROSSOVA (SHE/HER)

Adrienne Rich, poet and activist, was a leading voice within the feminist politics and discourse of the 1960s through to the 1980s. Throughout these decades, Rich made the shift from writing 'tasteful' poetry to engaging in expansive and groundbreaking feminist and gender theory. David Zuger speaks of this transformation from her earlier work of "painstaking, decorous poems that are eager to 'maturely' accept the world"

to "a poet bitterly unable to feel at home in a world that gives

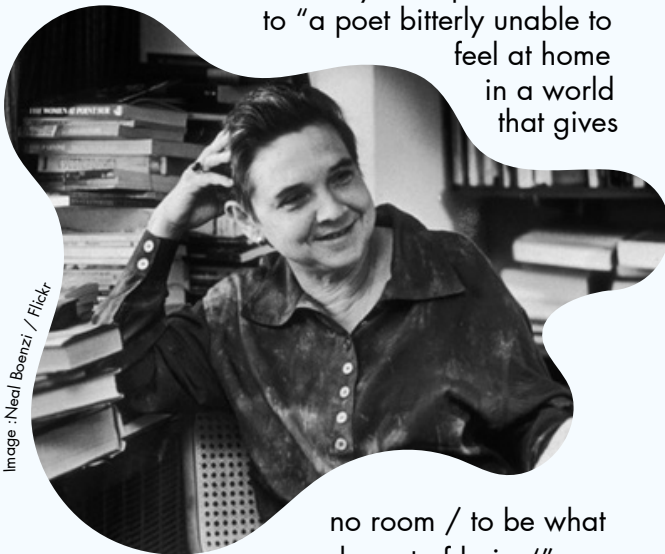


Image: Neal Boenzi / Flickr

no room / to be what
we dreamt of being"
(Poet and Critic).

Her seminal essay on 'Compulsory Heterosexuality', published in 1980, made waves within a previously scarce field of exploration: the invisibility of lesbianism within literature and society and the societal urge to impose a 'norm' of heterosexuality.

"RICH MAKES EXPLICIT THE FACT THAT THE SOCIETAL URGE FOR HETEROSEXUALITY IS NOT A BIOLOGICAL NORM BUT AN ARTIFICIAL ONE"

In *Compulsory Heterosexuality*, Rich makes explicit the fact that the societal urge for heterosexuality is not a biological norm but an artificial one imposed to maintain an order in which women are subordinate to men. This is not a natural order of being, but a result of a widespread societal focus on "male needs, male fantasies about women, and male interest in controlling women" (634).

This existence is not limited to lesbianism itself. The personal and political interests of Rich have often led readers to interpret her works purely through a lens of queer sexuality.

However, Rich's poetry is multifaceted in its various themes,

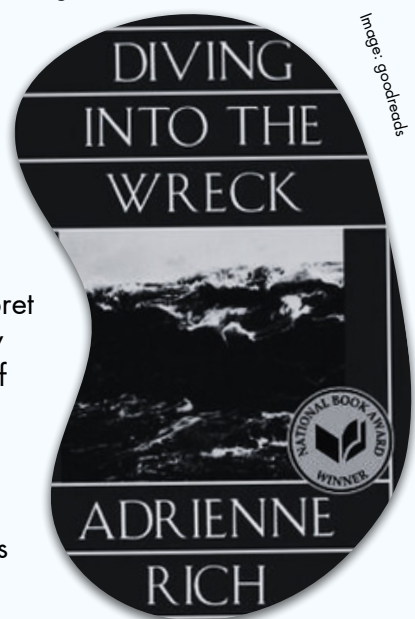


Image: goodreads

ranging from anti-war sentiment to radical feminism and gender fluidity. If she speaks in her theoretical works of the danger of imposing binaries of all kinds within society, she reflects this expertly within her poetry.

Rich's 'Diving Into the Wreck' (a copy of which can be easily sourced online) offers what I find to be her most deft and thorough study of human identity as seen through gender theory. The marine diver in the poem, initially out of place in the "grave and awkward" diving suit, gradually becomes more at one with the "wreck", until eventually they/we "are the half destroyed instruments" at the bottom of the ocean.

The reader is intimately guided along with the diver's descent into the wreck through the frequent use

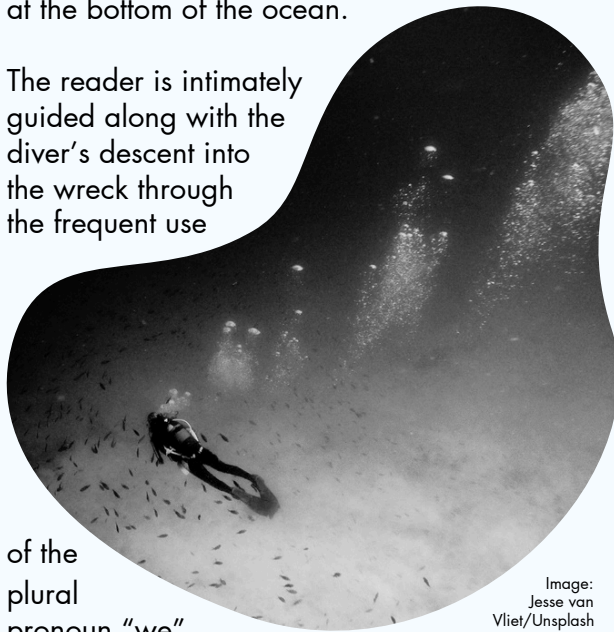


Image:
Jesse van
Vliet/Unsplash

of the plural pronoun "we".

Their body (our bodies) gains plurality and fluidity until they are both "he" and "she": "The Mermaid whose dark hair / streams black, the merman in his armoured body."

Rich's drive to explore a fluidity that she knows exists pushes her down, deeper into a wreck, away from a world that imposes and upholds strict binaries. The diver's search, after all, is for the truth and not the assumed truth –

**"THE
WRECK
AND
NOT THE
STORY
OF THE
WRECK",
"THE
THING
ITSELF"
AND NOT
THE "MYTH".**



Image: Marek Oton / Unsplash

And this search for real (and multiple) truths reflects (expertly) the feeling of expressing or understanding one's truthful identity, whether or not it aligns with societal expectations. Rich's diver does not expect to find a neat image, but a ruin to experience, rather than understand.

As Lindroth so expertly puts it, the diver, the poet and the reader take a "descent into self" and emerge, "the explorer who has descended into the depths of their being and returned transformed by discovery" (Tropes of Discovery, 75).



THE

RuPaul

-IFICATION
OF DRAG

DRAG'S ADOPTION INTO THE MAINSTREAM AND THE VALUE OF AUTHENTICITY

By Jasper Young (he/they)

< Alaska Thunderf*ck, runner-up on the fifth season of RuPaul's Drag Race and winner of the second season of RuPaul's Drag Race All Stars, at RuPaul's DragCon 2024

**"THE SHARP EDGE OF
PARODY. THE SHARP
EDGE OF POLITICS.
THE SHARP EDGE OF
SOCIAL
COMMENTARY.
THAT'S NOT
MARKETABLE." - IBI**

"Unintentionally, it has invalidated certain kinds of drag. There's been a removal of the irony of drag in a certain way. People come in thinking that this is what drag queens do." Were just a few comments Ibi had to say on the topic.

Over the last decade, presentations of drag have exploded in mainstream popular culture. Arguably, largely thanks to the RuPaul's Drag Race empire, drag has never been so familiar to the general public. But with familiarity, comes expectation and with expectation - comes judgement.

The so called "Rupaul-ification" of drag is the idea that in order for drag to be recognised as valid in the mainstream, it must fit under a particular aesthetic popularised by RuPaul's 'Glamazon' style and appearance. Perfect makeup, big hair, bodacious curves, and custom-fitted outfits which 'drag' the bank balances of budding queens into oblivion...

Ibi's drag is experimental, bold, and conceptual. It refuses to be pinned down by the aesthetic boundaries laid down by RuPaul and her shows, including, but not limited to: wearing padding, a breastplate, and gluing down a lace-front wig. I suspect they have strong opinions on such a topic.

"RuPaul, as a franchise, has done some incredible things for drag... with that, it has unfortunately narrowed the field with what people expect from drag.

"It's given opportunities to queer people in ways which no franchise has. But on the flip side, it has meant that for drag to marketable, we have lost some of the queerness.

When I interviewed drag artist and academic, Ibi Profane, for June's Pride Month episode of Planorama's 'Queer Student' podcast, I was dying to know their thoughts on how the popularisation of drag in mainstream culture, particularly through the success of RuPaul's Drag Race, has impacted the artform.



It has become the normal to expect queens of any stature on any stage to be immaculate in every respect. Their mugs must be beaten. Their hair must be human. Their lips must be synced. Beyoncé should be under the play-button of their stereotypes and at the drop of a beat they must be ready to jump-split from a 3m box and shablam to the ground without so much of a twitch from their groins. Oh – and in six-inch platform heels, obviously.

Such expectations have limited many people's idea of what drag can do as an artform – the questions it can ask of the status-quo – the subsequent boundaries it may push.

Drag has forever been at the heart of queer politics and the LGBTQ+ movement. Drag is inherently arresting, uncompromising, and striking. Drag takes in its hands the social rulebook for the gender binary, scribbles over the pages, rips them out and rewrites them. Drag enables you to be anyone you want.

It thus makes sense that at a time when conservatives (small 'c') and members of the far-right are beginning to infringe upon the rights and progress we have achieved over the last few decades, drag queens are also at the centre of the storm. In the USA, attacks on trans-rights and the moral panic surrounding so called 'gender ideology' have led to serious legislation being passed to limit and restrict drag performances.

“DRAG IS AS NEEDED NOW AS IT'S EVER BEEN. NOT ONLY TO RESIST SUCH REGRESSIVE POLITICS, BUT TO EMPOWER YOUNG QUEER PEOPLE”

In Montana and Tennessee, drag performances are explicitly restricted in the legislature, whilst four other states have laws about “adult” or “sexual” performances which may be used to target drag. In the UK, protests surrounding ‘drag story hours’ have been creeping into the headlines. This is in addition to the extreme anti-LGBTQ+ rhetoric coming from prominent Conservative politicians.

Surely then, drag is as needed now as it's ever been. Not only to resist such regressive politics, but to empower young queer people who may feel silenced by them.

This is why it's so important that we don't police what drag can be, as such judgement will only suppress expressions of and experiments with drag in our community. Take for instance Queen of the Mother-Tucking world Tia Kofi. She admitted to spending over £20,000 on her looks for her latest winning appearance on Drag Race, describing in a BBC article that “prices have inflated above the odds.” Subsequently younger, newer queens must contend with this precedent, with Raine, a young Brighton performer, stating in the same article that “if people's viewpoint of drag is Drag Race, they're gonna expect that level and calibre of outfits from drag queens they see day to day.”

Drag Race is a wonderful show. As Ibi Profane said, it's given opportunities to queer performers previously unfeasible. But whilst we should celebrate the impeccable level of artistry on display in the show, we also shouldn't hold that as the standard for “good” drag across the board.

As we've seen with events such as Warwick Pride and Warwick Drag Race, there is a space available for every kind of drag – that is what makes those events so special. Queens, kings, non-binary deities – whomever you want to be – such expression cuts to the heart of the very queerness drag emboldens, the very queerness no political force will ever be able to erase.



CURRENT INITIATIVES

Become a rep for PLAN!



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

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

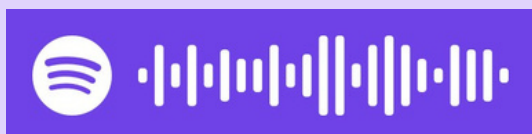
Keep an eye on our Instagram for applications :)

Planorama PODCAST: The Queer Student



Planorama's podcast, The Queer student is the new must-have podcast for all LGBTQIA+ students. Each month your hosts Jasper (he/they) and Yusra (she/her) will be interviewing guests and diving into the issues which matter most to queer students, stretching from careers advice and opportunities, all the way to queer news, politics and culture.

Following their debut episode, with special guest Ibi Profane, Jasper and Yusra now turn to interview Warwick students on how to best get settled into Warwick life as a member of the LGBTQ+ community.



WHO IS WARWICK PLAN?

If this is your first exposure to PLAN,

Welcome!

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

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

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

WE ARE ALWAYS LOOKING FOR **NEW VOICES!**

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

We print 3 issues every year, with our online articles posted regularly on our social media pages and website. At Planorama, we always want to hear more points of view. If you would like to write for us, contact us through our socials.

No prior experience is necessary!



GET INVOLVED

warwickplan.co.uk
/planorama

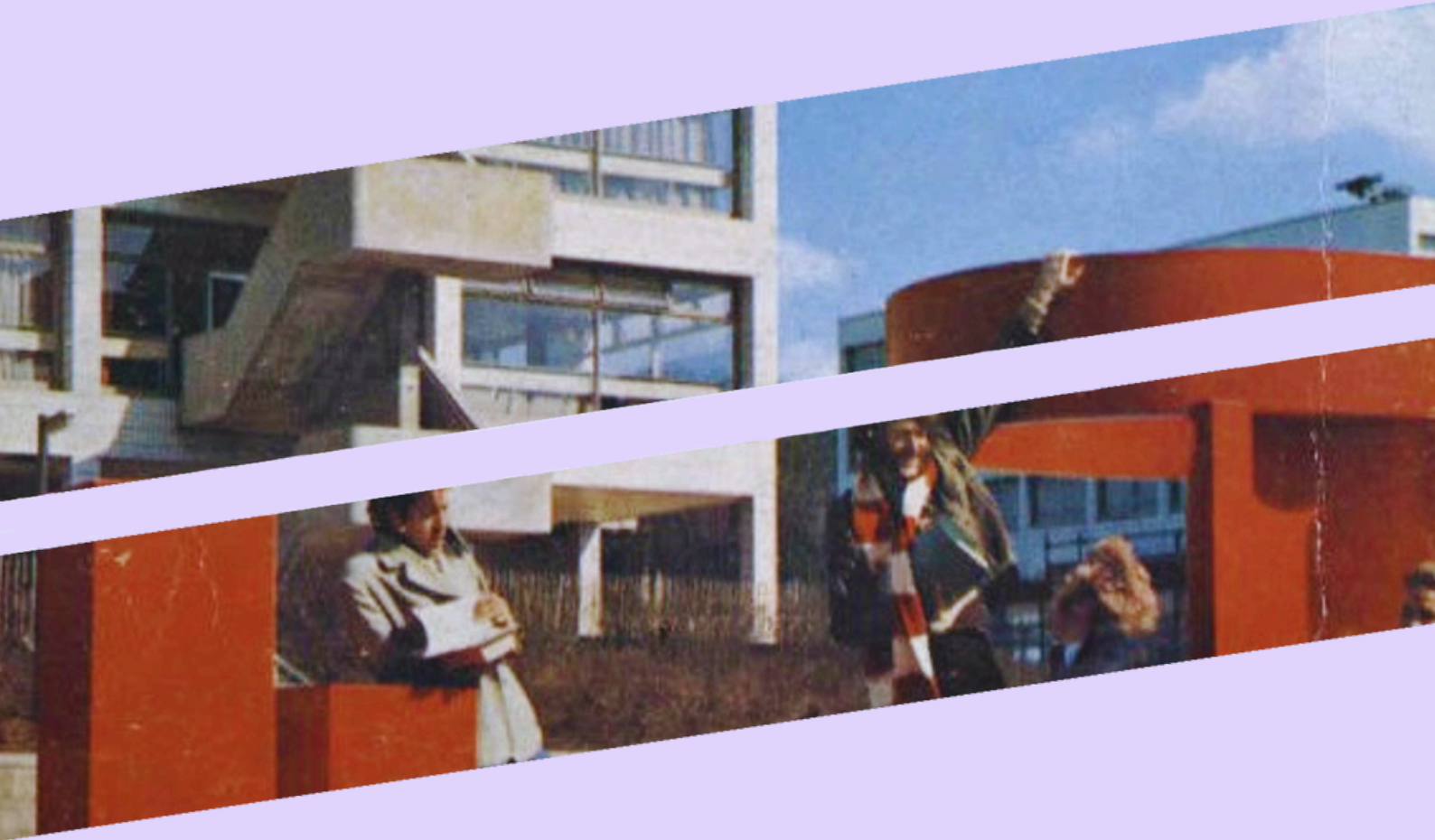


@warwickplanorama



Warwick PLAN Society





WARWICK PLAN'S LGBTQ+ MAGAZINE

PLANORAMA

