

From their collective experience, Team Cockroach learned the valuable lesson that anyone can be a better person as they make a decision to stand. Regardless of where they came from and who they were, they grew greatly as time went on. Thus, they found the fatal

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As the evening drew to a close, we lit candles on the train tracks at the end of the camps near the mass burial sites. Each candle represented a lost and a night of their memories. This sight might remind the darkness of the

Exercise. Good god, yes! I have been in commercial because, while I know there were too many was starting to kill. I have sucked down binge-streaming all enjoyment the blood contouring your spine at your 'home office', or strolling with your neck kinked downwards, does wonders for your mood.

The Annual of
ARU's Student
Magazine

Edition 3

Welcome

This is the third edition annual of The Ruskin Journal magazine. The articles featured in this annual were written by the students of Anglia Ruskin University, as well as members of The Ruskin Journal Society, throughout the 2019-20 academic year.

We reserve the right to publish all of the content provided in this annual, which was pre-approved by all interviewees, companies, artists, and individuals concerned.

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Find us online at ruskinjournal.com, or by searching “Ruskin Journal”.



From the website:

Hello from The Ruskin Journal – *the* student magazine for Anglia Ruskin University. The Journal – colloquially termed *The R.J.* – is an outlet for aspiring writers, creators and journalists to come together to share their ideas with our readers. Try your hand at reporting current affairs, reviewing books, shows or movies, celebrating sporting successes, lifestyle reporting, cultural analysis, photography and illustration, or anything else that you are passionate about.

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Calling All Students: Make Your Voice Heard!

Written by: Joshua Dowding



Featured Image: Steve Houghton-Burrett on Unsplash

As I'm sure you know by now, another general election is upon us. Though it would seem like an eternity since we last went to the polls, on December 12th the country will be asked once again to decide its future. Some pundits have already branded it as the 'Brexit Election', but I feel it's important to consider some of the wider issues facing the country now, and in the near future. There's a whole lot more going on in the world right

now: climate change, the ongoing refugee crisis, and the rise of the political fringes just to name a few. Of course, you should consider Brexit. Of course, some of these issues bleed into the Brexit debate, but try not to make this election all about one issue. Cast your vote based on a whole range of issues that are important to you, and don't follow the pack. This is your opportunity to make your voice heard.

What's at stake?

Every constituency in the country is up for grabs in the upcoming general election. There are 650 constituencies in the United Kingdom, each representing between 56,000 and 72,000 constituency members (depending on where you live), and a single seat in the House of Commons.

How does an election work?

The name of the game is to get a majority, and for any one party to gain a majority, 326 members of that party must first be elected to the House of Commons. Each party tries to field a candidate for each constituency, though sometimes a party may not field a candidate for a particular constituency due to a pact they've made with another party, or because they just don't have enough candidates.

With the first-past-the-post voting system we have in the United Kingdom, the candidate with the most votes wins the constituency, and thus a seat in parliament. However, that

candidate may only secure 39% of the total votes cast with the other candidates securing the remaining 61% of votes. What counts is that each of those remaining candidates did not secure more votes than the victor despite amassing more votes than they did in total. For better or worse, the current system favours the person with the 39% mandate, over the people with the 61% lead. To combat this system, you might want to research into 'tactical voting'. I'll leave that up to you.

At a national level, the party with the most elected members, or MPs, wins the election. However, since the name of the game is to get a majority, the party with the most elected MPs may still lose out on a commanding position in parliament by failing to gain that majority. This is referred to as a 'hung parliament' where no one party has a majority in the House of Commons. At this point, the party with the most elected MPs must try to form a government by either partnering with another party or by forming a 'minority

government'. The former may (I stress 'may') prove beneficial if the winning party can find another with similar political views, whereas the latter would mean that the government might find it difficult to pass their legislation due to a lack of a majority in the House.

In advance of the election, each party will release its manifesto outlining what they intend to do should they win the majority – at least in theory. And while it's easy to dismiss them, they do provide some insight into the party's priorities and leanings. So they might be worth a skim, at least.

It's important to remember that voters do not elect the Prime Minister themselves. The person that'll become the PM is either the current leader of the party that wins, or the leaders of the parties that enter into a coalition, or they're elected by the parties themselves (sometimes after-the-fact).

How do I know if I'm eligible to vote?

It's not enough to be 18 and

over to vote in UK general elections. Voters will also need to be a registered British citizen with a residential address somewhere in the United Kingdom, or – for those living abroad – must have previously registered to vote within the past 15 years. Qualifying citizens of the Commonwealth, the Republic of Ireland (especially if they were born in Northern Ireland), Cyprus, or Malta, may also be eligible to vote as well. However, EU citizens living in the UK on a permit will not be allowed to vote in the upcoming election at all. Again, make of that what you will.

Prospective voters aged between 16 and 17 may also register to vote, though they will not be able to participate in this upcoming election unless parliament decides to extend the franchise to those people. EU citizens are in a similar situation here.

How do I get involved?

You can vote in one of three ways: in-person, by post, or by proxy. Regardless of which you

choose, you will first need to register to vote.

- To register to vote, visit the gov.uk voter registration page. The deadline is midnight on Tuesday, November 26th. It takes a few minutes at most, but don't leave it until the last minute! It may take some time for your name to be added to the electoral register.

- To register to vote by post, again, visit the gov.uk website and search for "postal vote". The deadline date is the same as registration, though the time is slightly earlier at 5 PM. Voters in Northern Ireland can also apply to vote by post, though you'll need to provide a reason as to why you cannot vote in person.

- To register to vote by proxy, once again, visit the gov.uk website and search for "vote by proxy". The deadline date is the same as above – November 26th at 5 PM.

If you intend to vote by post, or by proxy, you will need to make a separate application in addition to your electoral

registration. These applications must be made in-time – any applications received after the deadline will be rejected even if it was the fault of the postal service that it wasn't received in time.

How does 'in-person' voting work?

Voting takes place at designated polling stations. Before the election, voters will receive a polling card telling you which station you are registered to vote at. These stations open at 7 AM on the day (December 12th), and remain open until 10 PM. After that, the station will close to the public.

When you arrive at a polling station, the ballot officer will ask you for your name and address so that they can find you on the electoral register. Be sure to have some form of identification on you just in case you're asked for it. Then you will be given a ballot paper and shown to a polling booth. You are expected to put a cross in the box next to the name of the candidate you wish to vote for. Putting a tick, a circle, or

anything else in that box will spoil your vote. Once you've finished, fold the ballot paper in half, exit the polling booth and drop the paper into the ballot box. That's it, you're done.

The results are declared throughout the night as each constituency office counts its votes. Some counts might spill into the following morning depending on whether any recounts have taken place.

How does voting by post or proxy work?

If you intend to vote by post, providing that you've registered to do so, you will receive your ballot paper in the mail close to the date of the general election. You must fill in the ballot paper as you would at a polling station and return it in the envelope provided. If you think your postal vote won't make it in time, you can take the sealed letter to your local polling station instead.

Voting by proxy means that you'd like someone else to vote on your behalf in your

absence. Your proxy would vote as normal, though they would receive two ballot papers instead of one. Your proxy of choice must be trustworthy and registered to vote themselves.

Should I get involved?

Yes, absolutely. Every vote counts, literally. It's a numbers game after all. One vote could make all the difference – that could be your vote. After all, voting is anonymous, so as long as you don't tell anyone, no one will find out which way you voted. Nobody needs to know.

Lastly, there's been a lot of talk about the 'two-party system' as of late. According to the BBC, every election since 1922 has been won by either the Labour party or the Conservative party. But in the years since the infamous 2016 EU referendum, a number of alternative parties have sprung up in an attempt to disrupt this system. Together with some of the smaller established parties, a credible force could be brewing here to take on the two-party system for the first time in nearly a century. Could be worth a look?

I'll leave it to you.

Closing

For more information on how to vote – especially if you're voting from abroad – visit the gov.uk website and search for "how to vote". This is your chance. Register to vote to make your voice heard!

Let's Celebrate JOMO!

Written by: Maria-Cristina Ionita



Featured Image: Alejandro Ortiz on Unsplash

Let's all celebrate the joy of missing out!

Drinks, events, societies, assignments, relationships, and more. As a student, I believe that while I have so many opportunities available to me, I have little time to spend on them. Some might argue that the key to this problem is effective time management, but let's not forget that we are only humans and that we are not in control of everything around us, no matter how much we may want or try to be. Remember that change in deadline? Or that birthday party which you completely forgot about? Or that friend that needed help?

FOMO (standing for the 'fear of missing out') is a serious issue for students today, especially with social media showing everything that we are "missing out" on. It leaves us feeling the undeniable pressure to constantly be doing something, especially in our free time. I see myself involved in so many things: running a society, attending different events, going to class, working 4 days per week and writing my assignments, all at the same time! And I still feel like I am missing out on chances to network, to improve my personal and professional skills, to change the world a little bit, and to make

sure I do not waste any second as a student at ARU. I have been talking to many students and they feel the same way: we are afraid of missing out on the opportunities of our lifetimes! Many of us came to study here with the hope that we can have better resources compared to our home countries, but we are stressing so much over striving for more that we can forget to enjoy a cup of coffee with a friend in the afternoon or to read a book that we like.

But now I ask you: Why aren't we celebrating the JOMO (the 'joy of missing out')?

The main way that I deal with FOMO is to remind myself that I am doing my best and that I need to hold myself accountable for my physical and mental health. I love being around people and engaging in different activities with other students, but I also know the importance of giving myself breaks and time alone to enjoy my own company. I praise myself every time I stop grabbing a convenient takeaway on-the-go and instead choose to enjoy a lovely chai latte in, listening to Christmas Carols and catching up with my family from back home.

Choose to be happy, not just busy. At the end of the day, you should feel accomplished and blessed, not exhausted and anxious. It is the small things that can help you, but if you feel like you need help, do not be afraid to seek it.

In order to give our best, I believe that we need to be in our best condition, so do not lose yourself in the process of becoming your best self.

Holocaust Education Trust – My Experience

Written by: Elle Haywood



Featured Image: Mika on Unsplash

My experience as an ambassador for the Holocaust Education Trust, and the importance of Holocaust Memorial Day.

The 27th of January each year marks Holocaust Memorial Day across the world, which is the liberation of notorious concentration camp Auschwitz-Birkenau. Institutions across the UK recognise this memorial and pay tribute through events, activities and talks in remembrance of those who lost their lives during the holocaust from the period of 1933 – 1945. It is also a

time to talk about the atrocities that occurred during this time in history, and to ensure that genocide of this scale never happens again. The holocaust, also known as Sho'ah and Huban, was the systematic extermination by Nazi Germany and its collaborators of over 6 million Jewish people by cremation, firing squad and gas chambers. This religious and political anti-Semitism is rooted in the ideology that the Jewish race was evil and trying to take over the world, which was fuelled by Adolf Hitler and his belief in total

annihilation. This barbaric act of state-supported genocide continued beyond the end of World War Two until the liberation of camps by the allies in the mid 20th century.

In 2014, I was elected by my sixth form to be an ambassador for the Holocaust Education Trust as part of the Lessons from Auschwitz programme. The aims of HET are to educate young people across the UK about the holocaust and how the lessons learnt from it are relevant in today's society. The foundation was formed in 1988 and it trains teachers and students within various programmes, whilst also providing a platform for Holocaust survivors to work with UK media and parliament in continuing the discussion of their experiences. On the LFA programme, I attended a training day in central London with many other students to be fully educated on the subject and trained in how to bring these messages back to the school to teach other students. We were also able to meet with one of the survivors, Susan Pollack, who was sent to Auschwitz-Birkenau in 1944. She spoke to us about her time in the camps and why she works with the trust.

Susan was one of the most inspiring individuals I have ever encountered. Her ability to carry on after all that she had endured and her determination to help others who had survived the camps left me in awe. She faced severe antisemitism during her life in Hungary before the camps, and lost over 50 relatives during WWII to antisemitism laws. Her bravery in telling us her story allowed us to pass on her messages of hope and to keep a promise of making sure that the memories of her and her family pass on to future generations. We must do all that we can to continue informing others in order to best assist the prevention of history repeating itself.

The next stage was a visit to the old Jewish village of Krakow, Auschwitz One, Auschwitz-Birkenau. My experience there will haunt me for the rest of my life. Both of the camps were an endless barren wasteland of barbed wire, crumbling shacks and the remains of the incineration chambers. Walking around reminded me of a prison, but one that would have been filled with people who had committed no crimes but of their religion, ethnicity and heritage; who had suffered at the hands of

hatred and evil. The camps held rooms filled with pictures of those who had lived there, as well as all of their possessions. From a mountain of hair still tied up with the ribbons of young girls, to the piles of glasses and watches of the elderly who knew that this was the end of the road. To this day I still think about the room filled purely with the shoes of every person who walked those very halls, but unlike myself, did not get to walk out again. It is something that we as a society should think about every now and again, how simple it is to take off our shoes when we get home before then being warmly greeted by our friends and family. We get to put back on those shoes and continue with our lives, whereas so many people would never get to put theirs on again.

The concentration camps epitomise a literal hell on Earth. The empty gas chamber sent me into a cold sweat, being in the confined stone room of which those four walls were the final sight that millions of people saw before their last breath. There is no comprehension of the fear that they felt, and that this damnation was due to no fault of their own. In threadbare pyjamas, starving

and with certain death staring them in the face, it's a situation no human should ever have to endure. The incineration pits held the ashes of so many individuals who had a background and a story; a family and a life. Yet within a few short moments, they were reduced to dust in the air. Their stories deserve to be told, their lives deserve to be remembered and it is our responsibility to honour their memories.

As the evening drew to a close, we lit candles on the train tracks at the end of the camps near the mass burial sites. Each candle represented a life lost and the light of their memory living on. This simple light repelled the darkness of this cruel place and was a message of renewed hope that everyone there shared.

The holocaust was over 70 years ago, and unfortunately, there are still so many traces of antisemitism, homophobia, xenophobia and racism in our world. It is down to us and our leaders to fight against these acts of hatred. We are not born into this world hating others, and there is no place for isolation, fascism and ignorance in the 21st century. It is important

to read about the genocide that took place, to feel anger at the horrors so many innocent people faced and to protect others in our lives from facing persecution such as this. We can teach others the lessons we have learnt, open our lives to inclusivity and promise to not let history repeat itself. This can be from small acts of speaking out against bullying and hate speech, to protests supporting equality and talking about history. Acceptance, tolerance and freedom are obtainable if we ensure that hope trumps hate and that we can forgive, but never forget.

Media Exhibitions in London

Written by: *Ciéra Cree*



Featured Image: *Ciéra Cree*

On Wednesday 4th of December, first-year students taking the Media Studies course were invited on their first university field trip - a day that played out to be both exciting and memorable for many reasons.

During class when the trip was announced, we were told where to collect our train tickets and what the trip would entail. The plan was to visit two exhibitions in London - one by Nam June Paik held at the Tate Modern, and the other being a 'multimedia show' taking place at the Store in Temple. We

agreed to meet-up by the train station's Christmas Tree before setting off on our journey.

The fact that it was the festive season made this little adventure all the more enticing to me - who wouldn't want to see the pretty lights adorning London streets? I was excited to see the exhibitions too! 'Media' covers such a wide spectrum of topics, so it's difficult to gauge what to expect from an exhibition about a subject so broad. Because of this, I was very interested to see what was yet to unfold.

At 10:15 AM our train started up and we were on our way to London. Our journey there was relatively quiet and the train itself wasn't too busy, at least not around where I was sitting. There was a low hum of chatter, some people reading, others on their laptops working, and the occasional person addictively looking down at their phone. Coming from a small village without public transport meant I hadn't actually been on that many trains before. This was something rather amusing to think about while looking out of the window. I don't mind trains, not particularly, but the ones that go really fast can be a bit...disconcerting.

Our first stop was Kings Cross to meet with Neil, Deputy Head for Film and Media, so he could join us on the final leg of the ride. After that, we all boarded another train bound for central London. The journey from Cambridge wasn't excessively long - it's a doable trip that's definitely worth taking for students who want to go exploring in the city.

Nam June Paik Exhibition

At 12:30 PM, we arrived in London and made our way over to the Tate together to have a look around. It was exciting to see the doorway into the exhibition without knowing what was next. We could see a bit through the entrance while we waited, but there was so much more to follow.

The walls of the exhibition space were both a pale cream and white partnered with wooden flooring. It really helped to enhance the space of the room - the minimalistic choice ensured that the pieces remained a viewer's undistracted focus throughout their stay.

Something I quickly noticed and appreciated, was the range of exhibits on show - evident due to Media's broad nature. There were metaphorical pieces, symbolic pieces and literal pieces. Pieces that worked on their own and others that worked collectively. Pieces which were physically there in front of us and others that were both digital and interactive. Some rooms had screens with

the lights out, while others were standing out in the open. There was something here to cater to everyone's tastes.

One of the more popular exhibits in the Nam June Paik exhibition was the silhouette screen which projected coloured images of the subject in front of it onto the adjacent wall. It was fun to move around, experiment with the projection, layer colours on top of one another, and to see how the projections changed depending on the proximity of the screen to the subject.

In the same room, there were some other thought-provoking exhibits: the first of which being two life-sized humanoid figures made out of old radios and TVs. Visually they were appealing just as they were, they were well-produced and very innovative, but it's always interesting to delve into the thoughts of what something could symbolise beyond the surface. Could they be representative of how television or the media, in general, infiltrate people's minds and become an inescapable part of them? Could

they be a way of showing how people's thoughts and lives, similarly to that of a TV or radio show, are something that others can "tune into" at their leisure? Or perhaps it may be a metaphorical way of showing how we broadcast certain aspects of ourselves - only the aspects that we want others to see.

When I looked closer at the expressions of the two characters, on the female figure I noticed some marks that looked like tears under their eye, and that the mouth is notably sadder than that of its smug, male looking counterpart. Perhaps this signifies something deeper about gender disparity within the media industry?

A few paces away from the figures was a rather peculiar table. On the table was an egg sat under a lamp and by this egg were two projections of the egg. What could this be saying to us about life? How could this be applied to Media? My initial interpretation of it was that it could be displaying the simplicity of life in its beginning. The world is stagnant when nothing has occurred. We

aren't aware of others or our surroundings, and for all that we know, we could be alone. That feeling, in relation to the projected eggs, is illusionary.

As for my thoughts on this in regards to Media, the lamp was the key to deciphering my meaning. Media so often puts people under the spotlight, presenting them to us as being "real" and "perfect" (what Richard Dyer would deem as "stars"). We idolise them and put them under our own spotlights, causing ourselves to feel faded and unable to shine as bright, like the projections, in comparison. We forget that these people aren't real, they themselves may forget that the persona they show isn't who they are, so the projected illusionary eggs around them could also be interpreted as versions of their former selves, to whom they have grown detached.

My favourite piece from Nam June Paik, however, had to be the Television Garden which, as the title suggests, was a garden filled with TVs. The television screens were synchronised, sat

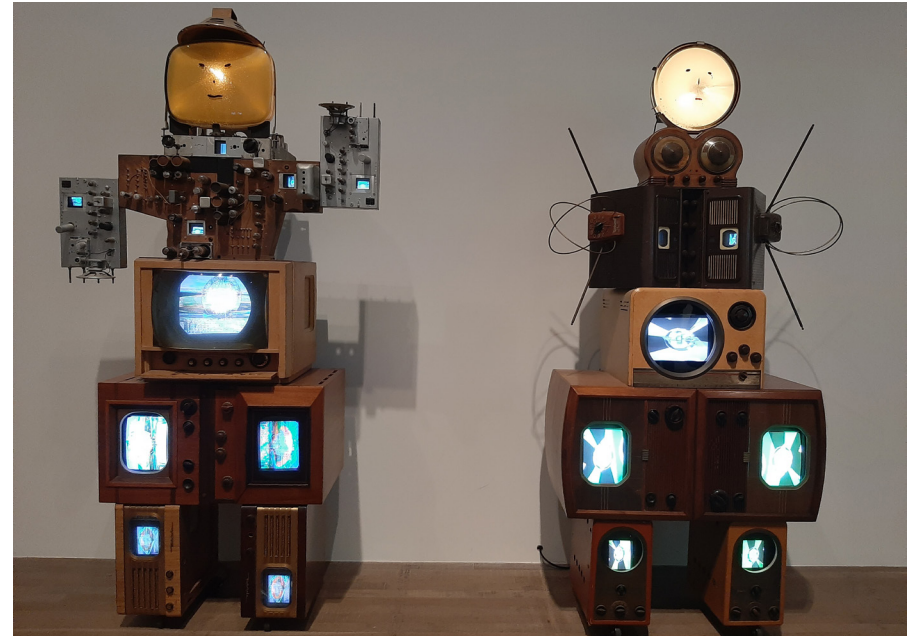
in a dark room, showing the same images simultaneously in a loop among the leaves. It was one of the first things I approached when walking into the exhibition as it immediately intrigued me and appealed to my love of metaphors.

What could a garden filled with televisions *mean*? Well, it can mean a number of things, whatever your heart desires in fact. Off the bat it serves as a great juxtaposition between nature and technology - it could be showing how the natural world today has become less appealing to people, and how instead of being surrounded by greenery that people would rather be immersed in a TV show. Or perhaps it could be illustrating how media sources demand our attention regardless of where we are, making it difficult to disconnect and be present in the real world. Or maybe there's a more ecological message being pushed, and it's a cry out for the environment. Some food for thought - does the garden have to mean a literal garden, or could it be representative of something else?

'The Nam June Paik exhibition was an interesting walk through another person's view on TV, audio and Media. His artwork maybe didn't make sense at times, but it was more about our interpretation of his thoughts, work and presentation. My favourite was the TV garden. Even in the dark, the bright lights of those TVs made our own world brighter. The world is much brighter with all these colourful images of media - and that's how our world turns into this garden of media.' - Elizabete Sipko

'I thought the trip was really fun and I liked that we were shown different exhibitions. I was able to learn about different artists that I'll definitely look more into. The Nam June Paik exhibition especially made me think about the ways you can mix different mediums as an artist, and I think this is something that could inspire my work in the future.' - Sara Roberto

Nam June Paik, as I've mentioned, was presented to us in a minimal style. Artefacts were well spaced out under their natural lighting for us to see or from within their darkroom. The second exhibition we attended however carried an entirely different, more modernised vibe.



Store in Temple Exhibition

After a lunch break on the South Bank, we made our way to the multimedia show at the Store in Temple. This exhibition was divided by corridors and curtains which not only helped to build up a sort of anticipation for each exhibit, but to also give our minds a moment to clear before heading on to see what was next.

Each room seemed to have a predominant colour theme that starkly contrasted with the ones immediately before it. There were lots of coloured lights and screens flickering through montages of images. My favourite place inside this exhibition was in a room where the walls were made up entirely of mirrors and screens playing videos. These videos varied: some were just patterns whereas others had narrators speaking profound messages. One of these profound messages was spoken while a man was shown on a beach looking out to the sea, which, to me, really stood out among the rest of the exhibition.

The multimedia show was a colourful and fun experience, but to me, it wasn't as impactful or thought-provoking as Nam June Paik. The artwork was appealing and trendy, which I appreciated, but as someone who likes to think, the first exhibition was preferred. However, I would still definitely go back to this exhibition again given the chance - it was *visually spectacular*.

'I really enjoyed the trip and thought that the artwork was really interesting and unique. It wasn't at all what I was expecting! I liked the second exhibition especially as it seemed the most experimental and abstract.' - Lorenzo Barba



Marian Goodwin Gallery

To our surprise, we ended up going to a *third* exhibition - Nan Goldin at the Marian Goodwin Gallery - which was free and not too far away. This third one seemed to be very 'people focused' and often over-sexualising, though I feel it was trying to communicate something about femininity or the concept of beauty itself. Wall displays showed photos of people in drag attire, people attending pageants, and others that were entirely naked. There were also some rooms showing videos, one of which I remember was rather vivacious, and another where a woman was shown celebrating her birthday and reflecting on her younger years. The link between age and beauty can be made here, as well as the fact that women are often sexualised within the media.

Among all this upstairs was a room made up of pastel landscape paintings which I thought were beautiful despite seeming out of place. The room was so calm and spacious, and the paintings held an enormity of depth to them. They were

by far my favourite part of the exhibition.

As we made our way out of the building, down Oxford Street and back to the packed train station where we struggled back on board our train, I sat and thought about the day gone by. It had been lovely, not just as an experience, but as an opportunity to spend time with people from the course without being in a classroom environment.



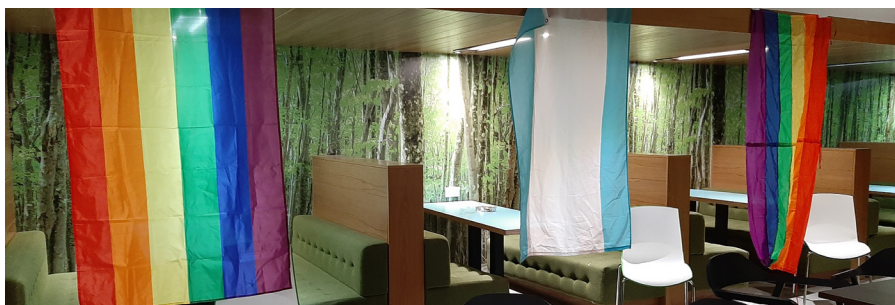
'The trip to London was not only great fun but also a great insight into different types of art that is shown within multiple galleries. Also, who could forget about the guy on the tannoy in the underground during rush hour - that man deserves his own sold-out show.' - Johnny Knoll

Overall it was fun, interesting, and a day that I am grateful for.

Body Images: Ciéra Cree

The Ruskin Journal ft. Creative Writing Society Open Mic Night

Written by: Joshua Dowding, Ciéra Cree & Gabs Bennington



Featured Image: Ciéra Cree

On February 21, the Creative Writing Society, together with The Ruskin Journal, co-hosted an open mic event to commemorate this year's LGBTQ+ History Month.

The event took place between 19:00 and 22:00 at The Academy Cambridge with a theme of 'Prose, Poetry and Plays'.



"The open mic was open to all. It felt really inclusive to [our] students [who] were able to showcase their talent in a safe space." – 'Gabs' Bennington (Co-organiser)

The idea was to create a space where people would feel accepted and be able to perform with confidence. To that end, the Students' Union decorated the hall with flags and accoutrements baring the colours of the movement we sought to represent that evening.

Together with the Journal, members from both committees

helped set out the tables and chairs laden with an assortment of drinks, snacks, copies of the latest annual, as well as a number of free sexual health packs courtesy of Amanda Campbell (AHSS Vice President, 2019-20) and her 'Best Night Out' campaign.

"It's a safe space, a small nook [that] attracted [a lot of] vibrant [and] diverse people and reminded them that they have a place in the world." – Shania Perera (Performer), speaking at the event.

At 19:00, The Academy opened its doors, and to our collective relief, people started to file in. In fact, it took until about quarter to eight before the flow of arrivals began to slow. But eventually, with the hall packed up to the walls with people, Merika and Ciéra took to the stage to kick off the night in earnest.

"Thank you for coming along to our event. Since planning for this started, we've all been very excited to see it unfold. We're proud to be showing a unity not only between our two societies tonight but also one between us here together, supporting and accepting each other."

We hope that you leave this room feeling happy, comfortable and most importantly like you belong. No one should be made to

feel that they aren't accepted or allowed to be who they are.

We first before anything would like to thank you for taking the time to be here in support of your fellow friends and students. Our university holds such a beautiful diversity of cultures, ideas and beliefs, some of which we're here to celebrate right now."



The night saw a total of nineteen acts ranging from beautiful spoken word poetry to incredible musical performances. Pieces like Shania Perera's 'A Distracted Physicist' to Freddy's infamous bars that got everyone joining in, to a glorious rendition of 'Hallelujah' to cap off the evening in style.

1. **Merika** - 19:49 PM - *Poem*
2. **Pavlov & Antony** - 19:53 PM - *Music (Come As Your Are by Nirvana)*
3. **Pavlov & Antony** - 19:58 PM - *Music (Heart-Shaped Box by Nirvana)*
4. **Bee** - 20:06 PM - *Poem (featured at Desperate Fleas)*
5. **Ciéra** - 20:17 PM - *Poem*
6. **Ciéra** - 20:18 PM - *Poem*
7. **Gabs** - 20:25 PM - *Poem*
8. **Shania** - 20:29 PM - *Poem ('A Distracted Physicist')*
9. **Georgie & Greg** - 20:38 PM - *Music (song from The Politician)*
10. **Georgie & Greg** - 20:42 PM - *Music ('Toss a Coin to Your Witcher')*
11. **Greg** (Solo) - 20:45 PM - *Music (song from his upcoming album)*
12. **Daryl** - 20:55 PM - *Poem ('Gaps')*
13. **Daryl** - 21:01 PM - *Poem*
14. **Daryl** - 21:11 PM - *Poem*
15. **Freddy** - 21:14 PM - *Music (rap - 'hell yeah')*
16. **Pavlov & Antony** - 21:22 PM - *Music (Creep by Radiohead)*
17. **Shania** - 21:33 PM - *Poem*
18. (sorry, we didn't catch your name!) - 21:45 PM - *Poem*
19. **Ronnie** - 21:54 PM - *Music ('Hallelujah' by Leonard Cohen)*

After the clock chimed ten, Merika Tencati took to the stage once again to thank everyone for making the event a night to remember.

Sentiment was expressed, other events were plugged, and the night drew neatly to a close - and what an incredible night it was.

"It was a great collaboration between Creative Writing, Ruskin Journal and the Students Union. I had a lot of fun and was happy to see so many students and staff supporting the LGBTQ+ community."
- Merika Tencati (Co-organiser)

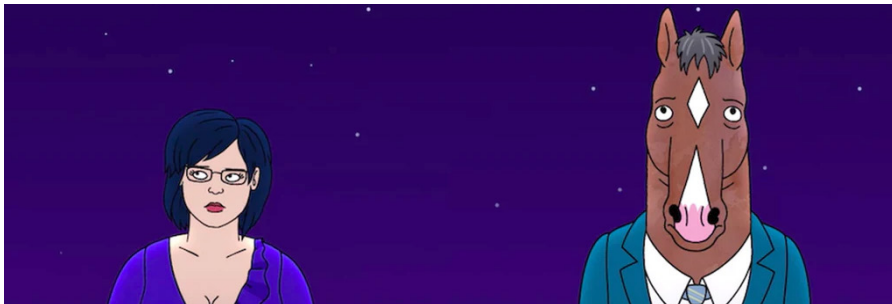
We would like to thank everyone who got involved in our inaugural open mic event and the Students' Union staff members who helped us make it all possible. Here's to next year!

Body Images: Ciéra Cree and Anglia Ruskin Students' Union



The Last Train to Redemption: The Good Place & BoJack Horseman

Written by: Sabine Buhain



Featured Image: Colleen Hayes/NBC

As January came to a close, so did a pair of popular, long-running television shows — namely NBC's *The Good Place* and Netflix's *BoJack Horseman*.

There was a stark contrast between the two endings of both series: where *The Good Place* discussed moral accountability in a lighthearted comedy, *BoJack Horseman* pulled no punches in its hard-hitting criticism of modern society's lack thereof. While Schur delivered an existential story in middle-brow dramedy

packaging, Bob-Waksberg found his comic relief in topical jokes, black comedy, and the occasional tongue-twister.

However, in spite of their contrasts, both of these contemporary shows attempted to answer one important question: can *anyone* be redeemed? In a world where 'cancel culture' is on the rise, it's a question we find ourselves asking outside of fiction as well. I'm here to discuss the differences, similarities, and ultimately the importance of what Schur and Bob-Waksberg have to

say on this topical subject.

The following will contain major spoilers for the finales of The Good Place and BoJack Horseman, and mentions of fictional addiction, sexual predation, and suicide.

The Idealism of The Good Place

Putting an end to four seasons and four years of runtime, *The Good Place* finally grants its quartet cast - Team Cockroach - a proper win. Having presented the flaws of the afterlife — particularly that it was too harsh a punishment to send an otherwise morally decent person to The Bad Place for not being ethically excellent *enough*, while those lucky enough to have been decently raised would ascend to The Good Place instead — the team take it upon themselves to design a new system by which to judge Earth's dearly departed.

Throughout the show, we see the main cast improve drastically in the afterlife, regardless of who they were when they were alive. Jason Mendoza, an impulsive criminal, becomes a surprisingly wise advisor to his friends in times of difficult decisions. Tahani Al-Jamil, an attention-seeking socialite, uses

her event planning talents to bring people joy and contribute to the greater good. Chidi Anagonye, once wracked with indecision, learns to accept his mistakes and have conviction in his choices. Eleanor Shellstrop, arguably the most narcissistic and selfish of them all, starts making sacrifices not only for her friends but for humanity at large.

From their collective experience, Team Cockroach learned the valuable lesson that anyone can become a better person so long as they make the decision to *start*. Regardless of where they came from, what they had suffered, and who they were before, they grew greatly as time went on. Thus, they found the fatal flaw of the 'Bad Place - Good Place' system was that it was *too final* — it did not give people a chance to redeem themselves.

It was here they decided to abolish The Bad Place entirely. Instead, people who died would be put through a series of tests that assessed their morality, and afterwards, they were subjected to *lessons* that would teach them how to become better people, based on their results. The more virtuous a person was on Earth, the easier their trials would be. Passing these

assessments would allow them entry into The Good Place. Some people would progress through their tests with flying colours, being given swift access to eternal paradise; others could potentially *never* pass, instead of being subjected to a post-lifetime of moral dilemmas and incessant tutoring.

It is in *The Good Place* that we see a positive outlook on the prospects of redemption, but not an ingenious one. With this system, Schur carefully treads the tightrope between idealistic naivete and harsh condemnation. It drives home the point that those who make a genuine effort to improve will eventually become *'better'*. We see characters who were neglectful parents, law-breaking sleazebags, and slanderous journalists in their time become remorseful and morally upright people once they reach The Good Place, making amends with those they wronged on Earth.

However, while everyone is given the opportunity to become a better person, not everyone does. These people aren't subjected to the fire and brimstone torture characteristics of The Bad Place, but rather a healthy amount of

pressure to *learn*. They can choose to be stubborn and never address their flaws, remaining in ethical training forever, or they can open their mind and confront their issues, allowing them to advance through the tests. They are never treated as subhuman but rather given the eternal, nagging opportunity to change.

The Good Place can be read as a utopic commentary on the criminal justice system, particularly the debate between rehabilitation and retribution. It argues that by constantly denying a person's own ability to improve, as well as a free life where they *can* spend time with loved ones, a guilty person *creates* their own form of torture — and we need not push them further than that.

To those who want to seek redemption, Schur sends a positive message: anyone *can* deserve The Good Place - they just have to work for it.



The Realism of BoJack Horseman

BoJack Horseman has put out six seasons worth of difficult characters with difficult questions. The series follows the ups and downs of one BoJack Horseman, a Hollywood actor turned alcoholic, and his turbulent relationships. Throughout each season, we have seen many opportunities for BoJack to change as he attempts to cut himself free from toxic influences like show business, substance abuse, and even the trauma from his abusive family. However, these opportunities are normally clipped at the wings by BoJack himself before they can truly take off, and each mistake continues to follow him on his journey of attempted self-improvement.

What BoJack has done throughout the show is what many would regard as abhorrent and irredeemable, such as abandoning his best friend who lost his job due to homophobia, sleeping with two women with whom he had considerable power over due to the *extreme* age gap between them, and being verbally abusive to those he considered his close friends. His addiction

not only affected himself, but also those around him, either tempting them into substance abuse themselves or making them suffer the consequences of his lack of control.

What viewers feel will be a turning point for the tragic titular character is often turned sour in a slippery slope of missteps within the next few episodes. And while it's not just BoJack who's flawed in this story, with his motley crew of similarly screwed up friends, he is *clearly* the worst of them all.

However, in Season 6 we see a shining ray of hope for BoJack that *seems* like it'll stay for good this time: having been hired to teach acting at Wesleyan University, he finds a sense of genuine accomplishment in being able to impart his knowledge unto his students. At this point, he's even managed to maintain his sobriety and, as a result, he starts acting out of interest rather than for his own ulterior motives. However, at the same time, many of the mistakes which BoJack has yet to receive retribution for start to come to light. In a battle with the press, BoJack loses his job and is condemned by the public for his

previous wrongdoings. Everything we saw him build up over the course of the season, as well as all seasons prior, is taken away from him over the span of a few days: his sobriety, his selflessness, and a significant number of his positive relationships.

Having lost all hope in his ability to redeem himself from his mistakes, BoJack takes to drink. And in his drunken state, he breaks into his old home (now owned by a different family), leaves his friend Diane a guilt-tripping voice message begging her to save him, and then attempts suicide unsuccessfully. He recovers in hospital and is shortly after sent to prison. A year later, he is allowed to leave prison for a day to attend the wedding of his ex-lover and close friend Princess Carolyn.

It's here that he finds out that everyone else has changed since he last saw them. Princess Carolyn has finally managed to balance her work and personal life, having been obsessed with the former previously. Mr Peanutbutter is focusing on improving himself independently; his previous relationships having been used as distractions from his problems.

And Diane Nguyen has been able to place trust in her partner and grow closer to her new family despite the trauma of her own.

Diane confronts BoJack with the fact that while she truly cares for him as a friend and will never stop doing so, she cannot continue to be close with him due to their relationship being a negative factor in her development as a whole. He is always dragging her down and putting her in a bad place, and he is always relying on her to help him be a better person; she wants to be able to care for her new family. That is her priority.

While BoJack has been in prison for a year, everyone else has moved on. For better, in that, the public has largely forgotten about his controversy and is open to seeing him on the big screen again — and for worse, in that all of his friends have stabilised their lives for the most part, except for him. However, there is a silver lining to Diane's confrontation: she wishes him the best.

BoJack Horseman has always dealt in shades of grey. This is far from a happy ending, and to the frustration of some, it is largely

ambiguous. It is unclear to the audience whether BoJack is going to become a better person immediately after this finale, or if it will even happen at all. Truth be told, this is not an ending; while we will no longer be there to observe BoJack's journey, his life and that of those around him will go on.

What *BoJack Horseman* presents to us is the notion that while every action has its consequences, these consequences are not necessarily the be-all-end-all of one's life. There will always be a second chance to try again. It may take several attempts, and have some low points, but the journey will never truly be over. Improvement is not a straight incline, nor is it one without loss — but so long as you keep living, every day is a day to start being better than the last.

Can anyone be redeemed?

The Good Place and *BoJack Horseman* don't shy away from answering one of life's most difficult questions. Funnily enough, where they are juxtaposed makes them complementary; while *The Good Place* follows a success story in redemption, showcasing four

selfish people becoming some of the most selfless in existence, *BoJack Horseman* tells the tale of one person who, unlike his peers, hasn't been able to move past his mistakes at all.

I believe that both shows are best watched in tandem, as they teach the same lesson with two distinct outlooks. Where *The Good Place* instils a sense of hope, *BoJack Horseman* comes with a well-intentioned warning.

In the end, their message is the same: anyone can be redeemed, but only those who try in earnest, *will*.

Body Images: Colleen Hayes/NBC & Netflix

What Is It Like to Be a HCP Student Amidst the COVID-19 Pandemic?

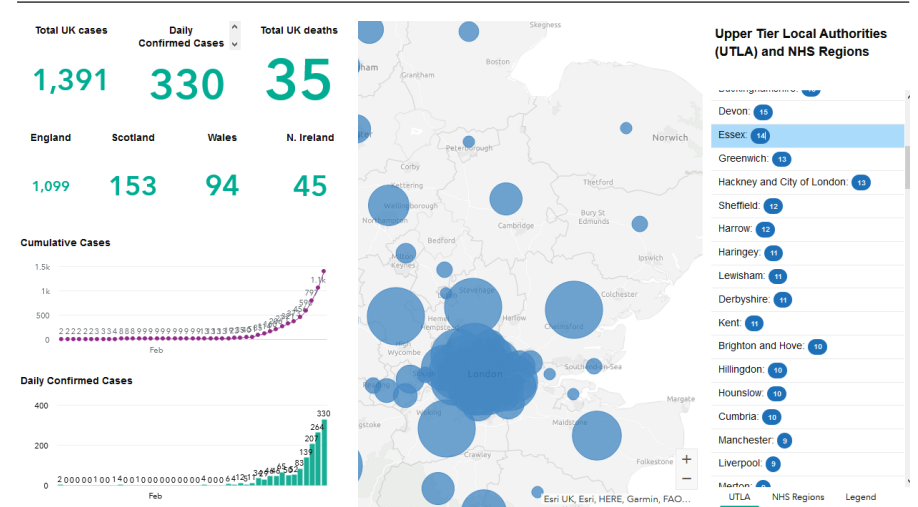
Written by: Pat Lok



Featured Image: Ani Kolleshi on Unsplash

As the World Health Organization (WHO) declares the COVID-19 outbreak as a pandemic, many organizations, whether public or private, have begun carrying out their emergency measures as-per the WHO guidelines - closing non-essential businesses, limiting social interaction, and encouraging frequent, thorough hand-washing to minimize the risk of infection.

However, a certain sub-section of the student populous, the ‘healthcare professional’ students (HCP), are stuck in the grey area. The university trains a large cohort of healthcare professionals; these include paramedics, midwives, nurses, operating department practitioners (ODPs), physician associates (PAs) as well as doctors. But as the number of COVID-19 cases continues to rise in the East of England, where most HCP students go to work on placement,



it’s difficult to say whether such placements should be *called off* or not.

Clinical placements are integral to a HCP student’s learning; it’s where we get to implement our theoretical learning and clinical skills - we get to practice in real life. Bedside manner and clerking patients are experiences that you have to accumulate over-time; it’s not a skill that you can master within the length of a degree.

Due to their crowded timetables, it may be unrealistic for the university to rearrange placements at such short notice since the placement coordinator has to consider the availability of senior clinicians to supervise students and other corresponding logistics.

What Do Some HCP Students Think?

Mae Hollebon, a 1st-year midwifery student from Chelmsford, talks about her experience of going on a placement amidst the COVID-19 pandemic.

“Personally I’m not overly worried about going on placement with the increase in cases although I know some people are! I’m just washing my hands thoroughly and often - which we do anyway! The ward I’m working on has had a couple of changes- if women have any symptoms they have to be checked over by a doctor before being readmitted to the ward! Otherwise, we haven’t been affected

much on the postnatal ward. Things are changing very quickly; a lot of staff are off as they consider themselves as high risk. Mothers are not allowed visitors anymore and their partners can only stay limited hours.”

I also spoke with a second-year paramedic student who will go on placement in both London and Essex.

“We’re younger than the population who tends to be affected by COVID-19 which is majority elderly people. However, the nature of our placement is that we get rotated around when we go on placements. For example, I will be spending a period of time in the Intensive Care Unit (ICU), followed by A&E, followed by the maternity ward. I’m just thinking that if I were to be infected, it will be sometime before the symptoms emerge as a study recently reported that it takes an estimated 5.1 days for patients to be symptomatic. By then I will have rotated to another ward and could be infecting other people.”

In a document sent to paramedic students through the university, The London Ambulance Service (LAS)

tries to address some of our paramedic students’ worries over COVID-19.

Pat Lok, author and 2nd-year medical student, who has recently finished her GP placement, talks about her experience of going on clinical placement in the midst of COVID-19 pandemic.

“It could be quite scary to see the number of COVID-19 cases going up every day but we’re taking the corresponding preventative measures, such as washing hands after seeing each patient. Some of my peers had PPE (personal protective equipment) training, a lecture on COVID-19 and the results of the ongoing screen programme that is being carried out when they were on their GP placement.

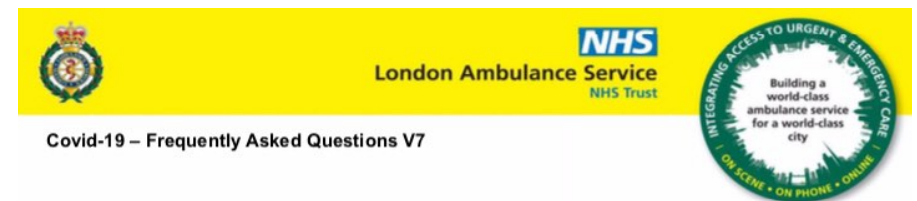
We were informed by our School of Medicine recently that our 3-week block placement will carry on as usual in 2 weeks; a few of my peers will be having their placement at hospitals with infected individuals. I’m not particularly frightened as this is what we are trained for, to look after the sick and come up with a solution to combat this contagious virus.”

How Are Our Counterparts Reacting to COVID-19?

Medical professionals regularly hold conferences and meet-ups to disseminate research and exchange ideas. It’s an established and efficient way to be kept up-to-date about the details that matter to our profession. However, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, many medical conferences have been cancelled or postponed for an undetermined period of time.

Some universities are cancelling their OSCE examinations

(objective structured clinical examination) for their final year medical students. OSCE is an important performance indicator of healthcare professional student as it assesses your communication skills, clinical reasoning, as well as your clinical knowledge.



Covid-19 – Frequently Asked Questions V7

6. Protection for students

6.1 What do students do?

- All students must remain in the front of the vehicle whilst LAS staff attend the patient.
- Should the patient need to be conveyed to hospital, the student will travel in the front of the vehicle, without making any patient contact.
- Students do not need to wear PPE (same as the driver) as they will be remaining in the cab of the ambulance.

6.2 Hand decontamination:

- Use alcohol gel between removing items of PPE and after doffing all PPE wash your hands with soap & water.
- Goggles are reusable and should not be disposed of after using them. They should be cleaned using Green Clinell wipes for 60 seconds and allow to air. Once this occurred, goggles should be placed back into the IPC pack.
- VP Hub will then receive the ambulance, arrange deep clean and source a replacement vehicle for the remainder of the shift.

What Happens Now?

COVID-19 is not an incurable disease. The WHO reported that people with mild illness will recover in about 2 weeks, while those with more severe presentations may take 3-6 weeks. The mortality rate of COVID-19 is a bit less than 1%, as estimated by Chris Whitty, Chief Medical Officer for England. We can adopt protective measures, recommended by the WHO to protect ourselves from contracting the virus, by washing your hands frequently, maintaining social distance and avoid touching eyes, noses and mouths.

As for us HCP students, the COVID-19 pandemic could be seen as an invaluable learning opportunity. The outbreak of infectious viruses isn't new to

the UK; in the past, the UK has tackled outbreaks of SARS-CoV, MERS-CoV and Ebola. So when HCP students go on clinical their placements, we should be supportive and understanding of NHS staff who are working on the front line amidst the COVID-19 outbreak, and try to absorb some of their talent and experience as we work.

Update: At the point of publication, all medical placements have been cancelled for ARU medical students until further notice.



World Health Organization

Reduce your risk of coronavirus infection:

- Frequently clean hands by using alcohol-based hand rub or soap and water
- When coughing and sneezing cover mouth and nose with flexed elbow or tissue – throw tissue away immediately and wash hands
- Avoid close contact with anyone that has fever and cough

#Coronavirus #COVID19

Barista Visa: Will Brexit Leave a Bitter Taste for the Coffee House?

Written by: Grace Martin



Featured Image: Nathan Dumlaon on Unsplash

At last, the government has come together to propose a new post-Brexit immigration system long-touted by Prime Minister, Boris Johnson. After the country officially 'left' the EU on the 31st of January, the effects of Brexit have, so far, been rather muted thanks to the transition period within which we currently stand. And while the government continues to propose legislation to prop-up their vision of the future for the country, there are those in the hospitality industry - such as myself - that believe that Brexit poses an imminent threat to the humble coffee shop.

A Brief History

The historical relevance of coffee consumption can be tracked alongside the history of foreign influence within our society. From its Turkish origins, the 'coffee house' has become an essential component of British life. Historically, it's created spaces for both the middle- and upper-classes to gather and discuss literature, hold intellectual debates, talk politics, and consume the finest liquor imported from the Middle East.

The first documented coffee-house

- the 'Pasqua Rosee' - opened in London, 1652. King Charles II (b. 1630, r. 1660 - 1685) once banned the coffee-house, believing it to be a place of political gossip and rebelliousness after the Restoration. However, this decree was practically unenforceable, so by the late 1600s and early 1700s, there were as many as 3,000 coffee houses in London alone.



This growth of 'coffee-house culture' contributes to our understanding of Britain's larger ethnic, social and commercial history. 'Coffee-house culture' led to the emergence of new political philosophers, and provided a space for those more socially-inclined to reflect on the world around them - as did Samuel Pepys, famous for his memoirs (1659 - 1669).

The coffee-house quickly became ingrained within our society, and while present-day coffee shops may not resemble those of history, I believe that they do

maintain many of the elements historically associated with them. Even today, people gather to discuss their bright ideas, the important issues of the day, or just what's been happening in their own lives. Though we live in an age of democracy, so we're allowed to.

Why is 'Coffee-House Culture' Relevant to Brexit?

In a word - *immigration*.

On the 19th of February, the government proposed a new points-based immigration system that's similar to those used by the likes of Australia, Canada and the United States. It's expected to come into operation from January 2021, though the reforms will sweep away some of the existing rights that EU nationals currently have while working in the UK. Some date back to January 1973, the month when the UK joined the European Economic Community.

While there will be a number of different processes to go through depending on where the person might be emigrating from, the nine main requirements for skilled workers, under this new system,

will require every applicant to score a total of 70 points to be able to successfully emigrate to the UK.

The British Coffee Association (the BCA) estimates that 95 million cups of coffee are consumed per-day in the UK, which is a huge increase from their 2008 calculations that estimated a figure of around 70 million cups. Additionally, the BCA estimates that the coffee industry 'creates approximately 210,000' jobs, 160,000 of which are known as 'registered baristas'. As a result, the BCA will work with the government to 'ensure a smooth transition [for] all its members on behalf of the industry'.

However, experts believe that the so-called 'Barista-Visa' will hit hardest for the three major coffee chains in the UK, those being: Starbucks, Cafe Nero and Costa Coffee. This is because the Barista-Visa would only help those deemed to be a 'very low-skilled worker', despite the fact that many hospitality-related positions require relatively high-skilled workers to fill them. That, and all three of these companies rely on a workforce that KPMG believes consists of 12.3 to 23.7% EU nationals.

Costa Coffee themselves believe that approximately 20% of their workforce are not ethnically British.

And that's to say nothing of the potential impact on the price of the coffee bean with the proposed import taxes, or of the current shortfall of more than 40,000 baristas that, experts claim, will be exasperated by Brexit going forward.

And what about the smaller chains like Signorelli's Deli here in Cambridge? Could they be impacted by the new immigration system or the proposed Barista-Visa? Colloquially, I believe so.



Why does it matter?

In my opinion, the concern should be focused on smaller, independent businesses and chains that are most at risk from the additional import taxes brought on by Brexit. We should also be concerned with how this newly-

minted immigration system might impact the barista workforce, whether that be new applicants or members of the existing workforce.

I'm also concerned about whether we're relying too heavily on large multinational chains from whom we purchase our coffee. I'm concerned about the local coffee shops who are having to compete with these businesses who can afford to undercut them. And I'm concerned that, with this reliance, comes a dampening of the slightly bohemian image cultivated by the coffee-house over the last 368 years.

And I'm also concerned about what the future holds for coffee shops in general. With the advent of personal coffee machines that boast about their café-quality coffee, what room will there be for the humble coffee shop in the future? I personally believe that coffee is best enjoyed socially, although this is an issue that could be its own article.

With the potential for disruption ever-present, it would be beneficial to see more students filling in the gaps by taking on part-time roles alongside their studies. As an MA student, and a part-time barista myself, I want to encourage

students reading this to look into the possibility of joining the trade. Coffee shops are an important staple of the high-street, and an important pillar of the wider economy. So despite the trials that might lie ahead for the industry, I would encourage students to try to fill-in that 40,000 worker shortfall, as previously mentioned.

In my experience, most coffee shops offer flexible working hours, respectable wages, and provide a means of socialising, whether it be with other team members, or regular customers. So, when this COVID-19 crisis has abated, why not give it some thought?

Body Images: Grace Martin

A Poetic Conversation: Abirami P. Kurukkal

Written by: Ciéra Cree



Featured Image: Alvaro Serrano on Unsplash

Over the summer of 2019, I had the chance to speak with the talented poet, Abirami P. Kurukkal, and today we decided to share a part of our conversation with you. We hope it's inspiring, that it makes you think, and that it encourages you to be kinder.

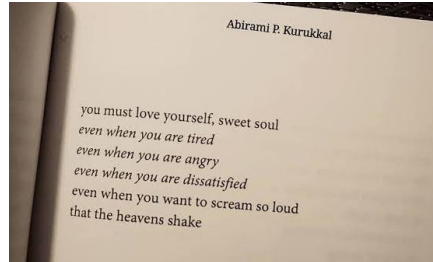
Abirami is a writer, author and visual artist based in South Africa. She's currently standing as the proud author of two books: 'Remember Me As A Time Of Day' (2016) which is a collection of poetry and essays exploring emotions, loss and strength, and 'Rudra' (2018)

which explores resilience, freedom, and the breaking down of stigma.

I chose to research Abirami P. Kurukkal not just because I was a fan of her work, but also because she was one of the first Instagram platform poets that I had discovered. We had exchanged greetings and comments about our writing now and then before we spoke, and she seemed like an interesting person who was clearly in love with the work she does. I wanted to learn more about her and what inspired her to write in the first place.



It can be compared to how one feels when on a motorcycle, holding on to the one you love, taking in the moment and nothing more. That's the kind of feeling I aim for when it comes to life. Hopefully, someday."



What got you into writing?

"I started writing when I was very young, around 7 or 8. I just loved books and that inspired me, but I never publicly put out my work because I didn't have the courage. My father passed away suddenly in 2013 due to a stroke and the experience completely changed my life. Tragedy and pain can deeply affect a person and the path they take in life. I turned to poetry for comfort and I haven't looked back since. Grief is still a struggle on the hard days but writing helps a lot."

How does writing make you feel?

"Writing makes me feel free. It is one of the things that I can control, even though at times it feels like it takes over. I feel like chains have been broken, like the gates have been opened. I feel empowered and released."

What do you do aside from writing?

"I am studying Psychology and working as a consultant, plus I also do freelance writing in my spare time. I work hard and I find joy in simple things. Finances always get tough, but I have somehow pulled through and I keep at it with the good that one-day things will be worth it."

"My hobbies are music, crime series, stand-up comedy, road trips and being a foodie. I also love all forms of art and cannot survive without my gel ink pens."

When do you tend to write - day or night?

"I mostly write during the night as well, but always from impulse, and always when I feel inspired to. Sometimes, I go for days with

nothing. Then, all of a sudden, at 6 AM while getting ready for work, something clicks, and seven poems come out. It's a process and I let it play itself without forcing it."

Why did you choose each title for your books? Were you afraid to release them?

"I was dead scared and considered cancelling at the last minute for both. It's natural to feel that way, I realised later... but yes, it was scary. The first book is about grief, in memory of my dad. The second book is about revival, in tribute to living life despite the struggle. The first book's name was inspired by an episode from the series One Tree Hill, which I still love because it was the name of an episode and it inspired a poem which inspired me to go ahead with the book. The second book's name was inspired by my culture, as I am a Hindu Brahmin and in Sanskrit, the word Rudra has a very special meaning on survival, something that I explain in the book at the beginning."

Is there such a thing as being "too open" in writing?

"I do not think expressing emotions has a limit. Expressing details of personal lives and experiences definitely has a limit, but expressing the emotion felt? That has no limit. There is no "too much" or "too open" there because once you write something and put it out into the world, it becomes open

to interpretation and that's the beauty of it. What may seem "too much" to you could be "that is exactly what I need right now, I can relate to that so well" to another. I try and follow that principle in my work."

Do you have any siblings? Are they into writing?

"I have one sister, and she is a lot younger than me, but supports me in my work a lot. She is first to congratulate me, comfort me and encourage me. I am grateful for that more than anything."

Do you plan on releasing more books in the future?

"Yes, I do... but with time. I have a lot of new work but no structure. With time the books will come, and their birth will happen but for now, I am content as is."

Where do you see yourself being in the next 5 years?

"I really don't know, but I hope to see myself mentally at peace, graduating, finding a bigger purpose and hopefully helping others to find theirs too."

If you could describe yourself in 5 words, what would they be?

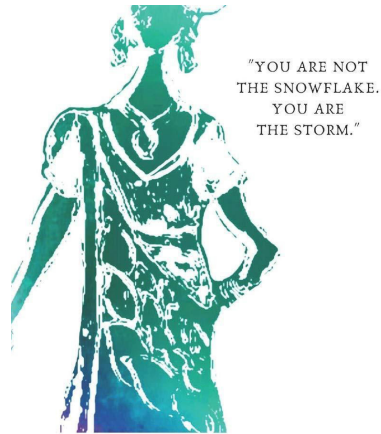
"Intense, complex, intuitive, heartfelt, strong."

What's your message to those who also wish to be writers but are perhaps afraid to share their work?

"Being real is the key. Your pain and past experiences might make you feel ashamed, angry, vulnerable and terrified. That might keep you back from sharing your work. Fear of being judged, fear to be open, fear, in general, might keep you back and that's okay. It took me three years after my dad passed away to actually find the strength to start sharing. I knew when I needed to. Things will happen at their own pace but keep your work YOURS and never an attempt at imitating another's work."

"Authenticity always wins. The rawer and honestly personal it is, the more you are able to own it. The truth is, poetry is not a competition or a way to become famous, even though Instagram tends to give off that vibe. Poetry to me is an expression, and the hope is that my expression of my emotions will help another soul somewhere, regardless of whether my follower count is 500 or 500k."

"Just work on original, honest content. Share your heart and the world will show you the good things in life, like fulfilment and inner peace, on most days if not always."



REMEMBER ME AS A TIME OF DAY

Revised and Expanded Edition

ABIRAMI P. KURUKKAL



My Reflection

From this conversation, I feel like I have learned a lot about Abirami. She's very grounded and human. Learning about her father passing away, and how she turned to poetry as a sort of comfort, is an insight into her life that I'm honoured to have heard. When I read her pieces now knowing more about her story, I perceive a whole new layer of depth and understanding to them. I could sense it in her work before - there was pain there - but after talking about it with her, gaining further insight, I feel both closer to the words as well as the person behind them.

It was nice to have a bit of a general chitchat as well. It wasn't related to writing; we went through what shows she enjoys and discovering our mutual love of gel pens, as well as talking about our courses which also shared some similarity. To be honest, I wasn't too surprised to see that we had things in common as I felt that we might before we even spoke. We're both relatively young, enjoy writing, and as I learned from the captions, we share the same sort

of views on the world as each other.

I loved the way she answered my question of how writing made her feel: *"It can be compared to how one feels when on a motorcycle, holding on to the one you love, taking in the moment and nothing more. That's the kind of feeling I aim for when it comes to life."*

From this conversation, I could clearly tell that she's found what makes her happy, and the way she is so unapologetically passionate about the world and what she does is inspiring to me. And I hope that this has gone on to inspire something in *you* too.

Abirami's books can be found on Amazon and you can also follow her Instagram @abirami_pkurukkal for further updates on future releases.

Body Images: Abirami P. Kurukkal

Taking Student Mental Health Seriously: Why the Students' Union Needs a Mental Health Representative

Written by: Izzy Woodcock



Featured Image: Ana Flávia on Unsplash

With more students being diagnosed with mental health problems than ever before, it's no surprise that the ongoing mental health crisis has had a sizable impact on student life. About a third of students that drop out of university do so on the basis of mental health, and according to YouGov one in every four students suffers from a mental health problem.

Between October 2016 and April

2018, twelve students attending the University of Bristol took their lives due to their own mental health issues. Since then, that number has risen to thirteen. Bristol University has since taken steps to improve their mental health support system, but why has there not an investigation into the higher education sector as a whole? Why have we not prioritised mental health as one of the top issues facing students today?

Students' Unions employ a set of full-time officers whose job it is to support and represent their students, manage campaigns, and liaise with their respective universities. And while the name varies between unions across the country, some Students' Unions have a dedicated 'Health and Wellbeing' officer as part of their service.

Leicester University's Students' Union has a dedicated Wellbeing officer; the University of York has a dedicated Community and Wellbeing officer, the University of Newcastle has a Welfare and Equality officer, and the University of Nottingham has an Equal Opportunities and Welfare officer, just to name a few.

Then there's the Anglia Ruskin Students' Union which has a faculty-based officer system; this means that our union does not have an officer dedicated to students' wellbeing, instead, each officer represents a specific faculty of the university itself. And while these officers have been trained to address concerns regarding a students' mental

health – they do so amongst other things. Which begs the question, what's going to happen to their existing mental health campaigns, such as the 'break the cycle' campaign, after the current crop of officers leave? Are we going to have a new, one-off mental health campaign every year?

How then, as a union, can we address something that's so far-reaching as mental health, that it can affect every aspect of a student's life? To words: Campaign Representatives.



Sexism, racism, disabilities; there's a campaign representative for each of them.

Discrimination against people because of their mental health is real and it affects all of us. Maybe you have social anxiety, but you have to give a presentation tomorrow; maybe you have depression, but you have essays due in next week. Campaign Representatives are there to help students alleviate these kinds of issues. They give students a voice, and in my opinion, mental health deserves a representative officer of its own.

To be clear, the university does a lot to help its student's with mental health issues. They spend a vast amount of money on services to help students manage their conditions. The London Campus has recently introduced a peer mental health programme which pays students to run evening activities and offer an ear to their fellows.



So, what's the problem?

It's the communication gap; the missing link between the Students' Union and the university regarding student mental health. The Wellbeing Team, the Activities Team, and the Students' Union should work together to help support students with mental health concerns. As it stands, the Students' Union and the university are working on parallel lines, therefore, we need a new representative officer that would bring these lines together and provide the support that students need.

Body Images: Eric Ward and Sharon McCutcheon on Unsplash

Cambridge City Council Launch a New Pilot Project to Protect & Grow the City's Tree Population

Written by: Joshua Dowding, Ciéra Cree & Gabs Bennington



Featured Image: Devin Kleu on Unsplash

On the 13th March, The Ruskin Journal was invited to the Guildhall, Market Square, to conduct an interview with Dr. Matthew Ling of Cambridge City Council regarding the launch of the Cambridge Canopy Project – a local initiative to protect and grow the city's existing tree canopy cover. As Project Leader, Dr. Ling had been eager to share some of the details of the project with us, and we have transcribed some of the interview that followed for the

convenience of our readers.

The Cambridge Canopy Project

This project is part of a larger 'umbrella' initiative called Nature-Smart Cities which includes other institutions such as Imperial College London and Southend-On-Sea Borough Council. The initiative will fund a number of pilot studies to 'deploy green infrastructure solutions in an effort to help fight climate change' – the

Cambridge Canopy Project will be one such pilot. The initiative operates in France, Belgium, the Netherlands, as well as England, with another pilot project based in Southend-on-Sea, in addition to Cambridge.

The Council estimates that there are more than 300,000 trees, whether they're on public or private land, throughout Cambridge, which equates to about 17% tree canopy cover by land area – whereas the average cover for cities in the UK sits at around 8%. Despite being 'quite well-treed already', the aim of this project is to uplift that coverage to 19% by 2050. To achieve this uplift, the Council told us that a total of 16,000 new trees will need to be planted throughout the city. Of these, 2,000 will be planted on Council-owned land and 1,500 will be given away through existing schemes, which leaves 12,500 trees that the Council want to 'encourage the public' to plant on their own private land.

"There's a real benefit to having areas of shade to help reduce the heat island effect in cities. For instance, having tree-lined streets with permanently shaded pavement, it could be 20 degrees cooler than it would

be if it were not shaded [...] That's without thinking of [the] trees themselves physically and how they reduce air temperature just through transpiration." – Dr. Ling

The trees that the Council intend to plant will be more robust than those that would be planted in more rural areas, we were told. Standing at around 2 to 3 metres tall (on average) and measuring at around 6 to 8cm in diameter, Dr. Ling explained that these young trees would need to be able to withstand a life that could see them being used as make-shift bike stands, goalposts, sun shelters, targets for vandalism, and other risks to the tree's well-being.



However, there will be limitations to where the Council can plant their 2,000 trees. Cambridge has a lot of private land that 'can't be touched' by the Council itself, and even in the 'public realm', there have been a significant number of areas labelled as 'unplantable' such

as near roads, pavements, brooks and rivers. Although some locations have been identified as potential candidates, Dr. Ling explained that ‘this will include some planting in the city’s parks and green open spaces’. But, as clarified, the project will focus on planting in areas that will not require lengthy public consultations or complex decisions.

“We have [the] funding to do [this]. With purchasing a tree, the manpower to plant it, some materials like tree stakes and [tree] ties, and hydration bags, it’s coming out at around £150 per tree [...] but we obviously can’t plant 100,000 [trees] just like that.”
 – Dr. Ling



After the 2,000 trees have been planted, the focus will then shift on to the maintenance of those trees, helping them grow, and protecting the existing tree canopy cover. However, looking beyond the Nature-Smart Cities initiative, Dr.

Ling told us that the Cambridge Canopy Project will have ‘its own ambitions’ going forward; he hopes that the project will later become its ‘own entity’ and evolve beyond the lifetime of the initiative itself. Despite being part of a wider European initiative, Dr. Ling stated that the aim of the project will be to ‘deliver things on the ground that influence, impact, and benefit the city itself’, in-keeping with the remit of the City Council.

“At the moment, this is so on-trend. It feels like the right moment for this project.”
 – Dr. Ling

Expanding Existing Schemes

For twenty-five years, Cambridge City Council have been running a scheme called ‘Free Trees for Babies’ which gives residents having a child the opportunity to apply online and take home a tree to plant in their own gardens. Over the course of that period, ‘thousands’ of trees have been given out to Cambridge residents’, which, coupled with the ongoing planting in the public realm, has helped the Council grow the city’s urban forest at a modest rate over-time.

With an estimated 44,000 private

gardens throughout the city, Dr. Ling notes that if the residents of the city could each plant one tree in their gardens, it would result in more than a ‘10% increase in the overall tree population, straight off’. The Journal noted that the Council had gathered this information with the help of an aerial photographic survey of the city.

“Everyone’s trees are part of the whole process.” – Dr. Ling

With the introduction of the Cambridge Canopy Project, the Council hopes to up the number of trees they can offer through this existing scheme, with an aim to give away as many as ‘500 trees per-year, over a three-year period’ – totalling 1,500 trees. That’s on top of the 2,000 trees that the Council aims to plant themselves throughout the project by 2022.

The Impact of COVID-19

As is the case for everyone presently, Cambridge City Council has had to re-evaluate how it will approach some aspects of the project going forward, since a significant part of the project would have involved a degree of public outreach and awareness-

raising. Many of these processes are now on hold for the time being. Nonetheless, interested members of the public can still get involved with the project in a number of different ways: the Council are currently running a survey to ‘gather insights into residents’ perceptions of trees’, the Council are also asking for help to map the locations of trees on privately-owned land, ‘especially Ash trees’, and they would encourage all residents to help water their newly planted trees. These activities can be carried out during your daily exercise time out of the house whilst also observing social distancing guidance, of course.



Unfortunately, the pandemic has also forced the Council to postpone its i-Tree Eco study which would have involved students from the university helping to survey their local areas. However, as Dr.

Ling explained to the Journal, in collaboration with Treeconomics Ltd, Forest Research, and Anglia Ruskin University, the Council will now employ a ‘novel approach’ to ‘engage untrained citizens’ from more than 130 households across the city to conduct the field surveys from the safety of their own homes. The Journal has been told that both university students and staff can still get involved in some aspects of this, and there will also be future opportunities to contribute to the project as well. Victoria Tait of the Global Sustainability Institute is coordinating this effort, so please contact her to express your interest in this work.

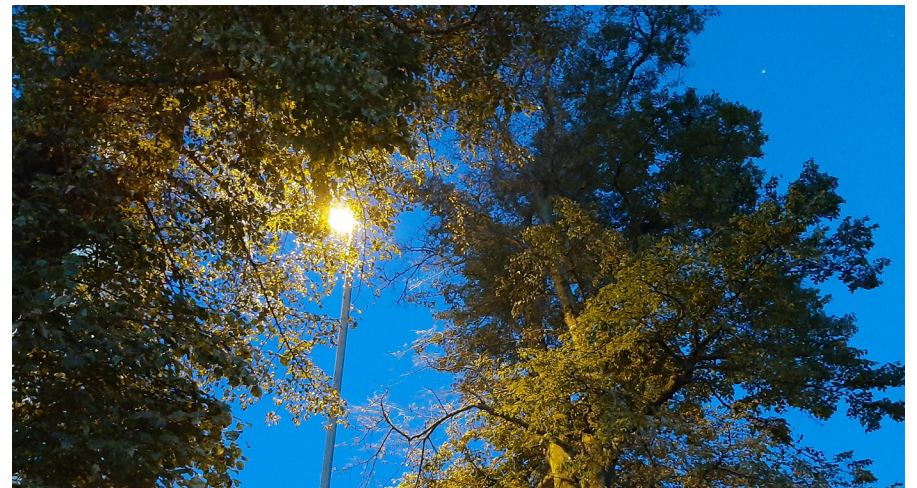
“It’ll be a huge challenge, but it’s where we’re hoping to go.” - Dr. Ling

Final Thoughts

It was a privilege to be able to interview a member of the City Council regarding this interesting environmental project. We hope that, despite the ongoing pandemic, the project will continue to move forward and see success in the long-term. We would like to thank Dr. Matthew Ling for his time – and his

patience! – and we look forward to covering the Cambridge Canopy Project again in the near future.

Body Images: Ciera Cree



I Hate Quarantine: A Sanity Memoir

Written by: Chelsea Furr



Featured Image: Sharon McCutcheon on Unsplash

Before I start – here’s a little about me. I am firmly set somewhere between an introvert and an extrovert. It depends on the crowd and the person that you ask. When I am out with my friends, I am a loud chatterbox, leading the buddy system of hysterical familiars on a pub-crawl because I know that, in the end, I can crawl back into my bed to recuperate.

I have enjoyed being in the office and talking to people in the kitchen, but there are some days where I have things to do and prefer to have my

headphones firmly on.

But at this point, I think we can all agree that the wish not to travel into the office every morning has become relishing each shopping trip like a breath of fresh air in the blur of quarantine.

Here is a little more about me. I come in two states: one clean and tidy until I’m sick or stressed for an exam, and the other is piles of clothes and binge-watching TV until I get the panicked urge to clean and procrastinate. I hate quarantine.

I hate that I can’t go to see the people that I love. I hate that the running joke is that I must enjoy this solitude. But I know that I am not doing it for myself. I am doing it for everyone else. For everyone’s immune-weak child and grandparent.

So, here’s how I’m staying sane

Blast uplifting, soul-pumping music and have a dance session - I call it ‘exercise’ - and if you are doing something like the laundry, treat it like a bonus. Who’s watching? I found that by the end of my dance sessions, I’ve also managed to correct my bad posture brought on from endless hours of social media and series-binging too. So, it’s a ‘double bonus’!

Get sunlight. I know it’s hard indoors, but like a house plant (or wallflower) you need some Vitamin D. Work, read, sit, and video chat by a window. Not only will it put less of a spooky look in your camera lens, but, maybe, you’ll get a tan. This also means getting out of bed on weekends before lunch. I set

multiple alarms to make sure that I get up in good time, as begrudged as I am, and it keeps me in some sort of ‘rhythm’.

We are social creatures too. Now, I am not too bad on this front, as it only takes me two weeks on average to respond to a message. But I don’t leave conversations hanging partway through. My advice is to message anyone you can to see how they are doing. Call your Mum; it will kill some hours. Hell, message your ex and clear bad blood. Email a long-forgotten friend. What are they going to do? Turn up on your doorstep? We are social animals and even if your level of socialising is the coffee barrister in the morning or that no-name in the kitchen, message them, because it might brighten up their day too.

Exercise. Good god, yes! I have been exercising in commercial breaks because, while I knew there were too many, it was starting to kill me. I have sucked dry binge-streaming of all enjoyment. Plus, getting the blood pumping after contouring your spine at your ‘home

office', or strolling with your neck kinked downwards, does wonders for your mood. Find a free workout video on the internet or just resort to advice point one and rock out on the couch.

Do anything and everything that you said you would do in your spare time. I tick-off small goals like calling my family or organising video-lunch catch-ups with friends. Take an online class. Learn a new skill. Do more than these four walls allow. I am not saying that there aren't days that I don't stay in bed and eat between napping. But on better days, I am chipping away at the stack of books I bought and never read. I have learned to knit and bake banana bread. I have even started developing a green thumb. Though, I could be killing these hearty succulents... I am not quite sure. I also write grocery lists and I write article pieces like this.

I hope that you are doing well at this time; take each day as it comes. The current situation is out of our control. But looking after your own head and

your own body is within your power. There is no perfect way to manage this time, but doing small things like checking in with your elderly neighbours and wearing a mask in public can help others as the NHS continue the fight. Good luck in staying sane and feel free to comment below with any cool ideas to pass the time. We will get through this.

The Journal

The Ruskin Journal was founded in March 2017 by Elle Haywood and Hanushka Karnani.

It all started in a small café in Cambridge, where the two would-be founders had a discussion about the gap in the university's media scene for an online student newspaper. A few months later, the two submitted a proposal, for what would become The Ruskin Journal, to the Students' Union and the ALSS Department, and to their delight, it was given the immediate go-ahead.

To date, the Journal has had well over a hundred members, including writers, photographers, illustrators, designers, as well as committee members from other societies. The website has attracted well over 20,000 total views in that time, including well over 9,000 unique visitors from around the world, as well as countless engagements through social media.

We won *Best New Society* at the 2018 Students' Union Awards, we were shortlisted for *Society of the Year* for 2017 and 2018, we won the *Bronze Award* from the Clubs and Societies Recognition Scheme (2019-20), and we were shortlisted for the *Collaboration Award* by the 2020 National Societies & Volunteering Awards (NSVAs) committee.

Visit our website for more information.

Acknowledgements

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The Journal would also like to thank the previous committees for their dedication to the Journal, particularly the founders Elle Haywood and Hanushka Karnani, without whom we wouldn't have had a student magazine to begin with.

Finally, the committee would also like to thank our friends and teachers who have encouraged us to grow the Journal into the publication it is today, and supported us in our endeavour to make The Ruskin Journal the best that it can be.

Thank you, everyone!

