

TWO ZERO ONE

Artwork by Anya Butler



Volume 2: Issue 3

EQUALITY

D,i.s/t.o-r.t/l,o-n

-That's not me
I see that now.
The face in the mirror is not quite whole,
The body is disfigured – wrong.
Years of self-conscious feeling, the wrong size, the wrong shape, the wrong face
All true;
Just not in the way I expected. Right?
My chest is fine – for a girl,
My hips are great – for a girl,
My face - my hair - my legs - my lips –
All Fine
for a girl.
The glass pane;it taunts me
Exaggerating the wrong.
make it Stop.
please.
I can't take one more day. one more look-
can't;Pain;Please
But how? Two ways.
Two boxes down two separate paths, one holds pills and one holds me.
Its only a matter of days.
Can I say it out loud yet?
no,
no, I'm not even sure.
saying it would make it real. i'd start to change- then i'd get the looks.
My family will say it's just a phase.
My friends, call me the wrong name;
but which; is; the right one?
People I know will stop and stare
And talk behind my back.
It's not always black and white but -
I can't always tell white from black.



Editors' Notes

This is our most ambitious issue yet. Packed full of articles, essays and poems about our theme 'Equality', this issue is sure to peak your interest and promote debate. Between pages four and thirteen, you can find a variety of pieces on equality in general; on pages sixteen and seventeen are two anonymous poems inspired by the Parkland shooting; from pages eighteen to twenty-six, there are contributions centred on feminism and gender equality (as well as the next instalment of Humans of Bromsgrove, back by popular demand); and between pages twenty-six and twenty-nine you can find two poems and an article about LGBTQA+ history and experiences. There is surely something for everything in this jam-packed edition!

Don't forget to email us your thoughts to 201@bromsgrove-school.co.uk - we'd love to hear what you think. Equally, if you're interested in joining our team, email us and come along to our meetings: 1.20 every Wednesday in the library (under the left-hand stairs).

Alia Derriey

It is a self-evident truth apparently that all men are created equal. Really? Even a modicum of reflection on this greatest tenet of the proud US constitution makes this one of the most depressing aphorisms of time. If it is true, then I have squandered my existence, for I cannot swim like Michael Phelps, think like Stephen Hawking or sing like Andrea Bocelli - and yet I apparently could have done so. It is not Biblical either - in the parable, talents were dished out in shares of different sizes and with different expectations attached to each share. The truth is it is our differences - our inequalities - that mark us out. What we do with them and how we treat and respect the differences in others is more important than striving to level all to some philosophical mean line. However, the irony is that true equality is only delivered when we are each allowed the same capacity to be different but that very difference will also inevitably lead to further inequalities as the talented in any discipline oust the less talented.

And with that conundrum, I introduce this edition of 201 in which you will hear a number of views of unequal strength on the issue of equality.

Aled Luckman

WHAT DOES EQUALITY LOOK LIKE?

Equality – “the state of being equal, especially in status, rights, or opportunities”

It only takes a few minutes of research online, watching the news or even observing daily life to understand that in our society, the concept of equality is often severely limited or even absent altogether. Even in such a developed country as the UK there are countless examples of inequality, especially income inequality: the richest 10% of households own 850 times the wealth of the bottom 10%. Another inequality that many developed countries are coming to terms with is gender inequality, prominently reflected in the gender pay gap. There are also horrifying examples of gender inequality globally: 40 percent of young women in South Asia and sub-Saharan Africa are married by age 18, whilst India recently ruled that rape laws do not apply to married couples.

Our society is fundamentally constructed around capitalism, which accepts that true equality won't, and shouldn't, exist. Throughout human history and more so in the natural world, there has always been hierarchy. These are often based on age (older adults have more power and higher status than younger adults), gender (men generally have more power than women) or are even arbitrarily set. Arbitrarily-set hierarchies are based on completely illogical distributions of power based on ethnicity, religion, and race – historically white men exerted power over black men in the US and other colonies. This further emphasises that prejudices such as racism, sexism and classism are manifestations of a society built on hierarchy. Karl Marx, the founder of Marxism, famously criticised capitalism and the hierarchy that it inevitably creates, stating that capitalism creates two classes of people in the society: the proletarians, composed of the working class, and the bourgeois, composed of the capitalists or the owners of the means of production. He recognised that this creates inequalities because of a discord between the working class and the capitalists, where the bourgeois exploit the proletarians for labour and create a 'glass-ceiling' in which their opportunities for improving their socio-economic circumstances are limited. Hence within our modern society true equality is incredibly hard to achieve. So, what are the solutions?

You only have to look at countless examples throughout history to realise that while in theory, communism should be the perfect solution for removing the barriers that create inequality economically and creating a classless society, in practice communism is incredibly flawed and often has disastrous results. Communist rule and Marxism can be directly blamed for many horrors including the death of at least 85 million people during the 20th Century. Communism itself does not erase the class struggle, as it proclaims, but enables it further. It does this because it is enforced by an authoritarian government: there must be a group of people in charge, and they are likely to hold on to and enjoy their power at the expense of the fundamental values they'd originally sought. This often results in discord causing low production, mass poverty and limited advancement for a country.

On the slightly less radical side, there is socialism. Even though equality is undoubtedly the defining goal of socialism, which favours a more equal distribution of wealth, socialism is similarly limited in its effectiveness because it's a system based on principles inconsistent with human behaviour: sharing is not a natural human instinct. The following quote by William Spencer is often brought to mind when considering socialism and, by extension, communism:

“Equality was achieved but only in the sense that everyone was equal in his or her misery”.

Despite these shortcomings, we must acknowledge the significant progress we have achieved globally. The proportion of women of working age in the labour force was 60% in 1970, 79% in 2001, and is now 90%. Women have gained the right to vote in many countries; even in traditionally conservative societies, there have been monumental advances. In August, Lebanon's Parliament repealed an archaic law allowing men accused of rape to be exonerated and escape punishment if they married the individual they raped. Chile's Constitutional Tribunal voted to ease the country's total ban on abortion, passing a legislation that legalises abortion under certain criteria. Thousands of individuals committed to equality and human rights took to the streets in cities around

TOP FOUR HISTORIC LGBT FIGURES



Lily Elibe

At a time before the LGBT community even existed, the Danish painter Einar Wegener was the first identifiable recipient of a gender reassignment surgery. Although not quite as influential as other figures, she paved the way and left precedent for other transgender people to be able to take the surgery. Lily died taking the risk of the first ever vaginal reconstruction surgery, as her immune system gave up allowing an infection to give her cardiac arrest.



Ellen DeGeneres

Ellen is undoubtedly one of the most impactful figures of the LGBT community in the twenty-first century. She challenges stereotypes of the LGBT movement with her light-hearted humor, and by promoting the cause in this way, manages to change people's views through the perspective of a friend instead of a protester. She came out on television, in the most public way she could, putting her career at risk. By showing her bravery and vulnerability she carried the hopes of millions on her shoulders who looked up to her, and pushed the world forward. Her actions and influence have earned her the incredible achievement of the Medal of Freedom Award. To this day, Ellen continues to counter challenges to her cause, one joke at a time.

Harvey Milk

Milk was the first openly gay political figure to be elected as an official. As he fought down laws allowing gay people to be discriminated, Milk inspired a generation of activists fighting for sexual equality. Some of his most notable achievements included striking down “Brigg's Initiative” and allowing gay people to teach in schools.



Obama Barack

Although not gay himself, the 44th president of the United States pushed for LGBT rights since the beginning of his term. Some of his most notable actions included repealing “Don't ask don't tell”, which allowed LGBT people to openly join the armed forces. Perhaps the most victorious was the complete repeal of DOMA (Defense of Marriage Act) in 2015 making it legal for everyone in the United States, regardless of sexual orientation or gender, to get married. This was a historic turning point for the LGBT movement.

Jonathan Chan

the back of a garage to please women, will be no more laughable than a woman doing the same.

To conclude, this is what feminism victories look like in 2018. Many won't agree with them, and this is where the battle gets harder, and in cases, the division gets greater. However, a clear goal for equality must be kept in sight, and with a pinch of perspective, we will eventually achieve it.

"As you grow older, you will discover that you have two hands, one for helping yourself, and one for helping others" – **Audrey Hepburn**

"Women are responsible for two thirds of the work done worldwide, yet earn only 10 percent of the total income and own one percent of the property...So, are we equals? Until the answer is yes, we must never stop asking." – **Daniel Craig**

Jack Hughes

What It's Really Like

Will my grandmother be disappointed?
Will my father have me on his knee?
Will my friends still accept me as one of them?
Will my mother still love me?

The ignorance is so upsetting.
Allies will rush to a victim's defence
Yet call the stupid things they see 'gay'
Get off the Goddamn fence.

Will people, teenagers stare?
Will they mock and abuse and jeer?
Will they turn around and indoctrinate others?
Atormentatorment an Ongoing Torment Why did this happen to me?

I. Did not choose this,
When did you decide you were straight?
How can your all-loving god hate me?
What did I do to deserve your hate?
Except love-

I just want
To love
It's not damaging in anyway,
I just want to love.
my children will live and be okay.
Will I?

Holly Nichols

the world for the Women's March to raise their voices on gender-related issues such as anti-discrimination, LGBTQ rights, reproductive rights, religious freedoms, refugee rights, and more. Nevertheless, although vital, these are only small steps towards the ultimate goal of total equality.

If true equality cannot be found within the past, then we have no choice but to look towards the future. This may seem intimidating, a daunting task, but we are the future! Future equality is in the hands of the millennials and Generation Z. Many gender inequalities would cease to exist if we dared to challenge bigoted thinking. The concepts of femininity and masculinity are social constructions, gender stereotypes that are the result of upbringing, culture, economic framework, power structures and political ideologies. We can achieve equality by challenging and changing the ways we think.

But of course, it's not that simple. To achieve true equality, we would have to completely dismantle our

current governmental system, disregarding traditional western values and ways of thinking. We have to appreciate that there will always be differences in opinions on what equality looks like. The most important steps towards progress would be recognising that we are all human and have the right to be treated – so that girls can walk home at night or down alleyways without fearing for their lives, boys can wear dresses and cry without being ridiculed, and no child has to die of hunger when we already produce enough food for 10 billion people. This is what equality looks like. One day, I we will achieve it – not through further societal constructs or ultimate authorities but by using our heads alongside our hearts, acting with compassion, respect, humility, and kindness.

Gemma Calthorpe

Equality:

People coming together to make the future better for everyone.

Both colours and race coming together to make a friendly unit and a good environment for all.

Black and white people mixing to be equal.

Equal rights no matter your race or gender.

Everyone having a say in everything.

Everyone mixing with no issues.

Inequality:

Unfairness in society.

In schools between gender, e.g. boys are punished more

The gender pay gap - inequality in the pay scale in society. Males often get paid more.

Racism

Not being equal.

Unfairness between people.

Many different types: social, educational, gender, racial and participation.

Judging

Stereotypes

Sexism

Lytelton L4

What is equality?

Equality is the right of different groups of people to have a similar social position and receive the same treatment. It is an ideal in our democratic society and there are different types including gender equality, racial equality or equality between rich and poor. It is also about ensuring that every individual has an equal opportunity to make the most of their lives and talents, and believing that no one should have poorer life chances because of where, what or whom they were born, what they believe, or whether they have a disability. But I appreciate: it is far easier to write down a definition like that than to actually apply it in our world, and we might even realise that it brings some problems with it.

The whole concept of equality is complex, because we are not born exactly the same way; there are certainly differences between genders and even if every human being would receive exactly the same treatment, there would still likely be different outcomes. I think that equality is not enough if we want to create a fair environment, because it is important to treat everybody as an individual. Therefore we would need to differ between equality in the sense that everybody has the same opportunities in a society, and equity, which ensures that everybody is able to receive the same outcomes.

A microcosm for society is a school with a lot of different students. The teacher treats every student equal, which is the way it should be. But in every class, there are students who are really smart and do not need a lot of help with what they are doing. There are also some students, who need a bit more time to understand the things that are being taught, so the teacher is very likely to focus on those students and spends more time with them explaining them everything a couple of times and helping them with their work; this is an example for equity, because even though the teacher does not treat everyone equally, he still helps for everybody to be able to reach the same outcome.

In my opinion equality is something that our society definitely needs to work on, but still needs to keep in mind that every individual is different, so sometimes it might just be fair that not everybody is being treated the same way; however, this difference in treatment should not be determined solely by people's gender or skin colour.

don't complain about these general statements, and therefore women shouldn't either. Men are not bothered by them; feminists are just overly 'whiney'. Somewhere along this thought process, some people, - mostly men - tend to lose respect for feminists, deeming them self-righteous, irrational and extreme.

Differentiations between the views of women themselves and amongst different feminists makes can make it unclear what feminism in 2018 is, but we must remember that feminism is not about women 'defeating' men; it is about equality, and always has been.

The electoral win for Donald Trump is not just a win for a right-wing candidate; it boasts a win for sexism and racism in the modern world. On face value, it proves that feminism is on the back foot, a catastrophic realisation for the world. And yet, that is where the silver lining can be drawn from.

Realisation of the world's gender inequality has spurred on a new generation of feminists. Since the election of Donald Trump, we have all become more conscious about our own societies. The shock of Trump's election has ignited a wave of millions to take up social activism. Feminist blogs are growing in popularity, opening the stage to young feminist writers. YouTube, the platform for so many voicing their views, has become the platform for a new generation of feminist activists and commentators.

Female pop-culture stars such as Taylor Swift and Beyoncé have also become more accessible, especially to a younger feminist audience. This is never more predominant than with the recent #metoo campaign. All the celebrity interest and attention means that young women are growing up in a world where people are held accountable for sexual harassment and assault. So many of these stories of abuse are no longer hidden but are being brought forward alongside names and identities.

"I want all of the girls watching here now to know that a new day is on the horizon." – Oprah

Today's fresh minded young women are growing into adults fiercely taking on board the world of feminism, refusing to settle for anything less than societal revolution. The second decade of the 21st century is in sight and women, more than ever, are eager to get involved and take action. This is the first hurdle overcome, and a bright future lies ahead. The

modern world tells women not to feel shame or embarrassment by saying '#metoo', largely due to the sheer scale of the sense of 'togetherness' which has rarely been achieved ever before. This is what feminism in 2018 looks like.

Heading away from the social media element, I wanted to make one final mention of something that had little weight in the media but I believe helps define what feminism in 2018 is.

The Formula One 'Grid Girls' were dismembered earlier this year, a controversial move. There are various arguments, but the persisting view against the move is that it doesn't matter what the sexual and misogynistic connotations of this form of 'entertainment' is; the only thing that matters is if the women who do that job are happy with it. This lies under the theory of Individualism, the idea being that interference under the name of feminism is not needed because the women had the choice to work there or not.

Whether you agree with this or not, you can't deny that this is a valid point. But the 'Grid Girls' debate goes further than this; it is not about what the women are happy to do – let alone an infringement on their freedoms – but actually about the subconscious impact of this role on society as a whole.

If women are constantly kept in this sexualised role, then across all branches of society, this is how all women will naturally be perceived – people will accept this as normal. It subtly stands in the way of change and granting the level of respect which women have been demanding for centuries.

'Grid Girls' originated in the car industry, which at its origins (and largely to this day) was overwhelmingly male dominated. The advertisement of cars hugely involved the sexualisation of women, so much so that car shops would even hang calendars of semi naked women pictured with cars on the walls, supposedly to sell the men the 'image' - of a world where women are sexualised and objectified. The medieval mentality that women exist purely for sexual purposes crept back into society during the 1990s and early 2000s. This is not the position society should keep women in. To be able to say that *our* society has gotten rid of that would certainly be a point to be proud of. One day, the idea of a man sat naked on the bonnet of a car, on a £3.50 calendar in

Feminism in 2018

“How can we effect change in the world when only half of it is invited or feels welcome to participate in the conversation?” – Emma Watson

I wanted to avoid using clichés about social media in this article. You must be sick of hearing everyone’s opinions on the ‘issue’ of social media.

Whilst I will mention it briefly, I hope, through looking at its relationship with feminism -an unfamiliar topic - it won’t be tiresome.

I am going to start with stating something obvious to most of you: the rapid growth and popularity of YouTube, Snapchat, Instagram and Twitter has suddenly given everyone a voice. This means that we are more biased and steadfast in our views than ever before. As BBC News North American Editor Jon Sopel put it, in today’s world, “if you’re not happy with the news you’re listening to, change your news channel”.

We are opinionated, and the platforms of social media give us reason to be. We can talk about anything from football, to social matters and political agendas. Millions of people watch and comment on these blogs, vlogs and chats every day. We are encouraged to have a raging opinion on everything.

I still believe free speech is sacred, but over the last few years, this has certainly had sociological impacts, dividing people and asserting groups and labels more harshly.

Perhaps no topic is more greatly affected by this than Feminism.

Naturally, America is a prime example – and, in particular, the one man who couldn’t escape mention in this piece: Donald Trump. He has divided people and politicised today’s feminist movements with his comments, past and present. His infamous “grab her by the pussy” remark seeped its way through political chatrooms across the world and somehow evolved from a disgusting lack of respect for women, steeped in misogyny, to a politicised discussion point. Many people victimised by his comments and behaviour – the women standing up for their respect and dignity, and some coming forward to report cases of sexual harassment by President Trump – were made to be the enemy.

You’d think that it would be easy to find common

ground over women’s rights – rights fundamental, long-fought over, and ostensibly achieved, especially in this day and age. Yet when they are politicised in such a way, amplified by the media, this proves difficult.

Of course with this great division is the opposing side to feminism. A side that, just like any other, has been given a voice, largely by social media.

There are many strands of opposition to Feminism nowadays but one of the most common is the notion that the movement is in favour of women ‘conquering’ men. This leads many men and even some women to turn away from Feminism based on the belief that it is against men, wants women to have more rights than men, and advocates the oppression of men. The issue is, with the accessibility of YouTube, for example, it is increasingly easy for someone to express their views and label them under a different, more respectable movement. A stereotypical example is Islamic extremists who claim their violent, racist and radical views to be based on Islamic teachings. People can be highly persuasive and influential in just one strongly opinionated clip. As a public we must root out our instinct to generalise and learn to make sensible judgements on the views we become aware of.

Some see feminists as extravagant hypocrites for arguing one point for women and a contradictory point for men. A common feminist argument is that the stereotypes of women, such as that ‘women are bad drivers’, ‘women are always moaning’ or ‘women are too sensitive’, are sexist and misogynistic. Many people would agree with that. However, here is the controversial argument: these ‘sexist’ and ‘misogynistic’ stereotypes given to women can actually be mirrored by ‘sexist’ and ‘misandrist’ stereotypes given to men: for example, ‘men cannot multi-task’, ‘men are grumpy’, ‘men are arrogant’ and ‘men cannot organise anything’. These male stereotypes are propagated by women, some of whom identifying as feminists and some not, but either way, a valid point is made. The controversial part comes when men purport that the male population

Equality

**Equality tastes like a shared city’s air
Crisp and warm on the tongue’s tip,
A tang of movement and shuffled breeze**

**It is the sound of a child’s cry from a distant room
A colourless ring: echoing**

**Equality feels like sun, melting plastic coated
rainbow umbrellas
Sheltering a thousand naked backs
A rainbow of nude**

**It is the smell of perfume with your eyes closed
The pricks of jasmine, damp upon touch**

**Equality’s disguise, is a million grains of sand
across a desert floor
A blur of non-distinguishable technicolour**

**It looks as though nothing is different
Amongst things that are not the same**

Lily-Rose Faulkner-Schuettt

Artwork by Anya Butler

Equality through the pages of Charlotte's Web

They say books are the key to our children's future. Whilst there are many books in the world, no book is quite like 'Charlotte's Web' by E.B. White. On the surface an innocent children's novel, it is full of unique perspectives on equality and diversity.

The Oxford Dictionary defines a child a "young human being below the legal age of majority." It goes describes one as "an immature or irresponsible person" and "a person who has little or no experience in a particular area." I disagree.

This article is formed around the essay prompt 'What does equality look like?' Whilst equality might not have a fixed appearance, it certainly isn't shown through stereotyping children as "immature" and of "little or no experience." Because frankly they – we – are capable of so much more.

"Children almost always hang onto things tighter than their parents think they will."

'Charlotte's Web', E.B. White.

Whilst children may not possess as much knowledge as their elders, they are more capable of understanding complex ideas than people think. They are not only influenced by what they are told but also by what they read, and, whether subconsciously or consciously, they use this knowledge and apply it to their daily lives. Many children read 'Charlotte's Web', but it is the encrypted message and morals within the pages that children take away with them. The teaching that by far left the biggest impact on me was on equality.

White's incredible book subtly sums up the way society operates through its fantastic tale of the miracle of an ordinary pig from the viewpoint of a child. This didactic tale embraces key life teachings highlighted by an element of fantasy, not only capturing the audience but forcing them to look inwards to truly understand the book's wisdom. Every character and even the scenery itself are symbolic representations of human qualities.

Let's start with the barn. Of course it's the natural setting for a story about a pig and a spider. But the barn is fundamental as a metaphor for our society; each animal represents a human attribute, and the barn is where stereotypes are formed. The barn is cleverly divided between those who judge Charlotte superficially - for her looks and for being a spider - and others like Wilbur who take the time to get to

know her and allow a friendship to blossom. In a sense, the barn is divided between those who believe that everyone should be treated equally, and those who don't.

Every character in this story, even the rat, contains an underlying message hidden within the depths of their personality and attributes. The sheep represent the human tendency (and necessity) to follow others; the rat, Templeton, embodies greed and selfishness. The horse, Ike, (introduced first in the film but not the book) represents human's judgemental nature based on misleading stereotypes.

It's not just the animals who stand for common personality traits: Mr Arable symbolises humanity's disregard for the feelings and emotions of others, and Mrs Arable represents the common assumption – similarly propagated in the Oxford Dictionary – that children are incapable of understanding anything remotely complex. All characters in one way or another personify inequality or equality. But the following three characters are by far the most symbolic.

Fern is the stubborn yet sweet eight year old who saves Wilbur from being killed and goes on to take the responsibility of looking after him, despite him being a pig, not a pet. From her actions, we understand that Fern's character demonstrates 'Justice'. As she believes that all beings, regardless of appear-

HUMANS OF BROMSGROVE



What are some problems with teaching teenagers?

For me, as a teacher, the biggest problem is that they know too much, they know more than me. I think it's probably what every generation happens: new generation comes up with new ideas and new ways of getting them, especially nowadays, with technologies that we have. All teenagers are so knowledgeable about them that it makes me feel that I am a dinosaur! Well, I should deal with it as I am teaching history, and history is all about changes.

(Mr Wilkins, History teacher)

How does art affect you?

Art affects me in many ways, especially my thought processes. Art is a big part of me as it helps me represent what I want to show - for example, my ideas, thoughts and feelings I want to share. Art is all about visual concepts and helps me document moments. People can speak art by using different shapes, colours, textures like words. I mean, words are also shapes and symbols that represent something, so anybody can speak art, anybody!



(Anissa Tam, U4 student)



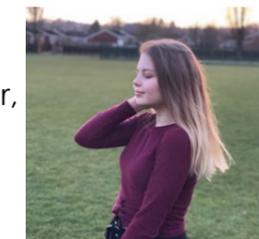
What are your thoughts on the role of women in science?

Women in science do a lot of work that is often overshadowed. They are often uncredited for their work or they just don't get enough opportunities as their male colleagues. But I think there are a lot of cases where if you look back into history, you can see important people such as Marie Curie or Irène Joliot-Curie who were way ahead than their male colleagues. Many modern scientific discoveries and revolutionary investigations wouldn't have been made without the work of Marie Curie and other female scientists.

(Mrs Woolley, Chemistry teacher)

Do you enjoy spring?

Yes, a lot! This is my favourite time of the year because after long winter, there is finally sunshine and all nature wakes up and starts to blossom. There is a special atmosphere in the air and I feel energy in my body. Also everything is turning bright and some kind of inspiration appears.



(Maria Melnichuk, L4 student)



What was the most embarrassing moment of your life?

Well, a few years ago I really liked a girl. When I asked her out, she rejected me...

(Eric Bae, U4 student)

Tatiana Morikova

Gender equality

The issue of gender equality has never been as relevant as it is now. It's been widely discussed in the media, prompted by the rise of the #MeToo movement and new laws on violence against women, and many new movements concerning equality have advanced and developed. In any democratic society, gender equality is considered a fundamental goal.

The concept of gender equality can be difficult to grasp as many tend to misinterpret its meaning. We live in a world full of diversity, with clashing opinions and thoughts; it is therefore crucial that we understand the meaning of gender equality in order to effectively discuss this topic.

The definition of gender equality is 'the state in which access to rights or opportunities is unaffected by gender'. In other words, gender equality is achieved when women and men enjoy the same rights and opportunities across all sectors of society, including economic participation and decision-making.

Women and girls represent half of the world's population and therefore also half of its potential. But today gender inequality persists in almost every country and considerably affects our social development. As of 2014, 143 countries guarantee equality between men and women in their constitutions. However, the world's remaining 52 countries have yet to take this step. Gender inequality has already affected many generations and risks affecting many more if the correct measures aren't taken. These measures include free access to education, empowering all women and girls, and generating equality in all working areas – the list goes on.

Inequality haunts girls even before birth and follows them for the rest of their lives. And it's not just the

girls who are affected – both their immediate family and the wider community can suffer the fallout. In some countries, girls are deprived of access to health care and proper nutrition, leading to a higher mortality rate and long-term social and economic breakdown. Globally, 65 million girls are not in school. A lack of consistent education in a girl's life can have a traumatic effect on our society and its development. Educating girls allows them to work and therefore improve our economy and our world in general.

Studies show that countries closer to home are also affected by gender inequality – only 27 percent of students taking the AP Computer Science exam in the United States are female. The gender gap only grows worse from there, as women continue to have fewer career opportunities, and earn on average 16% less than men.

It might be difficult to fully grasp the implications of such discrimination, particularly if you don't experience them directly. Some may question the importance and value of gender equality. It is imperative to understand that this issue doesn't only concern women; it concerns men, too. The gender equality movement seeks to change society's perception of 'feminine' qualities in men such as expressing their emotions, which they often suppress.

Regardless of where you live or where you come from, gender equality is a fundamental human right. Progression with this issue is critical to all areas of a healthy society, from reducing poverty to promoting the health, education and the protection of girls and boys. It is - as stated by the United Nations, 'a necessary foundation for a peaceful, prosperous and sustainable world.'

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Laetitia de Belgique

ance, ability and any other characteristics, deserve justice, we also see that she stands for equality, too. Wilbur was the runt, destined to be killed; this is the equivalent of someone on the fringes of society, perceived as different. Her choice to save him and give him the life that his siblings were granted is the equivalent of us treating people who we perceive as different with respect and understanding. In the book, Fern says "but it's unfair...the pig couldn't help being born small, could it? If I had been very small at birth, would you have killed me?" Mr Arable replies, "certainly not... a little girl is one thing, a little runty pig is another." "I see no difference," cried Fern "this is the most terrible case of injustice I ever heard of." Treating people the same irrespective of colour, shape or size is 'equality' and that is what Fern demonstrates.

Then there's Charlotte, who represents victims of prejudice. The spider faces discrimination when the other barn animals judge her based on her looks and the stereotypes associated with her species. Even Wilbur is initially wary of the spider but this only serves to remind us just how deceiving first impressions can be. They expect her to be creepy and crawly, and are surprised to find that she's loyal and kind. We are the judgemental barn animals, judging without knowing, and Charlotte represents those who are judged without being known. We go on to see that she is hard working, wise, thoughtful and clever; a true friend, and nothing like the original stereotypes she was labelled with. Throughout the novel, we learn of these aspects of her personality that make her such a wonderful friend and special creature.

Finally, there's Wilbur: the radiant little pig that Fern saved from death. He flaunts a free-spirited and pure attitude to life, symbolising youthful innocence - children who are unaware of life's harsh realities. Just as Wilbur was unaware of the slaughter house,

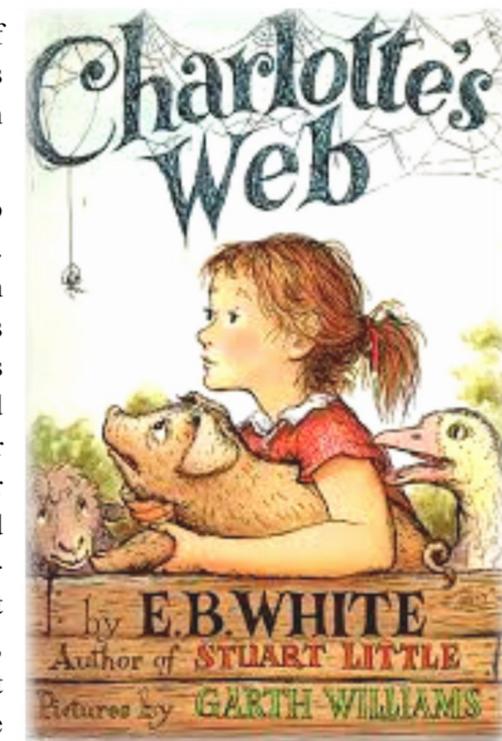
children today are often unaware of prejudices, stereotypes and inequality. Throughout the book, we see Wilbur mature and progress from his experiences and the people around him. Initially lacking confidence, Wilbur develops strength and conviction, forming an unexpectedly strong bond with Charlotte. We observe as they build the foundations of their friendship, their bond growing stronger as each page is turned. We see Charlotte's life tragically end, the motherly figure's strength exhausted after she puts all of her love and energy into saving her friend. She teaches the innocent spring pig both harsh and exciting realities of life, careful to enlighten him to the world without corrupting him – a lesson we would be

wise to learn. Inequality and discrimination persist and the children are our future; we need more people like Charlotte to protect young innocent minds and help them flourish in a positive way, otherwise inequality may never go away.

Debating this topic is sensible but unnecessarily complicated. There are groups upon groups fighting for equality and rights. There are constant and countless debates about what should and shouldn't be allowed. If you argue for women's rights you are labelled a 'feminist' which has become an insult in our society. What went wrong for people who are arguing for

such important, fundamental rights to be criticised? Such simple ideas, such complex ways of going about achieving 'equality' when a child would say the solution is just to treat everybody the same. Life would surely be simpler if we all thought like Fern, Charlotte and Wilbur. Perhaps, strangely, the only way to progress in life is to see things through a child's eyes, breaking down the complex ideas and basing our reactions on what we feel is right rather than what society tells us is right. In the end, we can all learn a lot from an undersized pig.

Jessica Rai



WHY I PROTESTED

Antisemitism has recently come in to the forefront of the news after a number of controversies. There is confusion and ambiguity surrounding the prejudice, so it's important to understand what it is to prevent misguided and offensive thinking.

Antisemitism is the hostility to or prejudice against Jews. As long as Jews have existed, hatred against them has existed also, taking various forms. Whilst in the past, Jews have been attacked, forced to convert, exiled and even killed on mass in camps, modern-day antisemitism is subtler – yet nonetheless dangerous.

A common example is referral to the Rothschild conspiracy – the ludicrous, centuries-old belief that Jews control all the world's money, media and governments. In 2012, Los Angeles-based street artist Mear One painted a mural in London featuring known anti-Semitic tropes – old, rich men with hooked noses playing with the world's money at the expense of workers. After local residents complained about the offensive graffiti, the local council decided to remove it. Jeremy Corbyn, who since became Leader of the Opposition, defended the mural on Facebook, arguing that removing it was akin to Rockefeller destroying Diego Viera's mural because it included a picture of Lenin.



YouTube

After Corbyn was also found to have been a member of a Facebook group, Palestine Live, in which anti-Semitic comments and posts were made, the Jewish community decided that 'enough



I took part in the demonstration because I feel that for too long, Corbyn and the Labour Party have neglected to treat antisemitism as a real issue, failing not only to stand up to it in the public sphere but also to deal with it internally in the party. Corbyn is unlikely to be an anti-Semite himself, but he evidently attracts anti-Semites who see him as their figurehead. Most importantly, he doesn't think this is a problem and is therefore prepared to turn a blind eye to it in pursuit of other goals he deems more important.

We didn't know what impact our protest would have on antisemitism in the Labour Party (Corbyn has since issued an apology, vowed to meet with Jewish leaders and attended a controversial anti-Zionist Passover meal, amongst other ac-

tions) but I certainly left feeling invigorated, at once uplifted and angered. Doing something, even if it's just forming part of a crowd and cheering when you hear something you agree with, is better than simply posting your thoughts on social media – or worse, doing nothing. It shows that you care and you're willing to devote time and energy to what you believe in; most importantly, it's a show of unity and strength for the movement which just can't be translated with the same impact online or in writing. I would highly recommend attending a march, signing a petition or even organising these for beliefs that you feel strongly about – read up on the facts (from reputable sources) and decide for yourself your views on the matter.

Alia Derriey

Decriminalisation of domestic violence in Russia: A STEP BACKWARDS FOR A HISTORICALLY PROGRESSIVE COUNTRY

Bruised limbs, parched blood around the face and sprawling surges of pain in your spine. Concussions and hurting joints. Are you a woman? Are you beaten up by your husband? Oops, sorry, there is nothing you can do about it. Accept it. This is what Russian government directs you. Domestic violence is now legal here.



In summer 2016, Russia decriminalized domestic violence on the grounds of preventing interference into private family affairs. Neither police nor the state would intervene if women and children were physically abused within the family. Previously, before amendments to the Criminal Code were adopted

in July 2016, nonaggravated battery was a crime, punishable by a fine of up to 40,000 rubles (approximately US\$700) or by restriction of liberty such as detentions or a six-month period of mandatory work with reduced income at a place designated by the authorities.

When I first heard about these changes I could not believe my ears. I refused to believe that in Russia something like this can happen. As an ordinary Russian girl who strongly believes in freedom, equality and (naively) expects to see it around me, I was horrified and disgusted by the news. How can women be robbed of their fundamental right to be protected? How can we let dangerous criminals grow inside families and further undermine the institution of family?

This law underlines the openly crawling conservatism and sexism in the Russian society. The official jurisdiction implies the superiority of men's position over women's, and men's "absolute power" over women either to "knock down a peg" or bring discipline in by battering. This is simply appalling. The Grand Duchy of Finland, part of the Russian Empire, was the first European country to introduce women's suffrage, in 1907, and elected the first women Members of Parliament in the same year. Some may argue that the Grand Duchy of Finland was a tiny slice of land in proportion to the whole territory of the Russian Empire and the legal changes were not significant. However, it was undeniably a crucial turning point in the mechanisms of the society; recognition of women's rights by the

state only emphasised the libertarian winds of change.

Later in history, Socialist Russia was one of the pioneering countries that introduced universal women suffrage in 1917 and granted women equal employment rights. Russian women never needed to fight for their rights because the new government introduced such revolutionary laws before they had to. Consequently, these changes were taken for granted. As Soviet Russia later became an authoritarian state, many of the women's rights existed only on paper, feminist movements were not encouraged and conservative views continued to prevail in the minds of the society, exposing women to unfair and unequal treatment.



Now we are shifting backwards from the enthusiastic improvements made 100 years ago. Unfortunately, the ruling elites in Russia will politically benefit from the introduction of discriminative laws. But today the situation changes. Russian women are more and more concerned about their legal status and position in the society. They are ready to stand up for their rights and confront the billowing waves of subtle persecution that start to poke into the open. Feminist movements slowly sprout in semi-authoritarian Russia, where they face a lot of resistance. Pussy riot is one of the examples, in which members were arrested. But I am sure that the obstacles will not stop our passionate fights for freedom, equality and liberty. It is on our generation to fight for liberal changes.

Anna Abramova

What you owe feminism

I started calling myself a feminist at the age of 11. It was something I so proudly identified as, a word and a movement I revered. I remember putting it in my Instagram bio, writing about it in school assignments at every opportunity and readily bringing it up for discussion at the dinner table or during break time in the cafeteria. It was such a relief to finally feel validated for that chafing feeling of unjustness when a boy in my class was devastated to be criticised by the PE teacher for ‘throwing like a girl’, or when realising almost all of the superheroes in my favourite cartoons were male; that there was nothing wrong with me, but with the structures of our society. I was so happy to know I wasn’t fighting alone.

But as I grew older, I let my voice fade out. As much as I hate to admit it, I began to remain silent when I overheard another discussion about ‘feminism going too far’. I replaced the fierce “*I am a proud feminist*” statement in my Instagram bio with my Snapchat username. Because the reactions I received were getting to me. “I am a feminist”, I say proudly as they wrinkle their foreheads and scoff at me. “Hah, you gonna dye your hair turquoise and stop shaving your armpits now or what?”.

Considering how much reproach you can receive today for being an outspoken feminist, you might wonder what kind of lunatic, profound opinions we are actually guilty of possessing. Equal pay for equal work? That something is wrong when every fifth woman in UK aged 16 - 59 has experienced some form of sexual violence since the age of 16? That your right to education should not be restricted by your gender? That a man shouldn’t have to be afraid of seeking help for mental illness due to fear of diminishing his masculinity?

When learning about these harsh realities, some days I feel like I might as well just admit defeat. Maybe the world wasn’t created to be equal; maybe one gender was simply supposed to be superior. But then I remind myself, once again, of the fire within my 11-year old self and everyone else who is part of the same fight. The people who died to push the world, even if just a millimetre, towards equality. That is why I’m furious every time I hear you say we don’t need feminism. For whilst you are saying it, you are either enjoying your voting rights, your abortion rights, your smaller gender pay gaps, your right to work outside home or your paternity leave as a father. And there it is - feminism includes you as a man too. Sure, you can no longer legally rape your wife (if you were particularly grieving your loss of that right), but on the other hand, feminists fought for your inclusion in the legal definition of rape, for your right to stay at home with your child, and are still fighting to ensure that you’re not defined by the weight you lift or the circumference of your biceps.

I can’t force you to call yourself a feminist, but I have every right to give you a wakeup call if you decide feminism is useless or the cause of any of your problems. Because feminism and man-hating are separate things. Because feminism is and always will be the movement for the equality of the sexes. Because none of all those rights you enjoy today are results of some form of biological evolution or miracle from mother nature; they are the results of a tough fight taken on by feminists that should be praised - not condemned. *That* is what you owe feminism.

Vivianne Wei

Is equality achievable?

Achievable, socially just?
The questions evoke emotions so deep,
Rattling people’s brains
Thoughts despising thoughts
An answer only questions the morals of another
Yet we search for it still, equality.

Speeches have rallied nations throughout generations
Any decade presents examples,
Blacks and whites, boys and girls
It should not determine our treatment
It should not dictate how we live
Yet, should it?

Through achieving equality
We aim through justice,
In the process we create a universe with no respect or resilience,
No backbone in children
No drive to retry after failure,
Yet we search for it still, equality.

Equality allows us to fight against suppression,
Strive for equal treatment,
Recognise and accept every culture
Any limitation of this should be abolished
In a free world
Yet, should it?

Equality is a limitation to individuality,
With it faiths once suppressed by inequality
Would be demolished by equality,
Cultures, hierarchies, views
Deteriorated in an equal society
Yet we search for it still, equality.

Equality suppresses individuality,
Equality allows freedom,
Inequality suppresses expression,
Inequality allows individuality,
Different views shape society
So both should be balanced
To create our world, our world of voices
Voices to be heard and voices to be acknowledged

Frankie Mellor

The Equality Hashtag

As social media has become more integrated into our society, where politicians use platforms like Twitter to address conflicts and openly discuss opinions, it is of no surprise that the issue of equality has featured in several discussions and hashtags on social media platforms.

#metoo:

This hashtag started to appear in the internet in October 2017. The original trigger of the call against sexual assault was an article published by the New York Times on the 5th October, in which Harvey Weinstein was publicly accused of having assaulted and harassed actresses in his movie productions.

The two women who were stated in the article were Rose McGowan and Ashley Judd. He sincerely apologised; however, that was not the end of the scandal. More and more actresses expressed their experience under the hashtag #metoo, leading to his sacking on the 8th March by the Weinstein company, as it surfaced that he has assaulted employees for nearly three decades. Three months after investigation the entire Weinstein company is sued, as they failed to protect their employees.

As soon as the hashtag hit the internet it was used to express feeling for sexual perturbation in every workspace, leading to 12 million reposts within its first 24 hours on Facebook and spread into 85 countries. #metoo is used to declare experiences from an unwanted touch, a misplaced comment up to rape.

One of the most famous uncoverings of sexual assault triggered by the #metoo movements was that by the former US Olympic gymnastics doctor, Larry Nassar, who has been sentenced to jail for 175 years after abusing nearly 160 girls, who until the social media campaign were too scared to speak out for fear of losing their careers.

It led to a reaction from men with the #HowIWillChange movement, which includes excuses, explained changes and personal experiences.

#whywewearblack:

Why We Wear Black was a reaction to the #metoo movement and was a stand taken by actors during the Golden Globes Awards in solidarity with people who have been silenced by discrimination, harassment and/or abuse.

Many actresses spoke out about their own experiences and, with the support of many men, aimed to reduce sexual misconduct in the Hollywood movie scene. For many, the hashtag reaches further: "We wear black (...) asking for equality, respect and meaningful change within all industries" said Amy Schumer



FEMINISM AND *fashion*

According to the dictionary, feminism is the advocacy of women's rights on the grounds of the equality of the sexes, but it's so much more than that. For a long time, fashion was a limited industry for women - many found it hard to make the break that would launch their career. But that's changing as people recognise women as a powerful force in their own right rather than inferior. Fashion isn't just pretty clothes but an art form, a medium for communicating a message to the world. Designers are becoming increasingly political, using their collection and brands to give a voice to all women.

In the past couple of years, feminism has come in to the forefront in fashion, starting with Dior's 'We Should All Be Feminists' t-shirts and reaching a peak with the celebrities wearing Time's Up black dresses and badges at the Grammy's. Designers and brands are beginning to use catwalks to campaign for equality.

But it's more than just protest about feminism - the fashion industry itself is evolving as women gain powerful positions in the industry and create collections to further the feminist movement, showing their support to women across the world. Maria Grazia Chiuri, the recently appointed artistic director of Dior, a position previously only held by men, says, "I try to speak about women now, and for the future. Dior has to be about female empowerment". Feminism is more than a passing trend.

Below are examples of designers and brands that aren't afraid to make political statements:

Tommy Hilfiger

Amongst several other designers, including Phillip Lim and Diane von Furstenberg, Hilfiger included white bandanas to show their solidarity with the #TiedTogether movement which supports the ACLU (American Civil Liberties Union) and the UN Refugee Agency.

Missoni

At their Milan Fashion Week show, Missoni placed pink pussy hats - made famous by the Women's March in Washington - on every chair for guests to wear, and the catwalk included a finale with all models wearing one.



Prabal Gurung

Gurung's catwalk featured Bella Hadid wearing a t-shirt emblazoned with the slogan, 'The Future is Female'. His collection also included quotes from Gloria Steinem, Susan B. Anthony and Emily Dickinson, all open and devoted feminists.

Philipp Plein

The show, situated in the New York public library, had a lot going on: models dressed as the Statue of Liberty, neon signs inside imitating Trump's 'MAGA' but instead spelled out 'Make NYFW Great Again'. An upside down American flag was seen on models' t-shirts, echoing mounting concerns after Trump's inauguration in early 2017.

Mara Hoffman

The shows began with four powerful women taking a stand: four national chairs of the Women's March on Washington delivered a powerful speech on acceptance and inclusion, and then raised their fists in the air to show their power.

Provocative Patellae



Worn since prehistoric times, skirts are the second oldest form of clothing in existence and were originally standard attire for both men and women. Sumerian men wore them, as did the Egyptians. In the middle ages, male warriors sported a short metal version below their breastplate armour. Scottish men still wear them as a celebration of culture and tradition.

As technology developed in 15th century, it became possible to tailor bifurcated items. Trousers became popular for men due to their functionality and superior modesty. However, the demarcation between trousers-for-men and skirts-for-women was not set in stone until around the 1800s. By that time, in Western culture, skirts had become so associated with being a feminine item of clothing that the word itself was actually used as slang for the word 'woman'. During this era, when daughters and wives were seen as nothing more than property, laws were even passed that declared only men were worthy of wearing these wonderful two legged inventions.

Times and thinking evolved, and by 1920, as sporting activities and cycling become more popular, trousers became acceptable clothing for all genders.

Well, almost.

As a young girl (from the age of five to sixteen), it was a uniform requirement to wear a skirt. For those of you that have never worn a skirt, they are an extremely impractical item of clothing. Too structured and they restrict you from moving; too loose and you feel like a cast member from 'Gone with the Wind'. If the skirt is ill-fitting, you find yourself amidst a daily battle of tugging it up against the pull of gravity, only to then be told off for accidentally exposing your kneecaps (a bizarrely serious crime at my all-girls' educational institution).

I could never see any advantages to wearing a skirt at school. Trousers allow you the freedom to run, lunge, cartwheel, sit cross-legged and move in any way you want, whilst always providing ample coverage. My school were more interested in treating me

as an ornament whose job it was to look pretty – an expectation never forced on my male counterparts.

My school also made it more expensive to be a girl. Compared to my brother (who attended the parallel boys' school), my uniform was nearly three times more expensive. Generic grey trousers are easy to source, whereas especially designed fabric was more niche. His uniform tended to be a one-off purchase for year-round use; I had multiple uniforms to match the ever-changing seasons.

Whilst on the subject of double standards, another issue I found difficult as a young student was my school's hypocritical stance on appropriate dress – their ever fluid opinion of visibility of female femur bones. They scolded us for momentarily displaying our *provocative patellae* in our main uniform, yet in the summer we were expected to wear athletic pants. Pants. Actual pants. Something that resembled my grandmother's underwear. Not even shorts. I wanted to be able to high jump, hurdle and run in something practical. Functional women's fitness leggings were not quite as freely available then as they are now, but even so, there must have been a more suitable alternative.

Fast forward to 2018. It is one hundred years since women gained the right to vote and ninety years since it became acceptable for females to wear trousers. Yet, aesthetics still appears to govern school uniform decisions for girls rather than practicality and comfort. Is it not time that our expectations on female attire should change? To many, it's an unassuming cylinder of patterned fabric, yet in my opinion, a skirt is a quiet symbol of what *'equality doesn't look like'* - an archaic piece in the inequality jigsaw.

If trousers are good enough for boys, they should be good enough for girls.

Ms Johnston

#blacklivesmatter:

The Black Lives Matter hashtag was used after an African-American teenager named Trayvon Martin was shot by George Zimmermann on the 26th February 2013.

On the day Zimmermann sees Trayvon, walking out of a store, he called the police claiming that "This guy looks like he is up to no good" and then starts following him, although the police tell him that it is not necessary for him to do so. When the police arrives, they find Zimmermann holding a gun and the boy dead on the floor. Zimmermann reported that he acted in self defence and soon after being brought to the police station was released.



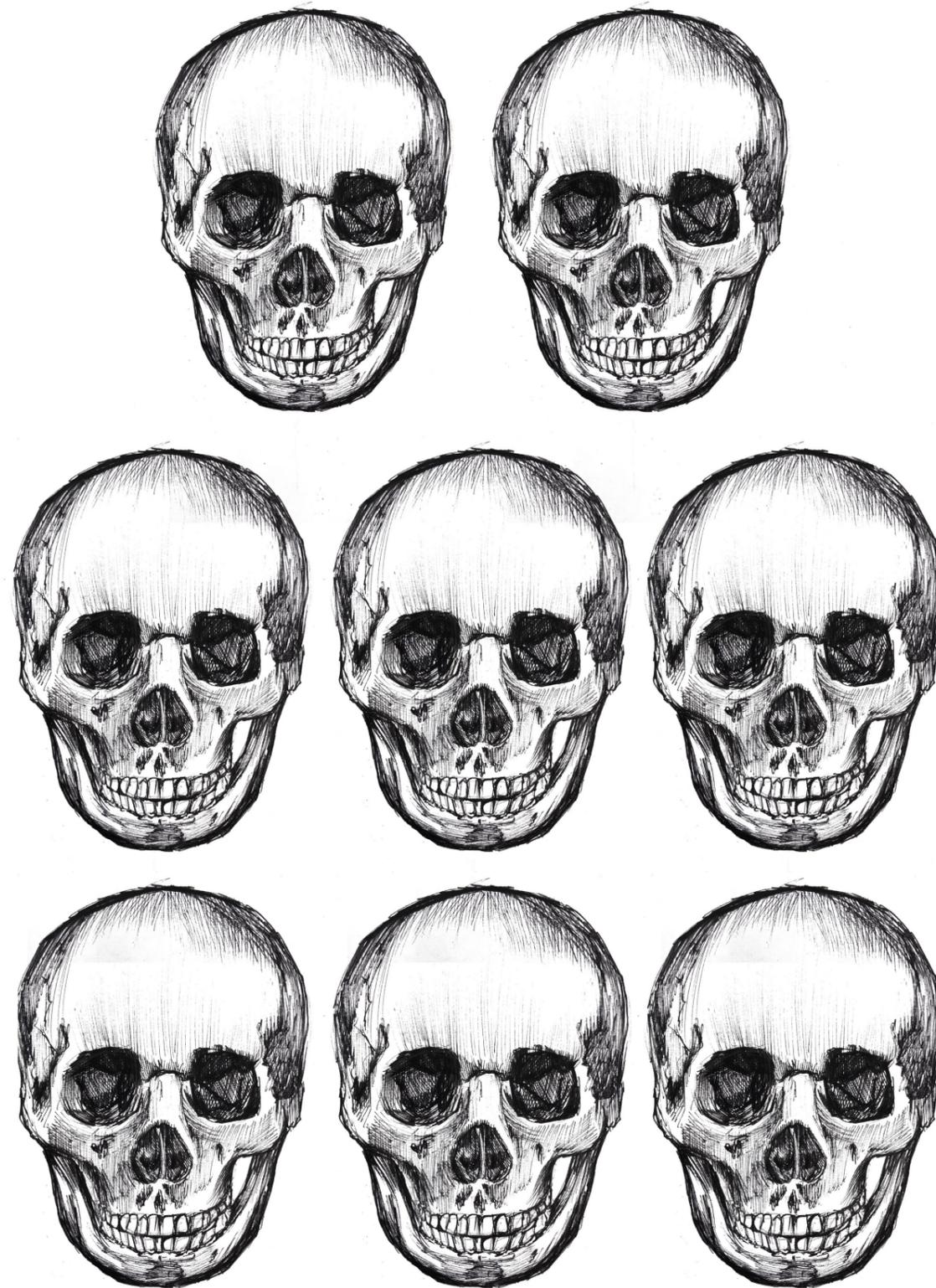
This caused a large debate about racial discrimination, racial profiling by the police, racial inequality and police brutality after several incidences of policemen killing African-Americans and Zimmermann's release, without any investigation, even after Martin's mother had organized a petition collecting 2.2million signatures demanding Zimmermann's arrest and President Obama calling for an investigation.

In his speech, Obama highlighted that it could have been anybody's child and that no one should face such injustice because of racism, discrimination and carelessness by the police.

The hashtag originates with the African-American community and has remained a relevant issue throughout the years, for example after the killing of two African-Americans Michael Brown and Ferguson Garner in 2014. It was brought up again with the accidentally controversial Pepsi commercial by Kendall Jenner linking back to a protest under the motto of #blacklivesmatter, which ended in the beating up of an African-American women by police officers.

Harriet Fuchs

*and killed at Marjory Stoneman
of mental instability, he had ob-
rote poems about the horrific*



What are their differences?

Emily Lou

It was an AR15 that the kid used.
A gun that, in this free world, men can indulge and abuse.
A boy who saw him load his gun,
The gunman saw and just said run.
A word that made the child flee from death.
Before waves of bullets rained on the school,
The kid looked on and asked himself,
Why is life so cruel?

How many more people must die,
before it's bloody metal – not tears – that your children cry.
This free world, rife with argument by politicians –
Men who make decisions, without suffering repercussions.
This gunman was not a delinquent; he was a child.
Born of your failed system, born of your sick traditions.
A boy who without second thought, took up his assault rifle
and headed into war with the children who learned ambition
With him. Emotion and sudden movement made them feel sti-
fled.

This free world is one with a core of rights,
A doubled edged dagger
That makes the average fat man want to fight.
'Over my cold dead body' he said.
LET ME HAVE MY GUN
Because whilst others use it for fun,
The protection I have outweighs the fact
That when a 19-year-old comes to school,
All the other kids have to run.

It's ridiculous, heck it's thoroughly imbecilic,
How children have to be careful of the education system.
Not because of a nation-wide test,
But a nation-wide threat of grown men
Looking to prove their ego.
Men who can't go against the party line
Who fail to realise that life is more important
than the next donation
than the dollar sign.

Prayers be with Parkland.



On February 14th, seventeen people—fourteen students and three staff members—were shot at Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida, by former pupil Nikolas Cruz. Despite a history of violence, the school retained and used an assault rifle. Two Bromsgrove pupils who wished to remain anonymous wanted to express their anger and pay respect to the victims.

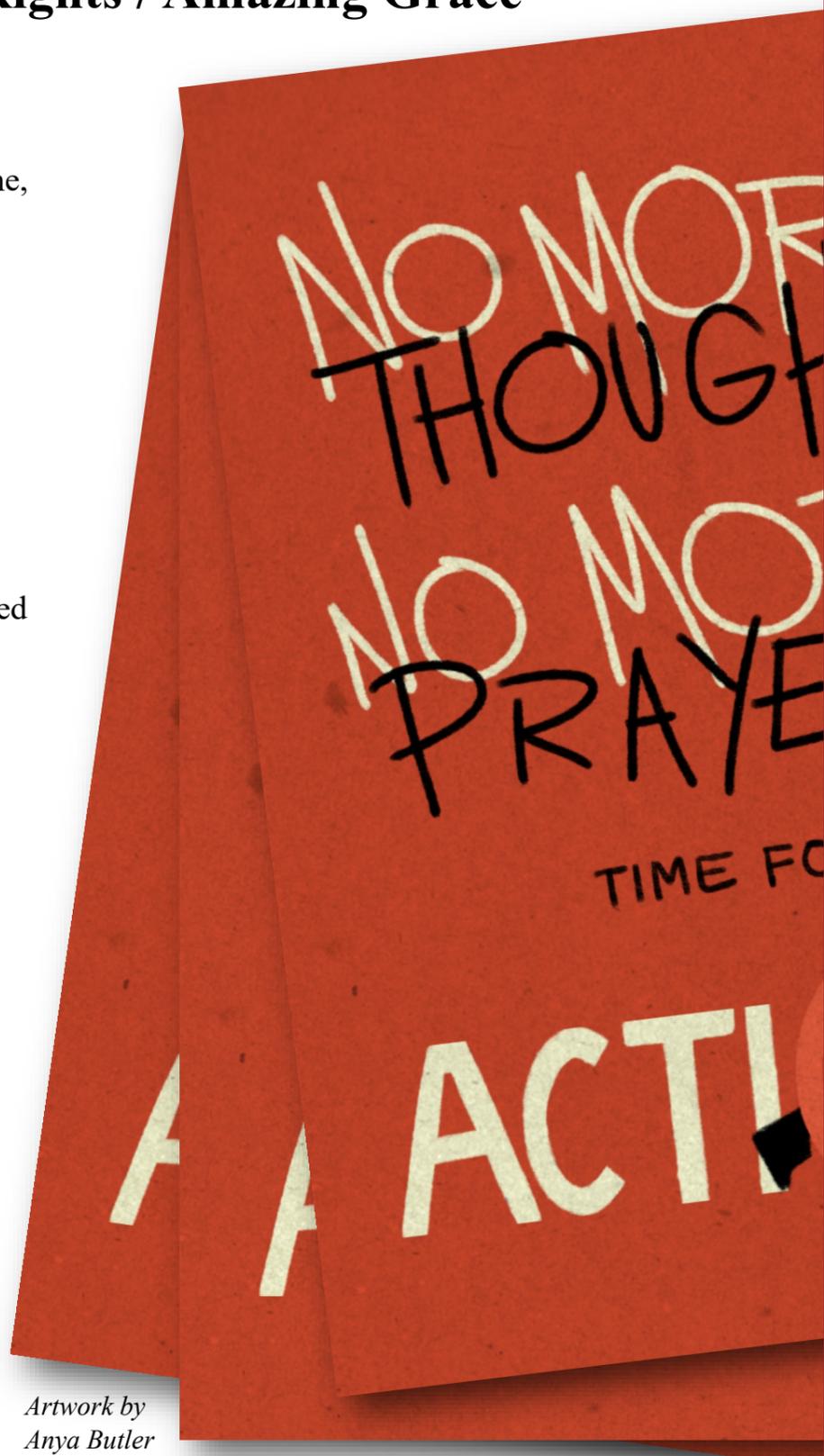
The Amendment Rights / Amazing Grace

The amendment rights,
Stole all our lives,
And now, you have, to pay,
Just a small fee would satisfy me,
If you take the guns away,

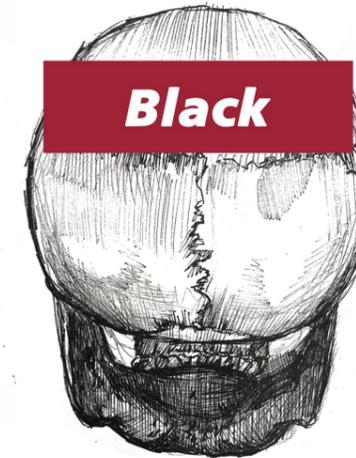
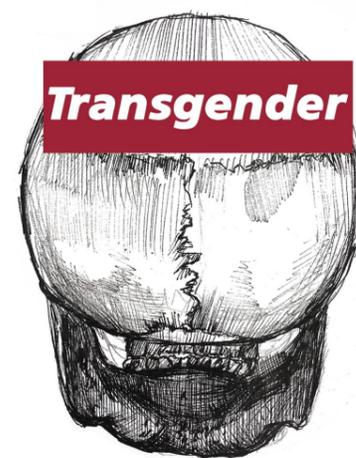
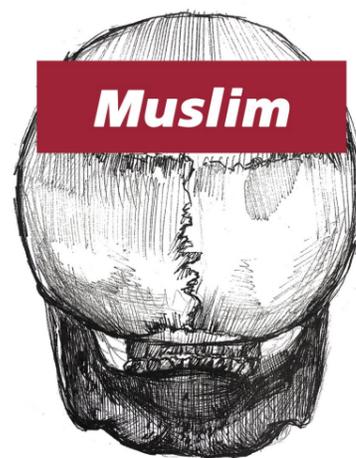
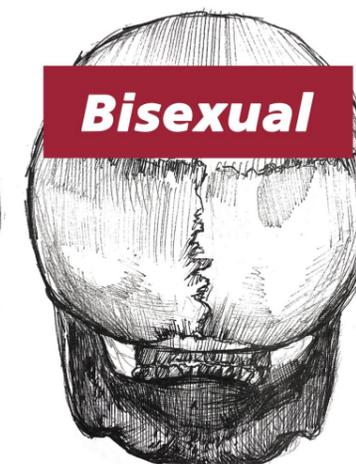
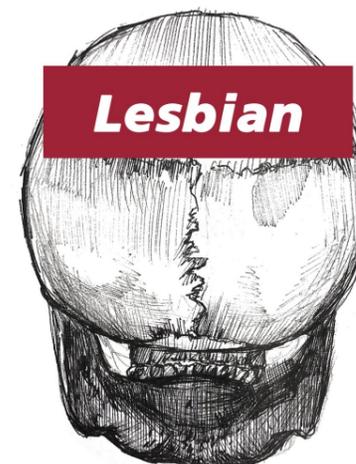
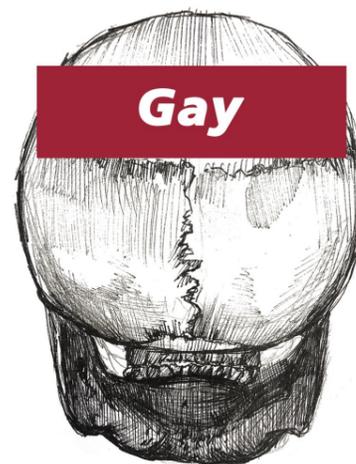
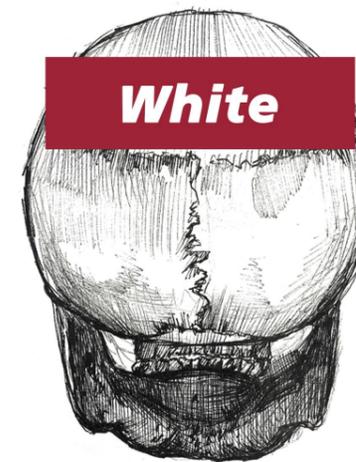
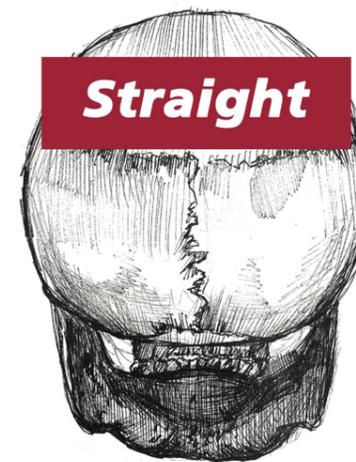
This is the children's cry,
For all that died,
From what this has become,
This nation was built,
From all its guilt,
But you haven't truly won,

For minorities,
For folks like me,
Whose voices have been shunned
This will not be the day,
Nor we shall not delay,
The world that we shall run

- to 'Amazing Grace' tune



Artwork by Anya Butler



**Don't compare your inside
to someone else's outside**