



**Transformative
J u s t i c e**

Autumn/Winter 2023-24

ISSUE 03

Phlegm Zine

Transformative J u s t i c e

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Editor's Letter

What separates me from the police officers down the street? What separates me but the training they've received, the crime statistics that do not count their violence, harm never measured but held in the body?

What separates us but the secrets they keep about the redacted past on their squad, life inside, and the silence the cell threatens us with.

What keeps the street clean? The smell of black rubber boots in every space under the sun? Freedom to roam with a baton - a wand of violence to wish upon? The tears that wash away our memories - grief and loss run riot over greyed, unblossomed life?

What creates safety? Brick walls, bleached porcelain, or food lining our stomachs? Iron gates and electric fences or border-free enjoyment of housing and heating?

We have to join those already seeing the truth, in milk baths after tear gas, in tears after funerals, in Death's arrival after dark, when handcuffs gleam in the night, when the shots fired, when we begin to run.

Abolition calls us to the front. Look up to the wind escaping from our sails and see where the suction comes from. A call to raise our hands to touch, to see who is beside you, your comrades, co-conspirators reclaiming the bounty we live in.

It feels unreachable and otherwise owned, but if we nudge the 'way of doing things' and move between its boundaries, these margins could help us find the answers to questions and anxieties we share.

This zine is our will to act - differently. A need stirred from witnessing something that did not feel right, feeling

powerless, remembering harm kept out of sight.

Thank you for reading. We used these pages to name our uncomfortable feelings and share our experiences to imagine a world beyond the one prescribed.

We are spitting back, punching up, calling out, asking you if you feel the same. I define it here as joy and building after dismantling.

Transformative Justice is the eye to identify, tool to dismantle and scaffolding we use to rebuild.

The task is impossible if we are alone. In publishing this zine, we are inciting the power in you. We are with you. Join us on the page and speak too.

*We are a world
in need of
abolition*

Jj Fadaka is a writer, workshop facilitator and radical based in Edinburgh. Her writing explores the possibility community, feminism, and love give us to create change. Jj uses poetry to speak to the political urgencies facing her local and global community whilst centring community and joy-making in mapping the struggles against these.

Dear the lost boys,

I hope this letter finds you well! Haha! See, girls can be funny too. But you know that. And there is more that you are learning to know in your body. If my body is an apology, what's yours? A weapon? We all have a lot to learn.

Every lost boy in their wandering crosses the boundaries of us girls. Your pain isn't your own and neither is your healing. Lost boys, we knew exactly where we were because you put us in our place. Was it to get your bearings? Did it work? We were in car parks, scared. We were in clubs, children. We were at home, getting on. We were thinking how the fuck did I end up here? again.

The trajectory of an individual survivor and perpetrator are not one. One person's healing cannot be reliant on another person's remorse, amends

or punishment. Freedom means many things, and we free ourselves to heal without caging others. As individuals, our trajectories may not be shared, but as boys and girls our healing is intertwined. We free ourselves from the binaries of perpetrators and survivors, as if we aren't all surviving something (or worse, not surviving).

I say we should free ourselves from binaries in a love letter from girls to boys. Am I being funny again? I speak as a girl whilst knowing that gender is not binary no matter what structures surround and produce it. People prove that every day by a simple fact of being.

I know some lost people who lost the shackles of boyishness, who made it beautiful, who still find it sticky. I do feel my womaness is in relation to my body and to the position of men. I am excited about all

our positions shifting... When I stand side by side with trans and non-binary people with all our experiences of gendered oppression and of being lost, and of joy and of healing, I couldn't ask for better comrades. There is harm and distance between us too, and I wish to be part of furthering your struggle as you are mine. If you feel lost, if you feel boy, I am writing to you too.

Lost boys, when you are lost, the world is losing too because what gets buried is treasure as well as pain. The parts of yourself that you fear, hide and have had kicked out of you; they are treasurers you sometimes show to girlfriends, friends who are girls, strange girls on buses, girls who work in bars. Often you don't seem to wonder about our treasurers or our pain.

It's a privilege to see and affirm you. But anything we bear alone is a burden. So don't cover up your treasure after you show it to us, because it is those closest to you who feel the sharpness

of the stones in the soil when it caves in after you open up. When you are lost we all lose in so many ways. Countless absent fathers, distant lovers, young men missing, old men gone. No way are you my enemy. Who stepped over your boundaries? Which men did you lose? Which girls got lost too? Your healing is not your own because you are not alone, in harm, hurt or love. We are not alone in this world that's more vast than girls and boys. Experiencing it with and within each other is healing.

I would like to share this letter. Can you help? If you know someone who might need this letter, please send me a message, and I would be really glad to post one of these prints to them. Get in touch on instagram @josie_tothill or via email at josiet.arts@gmail.com

Let's walk, struggle, scream,
look, pleasure, get lost and
find newness together.

Lost boys, there's nowhere
for you to return to. No place
awaiting you but the one we
build.

Dear lost boys, you have a
responsibility and you have an
invitation.

With love and solidarity,
A searching girl x

*Josie Tothill is an
Edinburgh-based artist,
writer, hopeless romantic
and silly human. She creates
spaces of care in which we
imagine and build radical
worlds in opposition to
oppressive systems and
towards collective freedom.*



LETTER TO THE LOST BOYS

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Current Systems of Violence

We live in a world that is dominated by racial capitalism, and we are entrenched in its violence and control. Collectively, to varying degrees, we live with the impact of this systemic harm with the most vulnerable - racialised people, women, minority genders, queer people, disabled people, people in poverty, and anyone who exists at these intersections see its violence daily. The state and private companies use the carceral systems of the law to keep us

in check and use the police to defend itself with violence. This also extends to ideas of cultural norms upheld by white supremacy and capitalism - those who don't fit into the mould, which is the global majority - are abandoned. Survivors of carceral systems are survivors of abuse by the state, and mental health systems play a large role in this abuse. This shows up in how the police are called to deal with mentally ill people and in mental illness being criminalised. It's important to ask if locking someone up in a mental health institution is any different from imprisonment?

Are we just removing a part of society we don't want to have to look in the eye? Especially knowing that mental health issues are exacerbated by poverty, lack of access to clean and safe housing, or hunger. Who is removing people from their community helpful for? And what use is mental health awareness if our solutions are rooted in individual responsibility without collective care? It's not to say that spaces for people to heal and get support aren't vital, but that we need to listen to psych survivors and their experiences of dehumanisation and abuse.

My work as a community artist and art therapist challenges me and my connection to legitimacy and colonised institutions. I am learning to sit with this discomfort and keep myself accountable in order to build the community and world we all deserve. Understanding these systems and, crucially, how they are used to dominate and control people is a major step to breaking away from them. This leads me to think about the binary of who is called a

victim/perpetrator, who defines violence and ultimately, who has the power to change this. Can the binary be expanded? Can transformative justice lead us to understand this nuance and recognise that we are all wounded by these systems, including perpetrators, while still holding space and prioritising those who have been harmed?

If we are advocating for systemic change from a transformative justice perspective - we need to recognise the many forms of abuse from the state. We can ask who holds the power and how that power is used to detain and isolate us from each other. How hierarchies are used to enforce people's position and status, which makes us less likely to advocate for change. Racial capitalism - understanding that capitalism is rooted in the exploitation of marginalised people, especially black, indigenous and colonised peoples - will not love us back no matter how much we adhere to its rules. Its very premise is based on false ideas of scarcity which

are used to turn us against each other. When I think of transformative justice, I think about how we could build bonds of community with each other, the earth and ourselves.

This piece feels like an exploration of questioning, of beginnings and expansion. Being trauma-informed means to understand holistically how experiences can shape us on physical, emotional and spiritual levels while recognising that these experiences are intimately intertwined with systems of violence and control. Poverty is violence, lack of access to housing and healthcare is violence, hetero-patriarchy, the gender binary, white supremacy is violence. But transformative justice, abolition and ideas of community care as presented in disability and anti-capitalist justice give us permission to open up to alternative ways of being. They challenge us to show up for each other and work against these systems in the present day, not just when the revolution happens.

Exploring transformative justice, mental health and power

There is no fix-all solution whilst we live under hetero-patriarchal racial capitalism. These ideas come from a place of questioning and curiosity. Though as a mental health practitioner, it also comes from a place of responsibility to understand and implement praxis – a radical alternative type of practice. Mental health practitioners need to recognise that the call is coming from inside the house. Being in a helping profession does not absolve us from doing harm. In fact our positions of power mean the ability to cause harm is enabled and embedded in the structures where we practise, especially if we are further sending people into exploitative and unsafe systems like the criminal justice system. In mental health work, we can challenge the idea that therapists are blank slates and recognise we all have our biases and perceptions formed by racial capitalism. We can recognise the power we hold over labelling someone as

well or unwell and do away with this binary altogether or even challenge the reporting system. There is emotional and material power depending on the institutions we are beholden to.

That does not mean all is doomed, but we can see our work as an opportunity to be truly relational when recognising that so-called psychology and understanding of what it means to be human - our education is rooted in cis-white male supremacy. Modern psychology was created by European men and is rooted in the legacy of colonialism and racial capitalism which in turn informs who has defined what it means to be a person. These ideas include but are not limited to a gender binary, monogamy, heterosexuality, White body norms and other essentialist hierarchies which actually fit very few people. Transformative justice is about expansion, moving away from binaries - who is well, who isn't well, who is harmed, who causes harm.

When thinking about how

impossibly large these systems and forms of power are, I can get overwhelmed and start to panic, but the whole point is that it's not about me, but the work does reside in me. Our individual power only means something when connected to a collective. We do not exist in isolation, we do not succeed in isolation, and when we invest in each other outside of formal institutions, there exists the chance to expand these constraints placed upon us. When we create these spaces, we offer opportunities for disruption and approval and institutions become less important.



Where can we go from here?

In thinking about what we can do, pursuing community and collective care, moving away from hierarchy and institutions needs to be centred.

Can group facilitation run by and centering survivors' voices enable community healing?

This is a form of community education and facilitation rather than expertise being bestowed upon people, especially by those in positions of authority. The potential for deepening relationships in communities through support and understanding feels powerful to me. There are infinite possibilities for different models of care than the ones sold to us; through the land, other species and of course existing communities who, through no other choice, have created and contextualised forms of justice outside of state and institutional approval. To be survivor-led is to understand how we can disrupt the models of behaviour and harm that are reproduced in everyday institutions.

In researching and learning from decoloniality, we know that our current system forced its way into dominance through colonial violence. We also know that ancestral ways of healing through lost practices such as collective artmaking, singing, communal cooking and other forms of care are available to us.

Radical care as antidotes to violence and working towards collective liberation are tools of justice, and as bell hooks writes, "there can be no love without justice". If I think about transformative justice and abolition, I think about love and care, I think about alternatives, and in that lies community and community research. We can learn from each other and create new forms of power.

The fight is material

Ultimately transformative justice is rooted in material reality and, therefore, it requires material solutions. This means fighting for material rights such as housing and healthcare and recognising that the justice system as it exists does not serve to help everyone. For example, in recognising that someone squatting is not a criminal for not being able to have their housing needs met, whether through landlord exploitation, being 'given' housing that is mould infested/dangerous or hundreds of miles from their community. When someone

has to resort to theft to feed themselves and their family while supermarkets price gauge and make record profits, can we ask who the criminal really is? If transformative justice is to centre survivors of direct and interpersonal harm, such as domestic and sexual violence survivors, we must expand our understanding of cis-hetero-patriarchy and its connection to material reality. We should also recognise that survivors are often punished for speaking up either through re-traumatisation, shaming or being imprisoned themselves. Financial freedom, access to housing, food and childcare becomes transformative justice work. Challenging cultural norms when it comes to understanding coercive control and the role of shame, no longer pedestalling romantic relationships and creating communities of care is transformative justice work. By fighting against these systems of oppression, we are working to remove violence and opportunities for violence while also holding each other to account.

This work is ongoing and pioneers of abolition and transformative justice, especially from communities victimised by the justice system, have been showing us it is possible. We can learn from those around us and we can build alternative futures. I have learned so much from and am so inspired and drawn in by organisers, artists, writers and creators fighting for this liberation. It takes community care and effort. It takes collective learning and solution-forming because these are collective problems.

Richa is a recently qualified art therapist working in intersectional feminist and anti-racist spaces. They are interested in challenging the biomedical model of mental health support and creating a world based on care, solidarity and mutual support.



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And What About Rage?

One more train to get another city.

The question follows me like a shadow, as I struggle to concentrate on my next destination, and the inevitable uncertainty that this life brings in the form of new relationships, destinations, timetables, and accommodation.

Now, I find myself in the north of Italy. My book is finally out, and the subsequent tour started a couple of weeks ago. I should slowly and neatly move from one place to another, talk about why and when and where I wrote these pages, then leave.

But this is not what's happening. It could never be like that.

The pages flare up in the

hands that hold them, as if touching invisible, hidden, but highly inflammable points. Every time, in every new place, something happens, something intense and deeply radical. Sometimes they are silences, long and complex, sometimes questions, asked in bursts, sometimes puzzlement, sometimes nervousness and annoyance.

All my questions, scattered through the pages, mingle with those from the audience.

Today it is this one that haunts me: but, what about the anger?

It scares me because I think I have given the wrong message.

There is a certain degree of arrogance in creative writing. You think that your vision could make sense for someone else other than you. That's why I never wanted to write a manual of transformative justice. I wrote a story, and that story is about a path I made. This path was not made of answers, but of questions.

The girl asking me the question has not yet read the book, so my doubt then becomes less pressing, but it doesn't disappear. Perhaps I did not emphasise it enough.

The anger is ours. That anger is legitimate. We still need that rage.

Giusi Palomba lives in Glasgow, Scotland, and is originally from the Naples area in Italy. She is a literary translator and writer, regularly publishing pieces on feminism, social justice, and critical thinking for several Italian publications. Giusi studies as a conflict resolution facilitator in Barcelona, is involved in community organizing, and published her book 'La Trama Alternativa' about transformative justice in Italian in 2023.

Transformative justice is not about stifling rage, but multiplying the spaces to express it. It is about noticing when it destroys us, asking for support before it does, trying to give it meaning and direction, distinguishing it from the pursuit of justice, but above all, not facing it alone. We do not face anger alone.

Through the Window

Walking up the Cornton Road, you'll come to a large white building with well-manicured shrubbery. It is nestled between two housing estates, situated just before the border of Bridge of Allan (the sign for BofA crouches protectively in defence of its upper-class citizens just beyond reach) and beside a small collection of stout, ugly but reliable blocks of flats. Across the road in the spring and summer, groups of brown, black, and black and white cows or flocks of sheep graze, sometimes strolling straight to the ditch that separates them from the road to stare at the cars or at the building itself. Behind the sheep and cows squats Dumyat and the mighty construction symbolising the legendary fighter of the English, the bringer of Scottish Freedom, the patriarch William Wallace. The white building, which looks like a more clinical

version of a North American roadside motel, backs up onto a wide, ancient river that separates it from another new-build housing estate beyond.

Apart from the traffic at commuter times and the occasional group of often-drunk teenagers on their summer holidays, the area is quiet, familial in spirit.

I live in one of the flats in the ugly blocks. Despite its bland roughcast exterior, the flat itself is, as we're often told, adorable – bright and, though small, airy. We have a large private back garden for our dog and our vegetable patch, surrounded by other well-maintained back gardens. The neighbourhood kids play in our hawthorn tree out front. My partner and I and our good friend, the neighbour upstairs, don't mind or bother these little trespassers. It's a good climbing tree and ought not



a high fence, maybe 15-20 feet in height, surrounds the grounds of the white building with hungry barbed wire at the top.

His Majesty's Cornton Vale Prison for Women and Young Offenders Institution does not, after all, want anyone who is unregistered in or out of those yards. And after three years in this flat, I have not, to this day, witnessed or heard a single person behind that fence. A mere silhouette in a top window 18 months ago is the only suggestion I have received that anyone lives behind those walls.

to be wasted on our far more breakable bones and our boring adult inclinations.

From our kitchen window, we can see the back of the white building while we fill the kettle or do the dishes. It's a view we've grown used to. A wall that once supported unruly trees, replaced now with stumps by the chainsaws of overeager neighbours, was evidently an attempt to shield some of the building from view. Despite its calm façade,

We were wary of moving into the flats across from the prison. My old flatmate and I hesitated (her for the status of living by a prison – me for the idea of living across from an institution of which I disapprove), but the yard was good (she, too, had a dog), and the rent was affordable. And, after all, wasn't living next to a prison meant to be one of the safest areas? Who wants to commit a crime in eyesight of the place they're trying to avoid? Perfect

for two young women. We told ourselves we were safer here than anywhere. Sure, it wasn't pretty to look at, but the flat was great, and the price better.

In we moved, and when she moved out, I stayed for the garden, the peaceful river walk, the pre-second-lockdown rent, and the cows. My partner joined me and my dog a year later. We've had no reason to regret the decision, and the discomfort of living across from That Place has become part of my daily emotional range. It is, after all, a supremely quiet neighbourhood.

That's what always got me. The quiet. We can hear the birdsong clearly every morning from bed, and get a full view of bright stars and dark skies at night. Quiet. Peaceful.

A far cry from Orange is the New Black, isn't it?

These days, though, the quiet has faded. The new prison on the north shoulder of the old, which creeps into BofA against that town's will, is nearly complete at a tax-funded bill

of an estimated £81.8 million. The old prison will be torn down. The inhabitants have been scattered to locations around Scotland and will return in June to their new 'home', which promises a focus on 'rehabilitation' and mental health.

Now for the noise. The old prison must be swept away along with the history that building carries. Severe overpopulation with a capacity of 119 yet at one time housing 400. The Isla Bryson scandal.¹ Its struggles to adequately support the safety and mental health of women who have predominantly struggled with abuse and addiction. Struggles that – in a prison founded in 1975 – cannot have looked pretty for the women involved. After all, when have 'institution' and 'women's mental health' ever been terms that married well?²

As I drink my morning coffee in my back garden before my counselling appointment, I can hear the incessant beep, burp, bleeping of construction vehicles and the angry,

murderous grinding of power tools as the teams move into the old grounds. I wonder at the silence we've experienced for the last three years in these homes that were built for prison wardens and now house a collection of families from diverse cultural backgrounds, families who are much more at risk than me or my partner of seeing the inside of the new building. The potholes and internet disruptions and litter that we thought were the worst of it have been accompanied now by a cacophony. And I think, most of all, how I can leave when the noise is too much.

Earlier in the year, I spoke to one of the construction workers. He apologised sincerely for the noise but said it was only to get worse. I wondered at the time if anyone had thought to

apologise to the hundreds of women and young people for the noise they had endured for the last half-decade of work on their new 'home'?

I thought probably not.

*Emily L. Pickard
freelances, fills in at various
libraries, and works for the
women's only indie publisher,
Linen Press. She lives, writes,
and reads in a flat surrounded
by cow fields in Stirling with
her beagle and her partner.
Her writings, both academic
and fiction, can be found
online.*

¹ Isla Bryson is a transwoman who, in early 2023, was convicted of raping two women. These rapes occurred before Bryson had transitioned. She was placed in Cornton Vale, but, due to public uproar, she was later moved into a male prison.

² I reached out in person and via email to staff within the prison, particularly the governor. At the time of publication, still no comment had been given. I requested, also, for writing/artistic submissions to be requested from the women within the prison if they would like to share their stories. Though staff appeared positive, I was never given confirmation that these were sent along, and have not received any submissions.

We find our answers together. Pass this page to a friend, and then another, what can we do instead of calling the police?

call Edinburgh Crisis Centre

gather people! Friends, witnesses, bar staff...

WHAT TO DO INSTEAD OF CALLING THE POLICE?

Call fire dept.

film/record abusive or threatening behaviour

MAGGIO 2023

« This is not a manual. It's a story »

Usura dalle logiche della produttività

« FEMINIDAD DESCARRADA CONTRA EL FEMINISMO PUNITIVO » L.M.A

this is not about SUCCESS OR FAILURE

CARE

MESSYNESS

ANGER

« I want a hug »
kwaww

PUNITIVISM

« What about the anger? »

« I don't want to take care of my aggressor! »

IF PUNISHMENT IS THE SPIRALLING OF HARM, HOW DO WE HEAL?

« HOPE IS A DISCIPLINE »
M. KABA

Giusi Paloma

Treating Mental Health in a Sick World

Reimagining mental health centres as pockets of healing that can hold distress, crisis and uncertainty with care.

An individual cannot thrive whilst their community isn't thriving. Our communities are one breathing, growing organism that exists in a caring relationship with each other and the land we live on. However, capitalism and the effects of colonialism such as exploitative labour, over-extraction of natural resources, austerity, and trauma of oppressive systems (to name a few) create conditions that make people sick.

Often within psychiatric care in the UK, problems are hyperfocused on biology and reduced to "disordered" or "sick" individuals with no sociopolitical context to their distress. And state

healthcare systems are set up to incarcerate and isolate these people in order to provide mental health treatment. Healthcare in the UK follows a medical model with little capacity to expand notions of health into social and financial facets.

However, transformative justice identifies that the illnesses we see in people are not individual experiences but a manifestation of the illness in our communities. The Mental Welfare Commission in Scotland reported that significantly higher mental health detentions occur in communities that are oppressed through poverty and fragmented as a result

How can state systems that originate from empire, built on domination and destruction, ever be transformative?

of capitalistic greed; in 2021-22, 39% of all emergency detentions happened to people from the 20% most deprived areas of Scotland. And those who leave hospital detentions are often discharged into homelessness or into environments with very little community connections or supports.

Healing within communities

Link House, a mental health housing service for women, in Bristol and the Centros de Atenção Psicossocial (CAPS) III programme in Brazil are community care centres that offer an alternative to carceral clinical input by operating a voluntary, open door policy for people in a crisis. These spaces were built by those with trauma created by state healthcare systems and have creatively imagined other ways of mental health care.

If someone experiencing a psychotic crisis were to present at Link House, for example, they would be offered a cosy, homely room to stay in and support from a team of trained mental health workers and peers. They would be invited to participate in the everyday rhythms of the residential project - helping with communal meals, gardening and are encouraged to remain connected to their community outside Link House. These services simply recognise that in order for a hurting individual to heal, they need holistic wellbeing of their mind and body alongside a sense of belonging to their community - rather than just being handed a prescription.

By placing equal importance on social elements when treating a crisis, these services help to reimagine our preconceived notions of what mental health care should look

like. Another example is, Open Dialogue, which is a radical approach that believes that psychosis happens between relationships and within environmental contexts, not within a person. It focuses purely on improving social relationships and contexts to treat the mental illness and hence, input from the person's loved ones or community is

What would it be like if we treated our sick people with interconnection and interdependence, rather than isolation?

valued over any psychiatric treatment. The emphasis during treatment is to address social issues, help them make sense of the roots of their psychosis and strengthen their community ties.

This shows us how the crux of deinstitutionalizing healthcare lies in de-hierarchizing it by addressing the excessive and exploitative power that medical professionals have over individuals. Transformative health care starts by envisioning a world

with equal distribution of power as a means of addressing the sickness in our world.

While the examples above are not perfect, and are still services with input from the state, they are still good starting points for us to envision a new future for mental health care.

What can we do in Edinburgh?

Wouldn't it be great if we had mental health centres in our city run by folk that live in the area, that know the community and its people - and so that care can be adapted to those most likely to need it? These centres will allow for people to simply turn up and ask for a space to be cared for, andw leave to seek the comfort of their loved ones. A space where nobody is held against their will, because it's

somewhere they want to stay; a space that welcomes and holds their distress for them. Those that work there will actively invest in practising interdependency and vulnerability, and recognise that the relationships that make us and hold us up cannot be replaced by any pill.

Here are some great organisations in Edinburgh that are currently working towards similar futures:

- The Patients Council at the Royal Edinburgh Hospital collectively campaign for the liberatory rights of mental health patients, and you can join them if you have lived experience

of statutory services in Edinburgh.

- Advocard, an independent advocacy organisation, works tirelessly to make the voices of those incarcerated within hospitals heard.
- If you experience a mental health crisis, you can access the Edinburgh Crisis Centre for acute care outwith hospitals.

However, in Edinburgh we need to grow more grassroots spaces that allow for a pursuit of psychiatric abolition and holistic, peer-led community caring.

Lakshmi is Edinburgh-based, originally from India, and a social worker in Mental Health and Addictions by day and multi-disciplinary artist by night. She is passionate about curating spaces of care and connection through her work, and is on a journey of expanding her vision of what radical community care can look like.

Turn this page for her artwork inspired by natural ecosystems and how they generate ideas for transformative justice.



"ABOLITION IS ABOUT PRESENCE, NOT ABSENCE. IT'S ABOUT BUILDING LIFE-AFFIRMING INSTITUTIONS"
- RUTH WILSON GREENBERG

The X in the Saltire

Scan this QR Code to hear the original spoken word of this poem



Original dedication March 2022

To the two unnamed Sudanese Revolutionaries whose skulls have been held in Edinburgh, Scotland for over a century - and to all Sudanese Revolutionaries who continue to resist Military rule; a legacy of Scottish military rule of Sudan under British Colonialism.

Update May 2023

Shared in solidarity with the family of Badreddin Abdalla Adam Bosh, shot dead by Police Scotland in June 2020. Scotland's Police Investigations & Review Commissioner recently closed its private investigation in April 2023. It concluded that the fatal shooting of Badreddin Abdalla Adam Bosh was 'absolutely necessary'. Badreddin's family in Sudan are today calling for a public inquiry with integrity, transparency and independence.

The unsaid, the unnamed, the unknown,
Inverse of a Black Scottish backbone.

Raising my seeds in the winds of auld reekie,
Sowing a seed in the belly of the beast, We Anglicised,
Arabised,
African Hebrew,
Gravitate overseas & land like St Andrew.

WE'RE HERE! Cos they were there, evidence locked in their
Berber hair,
their robes, their pipes, their nationalism,
Colonised peoples Right to resist's a given!
but
Check yourself, check your wealth, and your position,
Sudans IndyRef was back in 2011!
Sudanese still in these schemes &
stairs of this city,
Shaggiya of Sighthill,
Nuba of Niddrie,
Dongolawi of Leith,
Mahasia of Muirhouse,
Hawwara outside Holyrood,
That's YOUR house!

But where's the interest? The curiosity? The Comparisons?
They call us New Scots,
but only consult at Elections?

The undetermined, the unwinding, the unknown,
inverse of a Black British backbone.

Keep a close eye on these Scottish-wise Jamaicans,
Deconstructing devolution,
Remixing reparations.
Unlocked architects of a new vision,

This time it's Africans on a Civilising Mission.

D'ya ken we're kin?
But kinda like Cane & Abel
One celebrates with Kitchener
how the others left disabled
Dervishes Decapitated
Academics Captivated
From 1898 to now, the Uni's still got
Niggers domes in cages!

And you tell us it's old history
But on my street I see the Mahdi
in the stones of our tenement
that are cut on these four elements
Reconquest
Independence
Asylum hotel
Military intelligence

Artillery of Ignorance
Reserved matters
no Remembrance
for Park Inn scenes of Badreddin
getting shot up by the Polis
Trauma-informed enforcers
for private Scottish profit

This Celtic nation's got a complex in its complexion
a thread of its own class
woven into the Tartan.
Fraying at the seams,
the detail's cut for decoration.
failed to task the basic ask:
what will you learn from decolonisation?

The infinite, the unending, the unknown
power of its African backbone.

The X in the Saltire.

June 2020

PIRC Investigation opens:
<https://pirc.scot/news/latest/investigation-launched-into-death-of-28-year-old-man-shot-by-armed-police/>

April 2023

PIRC Investigation closes.
COPF statement on conclusion of this investigation:
fatal force 'absolutely necessary' & 'no evidence of any criminality on the part of any police officer who attended at the incident'
<https://www.copfs.gov.uk/about-copfs/news/crown-office-statement-on-the-park-inn-hotel-shooting-incident/>

6 April 2023

BBC interview with Badreddin Abdalla Adam Bosh's brother:
'...brother Adam said he wanted a public inquiry with "integrity", adding that "there must be transparency and independence".
His call for an independent inquiry has been supported by one of the survivors of the attack, known as Mo.
Mo said the tragedy would "live with me for the rest of my life" but that Badreddin's family have questions and deserve answers.'
<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-scotland-65189989>

*Zaki El-Salahi is a British-Sudanese performer & community educator. Zaki's work is rooted in Rap, Dub poetry, and MC culture in grassroots Black British consciousness. Zaki focuses on developing artist collectives in marginalised communities in Edinburgh and East Oxford. They are inspired by the artistic resistance of ordinary Sudanese people doing extraordinary things within Sudan's 'December Revolution'.
Listen to their audio bio at <https://tinyurl.com/ZAuBIO>*

Two lads fae the scheme

We're two lads fae the scheme, with big f****n' dreams. That sentence alone locked lads like us on the outskirts of opportunity. Stuck in the wastelands of wanting. With delusions of dreaming. No one taught us it was OK to express ourselves in our own voices. To tell stories about our own lived experiences. To let yer tongue off the leash on occasion with a few well placed expletives, to show folk where you came from.

We are two creatives who were never invited to the party. In fact, we didn't even know there was an empty. The education system focused on moulding us into factory fodder while pathways to creativity were non-existent. So in late 2020, when a strikingly honest debut memoir came out from an unknown author, donning an equally traumatic front cover at the hands of an unknown illustrator, we pretty much invited ourselves. We kicked the door in.

Euphoric Recall is a gritty memoir about recovering from addiction.

But it's more than that. It was the birth of a rare opportunity. We tiptoed around the elitist creative industry wondering how loud to whisper in our native voices with our harsh words and unsavoury life experiences. We were grateful to Guts Publishing, a punchy independent publisher who acquires ballsy stories about life, for putting us on the map. Surely it would only be a matter of time before we were found out and escorted off the premises?

No thanks. We gave up being self-fulfilling prophecies scraping around broken social structures a long time ago. Since late 2020 there have been critically acclaimed TV shows (Scotland's Stories: Let's Talk About Trauma), gaining an incredible agent (Jenny Todd, The Literary Office), and Euphoric Recall becoming a best seller.

Through it all, us two lads fae the scheme were quietly working away in the background creating a

charity. You see, the reason the art is so brutal and hard to swallow, is because the culture we grew up in was just as unforgiving. Scotland has the worst record in Europe per head of population pertaining to drugs-related-deaths. This intertwines with many variables like intergenerational trauma, social deprivation, and mental health. As two lads fae the scheme, we identify! We identify hard. A shit ton of activism has happened in the last two-and-a-half years and one Google search will bring it all up. But ultimately, we decided to create a charity called The Scheme – Livi, using creative methods as an alternative source of support for those impacted by everything we just mentioned. We are putting ourselves on the front line. We use a wide range of creativity including writing, art, filmmaking and the list goes on.

Our services are free and will always be free to those who need them. We decided there was no way we were going to be passengers or observers during these multi-layered and intertwining emergencies in our community. Be it cost of living or drug-related-deaths. We are still out here trying to prove to the creative industry we deserve a voice and a

platform.

Every day we will give a platform to those who need it. Punitive measures don't work. The Misuse of Drugs Act 1971 has been trying to punish the trauma out of people for over fifty years. It doesn't work.

We have a vision of a different way. A way that worked for us. A vision of creativity. It's with gratitude we now have others buying into that vision too. From the public, to funders, board members and elected members. We're only just getting started. We're two lads fae the scheme, wae big f****n' dreams!

Aidan Martin is a best-selling author of his memoir Euphoric Recall. As a grateful recovering addict, he works as a trauma trainer, public speaker and campaigns on the drugs-related-death crisis in Scotland. His documentary 'Scotland's Stories: Let's Talk About Trauma' aired on STV to wide critical acclaim. He is co-founder/co-CEO of the charity- The Scheme - with Mark Deans. In October 2022, Aidan was awarded the Lifetime Ambassador Award from West Lothian College.

Dispossessed

They analyse me, researching
the specimen, the addict
telling me my disposition comes
from dispossession.
that my catastrophe is colonial in
nature.
condemn me nonetheless, map-
ping landscapes,
tracing fingers along trafficking
routes
gawking, gazing, calling police to
cart me away.
to where? nowhere?
if they could, they'd make like
houdini
disappearing me and all they deem
undesirable
further deeper in our depths of
despair,
invisibilizing products of the state,
telling me to quit nonetheless.
my strife is systemic, but the pris-
on cell holds me, alone.
the night winds wail outside, whis-
pering injustice to anyone
with ears attuned enough to listen.
this catastrophe is colonial in
nature,
this disposition comes from dis-
possession,
disenfranchise me nonetheless,

discarding the wonder of these
cells.
glittering intention reduced to a
statistic,
the girl they disappeared.
her plight was colonial in nature,
her disposition inherited from
ancestors dispossession,
That's re-colonisation. This cell, my
assimilation.
assimilate me into the grate of
these bricks.
they take issue with my heart beat,
my disposition is my steady breath.
disappear me into the grate of
these bricks
my disposition, the
extension of your colonisation.
I, the specimen, displaced,
dispossessed, dispositioned.
positioned perfectly in
the grate of these bricks.

Ceasing Destruction

“One is free to live one's own life
only because
one is free to die one's own death.”
'Necropolitics' by Achille Mbem-
be, 2003
If you've felt the pain I've felt,
if you've been where we have been,
if you've lost your loved one to
poor public policy,
you would want to stop the harm
as well.
Our loved ones are not free to die
their own deaths.
In my hometown, just this last
May,
195 lost their lives to drug poison-
ing.
195 funerals, 195 broken families.
I feel grief in British Columbia's
streets
one hundred and ninety-five times
over.
If you've felt the pain I've felt,
if you've been where we have been,
if you've lost your loved one to the
Drug War,
you would want to stop the harm
as well.

I will not lose another loved one to
mental health, suicide, or over-
dose.
When the night is howling, haunt-
ing, a horrid place,
reach for these calloused hands
and I'll hold you close.
I keep a candle lit for the loved I've
lost,
and a light on in the living room,
for the living that I refuse to lose.

*Renite is a Punjabi poet
and spoken-word artist
based in Vancouver,
Canada. Passionate about
mental health, poetry,
and movement, her work
incorporates training in
sociology, studies of mental
health, experiences of grief
and micro-aggressions as a
woman of colour in the West.
Her debut poetry pamphlet
'Humanise' is available for
purchase in August 21 Cafe
in Edinburgh, U.K.*

Violations of Consent: What we did next

I remember the day well; It was sunny in Edinburgh (for a change) and I was just sitting down to relish in peaceful solitude. As I glanced at my phone, something seemed off. Messages flooded in from friends and acquaintances, all inquiring about a particular individual. Did I know them? Did I socialise with them? Were they attending events? My heart sank as I realised that I did know this person, and I had frequently invited them to my events. The sinking feeling grew stronger. I was unprepared for this.

Until this point, I had heard stories—stories of consent violations and crossed boundaries. But now my friends and even strangers were asking me if I knew about

this person's actions and I had no answers.

Some background; For nearly a decade I have been organising what I refer to as “safe space parties.” These events aim to create an environment free from judgement, where individuals of all identities, backgrounds and sexualities can feel included.

It's easy to imagine the punishment or consequences a stranger should face after mistreating someone, but when it's your friend, your first

instinct is to deny it. However, it became clear to me that this needed to be addressed, friendship aside.

It began with exploring kinks and hosting play parties, gradually leading to the formation of a community. Many attendees appreciate my events because I place a strong emphasis on consent and communication. Consent is an ongoing process within both polyamorous and kinky communities, involving continuous communication, active negotiation, and mutual understanding. Enthusiastic and informed consent is recognized as a fundamental element in promoting trust, and respecting the boundaries of all parties involved. I take pride in these efforts, though I naively believed that we had learned from the mistakes of others. We created guidelines for our space, focusing on simple things like vocabulary and defining our values, with sex positivity, acceptance and consent being core principles.

However, facing the reality of harm within our own community filled me with apprehension. This specific case involved a person - Lux* engaging in self-pleasure in the playroom. Lux had failed to discuss consent with other participating parties, and this that made people uncomfortable. I had never considered boundaries around self-pleasuring. It was a moment of harsh realisation, and I couldn't help but feel remorseful for not having acknowledged it earlier.

During one of our gatherings, the group collectively decided that this issue needed to be addressed. The process became complex and protracted, with many voices trying to plan, so only a few people were asked to address it, myself included. We wished to approach this openly, to engage in a discussion about how we could improve. Part of me believed that the issue may have arisen because certain boundaries for play

**Please note that all names have been changed to protect the identities of those involved*

spaces were not clearly defined, which led a small fraction of participants to wrongly assume that anything goes in a sex-positive space. This misconception is not uncommon.

I was nervous and quite wary about the possible implications. I worried that my friend would face severe consequences, perhaps even “cancellation” – being banned from community gatherings and events. I decided to invite not only those directly affected by the incident but also other event hosts to engage in a discussion about what we, as hosts, could learn from this particular incident and how to put these learnings into practice. That day we updated the guidelines, defined self-pleasure as an act that still needs negotiations and consent and agreed that moving forward we would define if the play room was suitable for self-pleasure or not. Then we discussed how we would address the situation we had on our hands. Morgan*, a fellow group member, would be helping Lux

to take in information and be supported emotionally. Robin* would be representing all those affected, passing on the minutes and discussing future actions.

When the long-awaited conversation finally took place, two chosen individuals facilitated the talk with Lux and detailed minutes were taken. Lux appeared anxious about the discussion. Initially, they seemed confused and resistant, but Morgan helped them understand how their actions had affected people around them and that helped Lux to see how they unintentionally became someone they disliked themselves. After the meeting, Robin reported that they believed Lux had grasped the impact of their actions, expressed regret and displayed a genuine desire for personal growth. Consequently, Lux decided to take some time away from events to reflect on their actions.

Problem solved! Or so we thought. We collected stories, made a plan, addressed the

issue and it seemed to have had a positive result.

I wish I could tell you that there is a simple formula to resolve conflicts and address harm within a community. It was my own hope for such a formula that led me to discover transformative justice and attempt to adapt it.

Lux took accountability for their actions, apologised for what occurred and although they decided to take time to reflect, they were still welcome at community and play events. So it appeared that recognition of the issue and apology would be restorative.

However, one of the people affected still felt hurt and violated, and decided to call Lux out on social media and exposing the mistakes

they were trying to atone for - this led to them leaving the community altogether. Everyone has their own path to healing, which should be respected. While the general sentiment was that Lux would be welcomed back, for some others, it takes time and new experiences to bring about change in how we respond to harm. There needs to be a recognition that when harm happens between individuals in a marginalised community, the whole community is affected, and on a personal note - I wish people shared their mistakes more often.

Consent violations, crossing boundaries and harm happens more frequently than people register or talk about. Knowing that many around us had to overcome their biases or outgrow their upbringing to be a well-adjusted “safe” person to play with or date, could help a community grow more. Grow better. Learning shouldn't be tied to shame.

Looking back, it is clear that we never defined how the process of accountability

would unfold or how a person could reintegrate back into the community. However, every situation is subjective, contextual, and presents its own unique challenges. We have encountered cases where past consent violations were brought to the forefront, false accusations were made, instances of unprotected sex arose, and patterns of behaviour required addressing, with some individuals refusing to take responsibility (the only case I know of where a

person faced cancellation - people stopped attending their events and banned them from other events, their lack of accountability was shared through the community and passed on to all relevant spaces). What I can tell you is that for any approach to work, there must be a genuine desire to learn, grow, and improve collectively. Furthermore, immense patience is necessary—a lot of it.

On reflection - first and foremost, we must accept that harm occurs. When harm occurs, it is crucial to recognize the reality of the suffering experienced. You should swiftly determine whether the harm is an isolated incident or part of a pattern of behaviour. Designating representatives and/or allowing individuals involved to select their own representatives can establish two communication pods that work towards resolving the situation.

crucial, but celebrating successful resolutions is equally important. Unfortunately not all situations have a resolution but each reflection makes the next situation so much easier to deal with. No matter what the outcome of the situation, it is usually emotionally and morally taxing and it is useful to have a “housekeeping” day where you can hug it out, cry, mourn losses, support those that need it and reflect on what has been learned and what we could do better.

You should facilitate an environment where people can truly hear each other’s experiences and collaboratively decide how they want the issue resolved (in person, online or through representatives). Defining a path of accountability—what it entails, the necessary steps, and the timeline—is essential. Creating a timeline for accountability check-ins, where progress is assessed and emotions are acknowledged, can aid in the process.

If the resolution is not effective, acceptance is

Kima is a photographer and dedicated intimacy coordinator. Beyond her artistic pursuits, she has actively nurtured local queer and kink communities, fueling her passion for community building, ethical non-monogamy, transformative justice, trauma healing, and intimate negotiations. Her work reflects a deep commitment to fostering understanding and connection among diverse individuals.



Richa OkhDougall

LIMBO

my posh telephone voice sounds like

Good afternoon pharmacy, Louise speaking how may I service you? Have you been Bad?

I really can't help it, truly.

I want to burn the white top like clinical waste It's how they see me and it's how I feel.

SimvastatinAspirinDiazepamTemazepamBendroflumethiazideBuprenorphineQuetiapineTramadolMethotrexateRami-prilPropranololAtenololAmlodipineLithiumcarbonateMethadoneOxycontinParacetamolMetforminCarbamazepineIbuprofen-Sildenafil.

Boxes and boxes and boxes and boxes. I'm awful at math in general but fucking hell, I am a GRAND GODDAM MASTER of the twenty-eight times table.

I want them out of my eyes and out of my head because they're overdosing my reason and my love and I'm choking on my passion and my payslip trying to find

space

for them both and then I cry and I laugh and I sleep and I get up and do it all again again again

I don't have enough fingers to count the number of times I've been told that I'm the reason you'll die because

Because

Because

I take you all home. How sad is that?

So yes, I want to burn my clinical waste and holler a big FUCK YOU to Captain Pharma because I make no fucking difference. My country has the highest rate of drug related deaths in Eurpoe, whilst the suicide rate is at a five-year high, whilst we continue to sell opioids over the counter because

The patient's wellness is more important than ever, it's

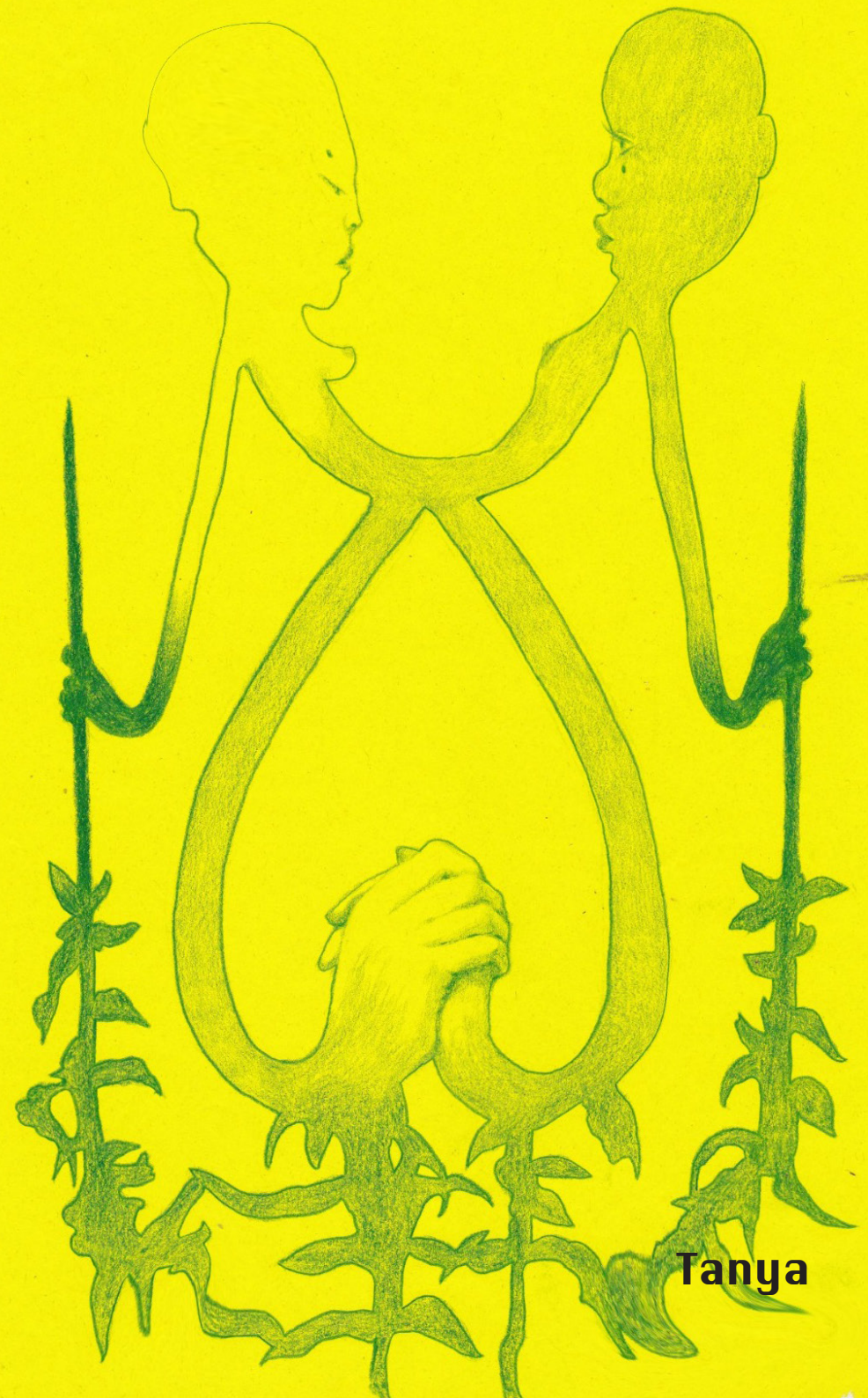
Just **not as important** as three hundred million in the bank.

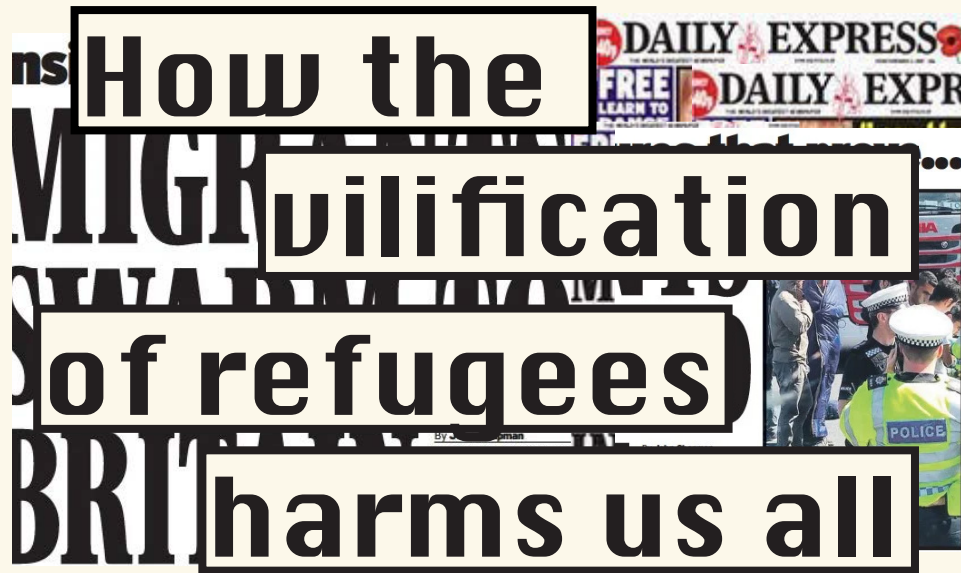
For more sexy conversation please enter your credit card details.

Spank

In the playground playing
kiss, cuddle or torture we
always chose torture like
a class of 9-year-old Subs
may explain why
I enjoy having my hair pulled
and my arse skelped –
perhaps, maybe, or,
we were subconsciously preparing
to live inside a system that wants
to keep collars blue/
white flags raised.

Louise Holland is a Scottish poet. She is a recent graduate of the MLitt creative writing course from the University of Glasgow. Lou's work has appeared in Skirting Around, Obscure Quarterly, Grim & Gilded and All Becomes Art Pt.2, an anthology celebrating the works of artist Joan Eardley. Lou lives in Glasgow and is a shameless nerd. Her favourite ice cream is mint choc chip.





How the vilification of refugees in the UK harms us all

**“Illegal migrants”
“Illegal refugees”
“Illegal asylum seekers”**

This is the language of not only the UK’s bigoted press but also what our politicians tell us. They work in a symbiotic relationship that presents a misinformed, racist understanding of asylum-seeking.

The misleading rhetoric around refugees is politically pragmatic in preventing any of us from ever fully understanding migration laws. This allows politicians to create

a discriminatory narrative around refugees and magnify an issue that does not exist. The UK is ranked only ninth globally for UNHCR (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees) resettlements. Suella Braverman states the UK asylum system is ‘overwhelmed’ but misses out that Germany received twice as many asylum applications last year. France, Spain and Austria all take in far more people than the UK. This current attitude of the Home Office undermines over 50 years of international law and understanding of the history of

war, forced displacement and persecution. The vilification of refugees harms us all.

Braverman, current Home Secretary, has put forward and passed an ‘Illegal Migration Act’ to ‘stop the boats’ and target vulnerable refugees who are crossing the channel to seek asylum. However, seeking asylum is NOT illegal in the UK. This bill will detain and deport those caught crossing the channel while placing a cap on how many refugees will be offered asylum. This Act implements an asylum ban that has wider negative implications on the process of seeking asylum. Braverman claims there are enough safe and legal routes that ‘abusing’ the system through crossing the channel is unnecessary. As former Attorney General, she is very aware of international law, but how true are her claims?

Currently, the safe and legal routes for asylum seekers are resettlement schemes claimed when a refugee has reached the UK. These are usually responses to specific conflicts, which in nature will

leave others behind if there is not enough international attention drawn to it. For example, there is the Ukraine Sponsorship Scheme. There is also the Syrian Resettlement Scheme and Afghan Citizen Resettlements Scheme. There are limitations in this process; it restricts access based on origin country and divides who deserves asylum. It also depends on the refugee being in the UK before applying, and under international law, there is no crime in making the difficult journey across the Channel. These resettlement schemes do not encapsulate the reality that anyone from any country can end up fleeing persecution or disaster. In June 2022, only 1,622 refugees were resettled in the UK against the backdrop of 89.3 million forcibly displaced people.

Politicians keep telling you about ‘illegal’ immigration, ‘illegal’ refugees, the people on the boats who are crossing the channel ‘illegally’. This is a twisted reality of international and domestic laws around asylum-seeking. Claiming asylum is not illegal, and



neither is remaining in the UK while in the process of seeking asylum. The Illegal Migration Bill proposal is an abuse of the current legal system to

spread a bigoted agenda. The UK is actively attempting to violate human rights. Asylum seekers in the UK must be in the country to seek refuge

status, preceded on the 1951 Geneva Convention, which recognises the right of refugees fleeing persecution to benefit from rights and protections. Recent legislation from Conservatives Priti Patel and Suella Braverman attempts to criminalise entry based on specific routes and nationality. Crossing the channel via small boats, as there are no safer routes, has resulted in 38,000 people making this journey in October 2022 - 93% claimed asylum.

Language is a key issue in criminalising refugees. It changes our attitudes towards refugees and our understanding of key issues. When politicians put 'illegal' in front of something, they are weaponising their position of power against the public. The average person is not in tune with international human rights laws, we may criticise the government, but we trust its bodies to know more. The discussion around seeking asylum in the media and government perpetuates a narrative that vilifies those fleeing persecution and

disaster. The idea that there can be 'safe and legal' routes allows us to condemn those that take perceptively 'illegal' routes. This pushes the idea of there being the deserving and undeserving refugee, which is usually reflected in how much individuals understand a conflict.

The response to the Russian invasion of Ukraine was met with resettlement schemes and £220 million spent on humanitarian assistance. This response exists while politicians vilify seeking asylum and seek to make it more difficult. Arguably, the UK's emphasis on nationality-based resettlement schemes has adopted a segregated immigration policy. Sudan is in a current humanitarian crisis. An armed conflict between rival factions of the military government began in April. The crisis has left hundreds dead, and many are fleeing and displaced. It is an internal war. Few have been evacuated, and the Home Office are not responding with any safe and legal routes for Sudanese refugees to claim asylum in

the UK; a country that Britain occupied for 56 years.

In contrast, 300,000 visas have been issued for Ukrainians to flee. Why is this not happening for Sudan? Immigration experts are concluding that race is a factor in why there have been such contrasting approaches by the UK Home Office. Braverman continues to refuse to create 'safe and legal' routes for Sudanese refugees while claiming these routes exist.

Contrastingly, many of the resettlement schemes, such as the Afghan Resettlement scheme, have been criticised for being dysfunctional. It is unfair to make safety for refugees conditional based on ethnicity or nationality. The Conservative Government remains committed to vilifying asylum seekers out of a fabricated morality that there are 'too many' while ignoring that there are human rights that extend to everyone. This is not to be debated, everyone is equal in front of the law, and one group is not more deserving than the

other. Fizza Qureshi, chief executive of Migrants' Rights Network, stated, 'it is clear any compassion for black and brown refugees have truly disappeared'. All refugees deserve the same treatment.

The Illegal Migration Bill proposes denying protection to asylum seekers in need of protection and denying them the opportunity to put forward their case if they have arrived here via small boat. This is a clear breach of the Refugee Convention and undermines the humanitarian tradition Britain committed to after World War Two. The United Kingdom played an active role in providing support for refugees as the nature of the second world war showed that anyone can become displaced. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees was created as a direct response to the tragedies of the second world war. The UK also played a key role in drafting the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which has been significant for the UK's post-war legacy. The recent immigration policies

proposed by this government undermine and negate the UK's contributions to establishing safety and security for refugees.

It is a political move to think we are being 'taken advantage of' as a country, used to win votes and turn a non-issue into one to fight and find a right-wing solution to. Are we happy to be non-responsive to politicians that misrepresent and manipulate the public? And say claiming asylum is 'illegal'?

The vilification of refugees by our politicians and media does a disservice to the British public's ability to understand and empathise with displacement. The Conservative government is not one to trust, but this

is not something new. After accepting Jewish displaced refugees post-1940, there were a rise in antisemitism and the need to protect 'British Blood'. With hindsight, we can say that accepting refugees from Germany and Austria fleeing from fascism post-1940 was the right, moral decision. And that these people ended up in a horrific circumstance out of their control and deserved to be protected and offered refuge. But why do we continue to negate the moral and economic benefits of immigration and protecting refugees in the present? How can the UK exist in this capacity despite its historical engagement with refugees? With imperialism, exploitation, and occupation, the global imbalance between countries is something that has been created but also needs to be accepted. There are 'rich', 'developed' countries that should bear the responsibility – however, it is important to note that the countries that accept the most refugees tend to be in the 'global South'. History shows there is a humanitarian and moral responsibility to

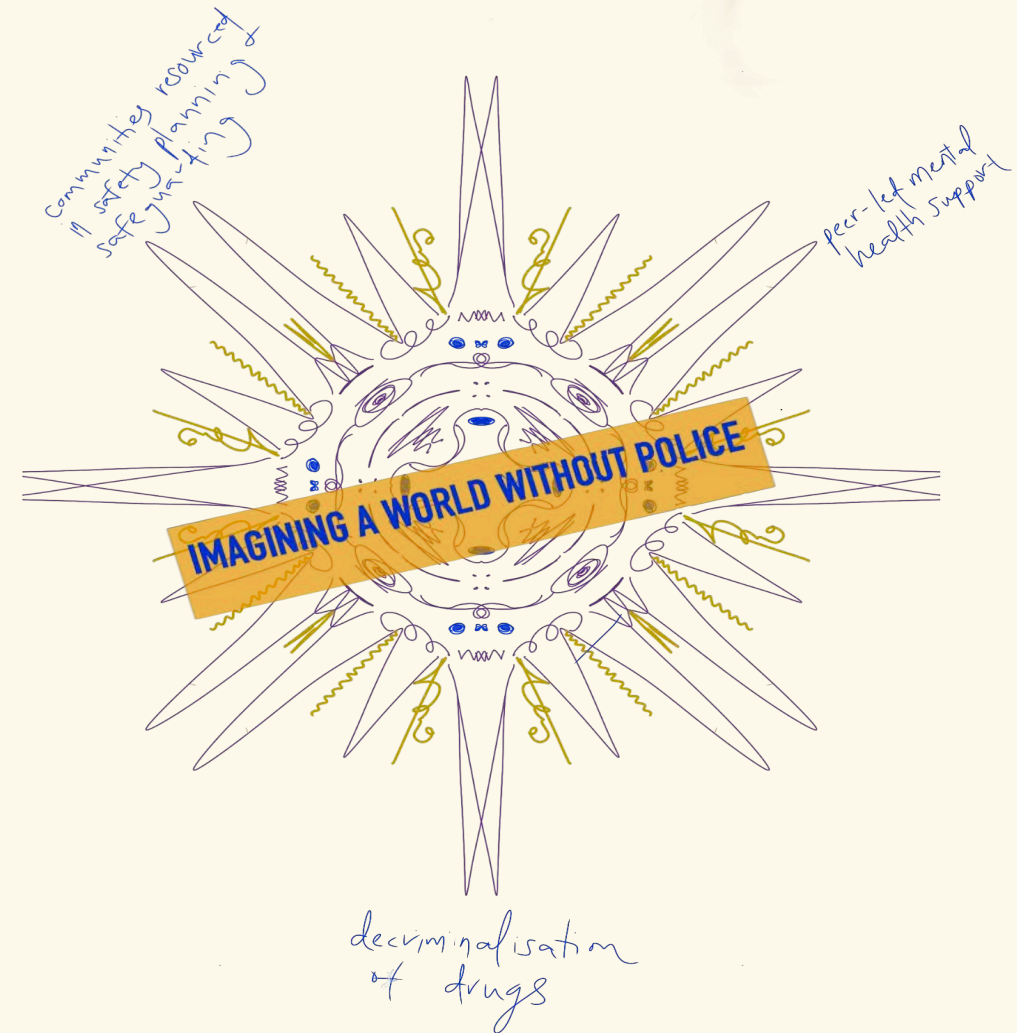
be accepting and open to refugees who are not in control of their realities. But despite this saviour complex being taught in school in terms of fascist Europe in the 1940s, current immigration policies show who the UK chooses to accept and who they choose to vilify. The intersection of race in this analysis of politics cannot be ignored.

The UK's current immigration policies and narrative are deeply concerning and are parallel to the lack of action in domestic policies. A government that will vilify the most vulnerable in society is not fit to govern, whether you are a refugee or not. To discard those in need implicates us in other attitudes that will affect us all – and this is evident with the recent government developments in limiting the right to strike. In the midst of a cost-of-living crisis, the government is trying to redefine who you should focus your discontentment on. To draw attention away from themselves, instead, they scapegoat those asking to be paid what they are

worth and demonise asylum seekers; to buy themselves more time and for you to not reflect on their political record to remember who got us into this mess. Authoritarian and fascist tropes never only harm one group. It is a slow progression of scapegoating and bigotry attitudes that will, in time, affect us all. These are symptoms of a bigger issue in the UK, the disdain for human rights, an obsession with national security, and a corrupt mass media – the symptoms of fascism.

Ruweyda is a History student at Edinburgh University. A regular contributor to The Student, a student-led newspaper, she writes about UK politics, foreign policy and sustainability. Ruweyda's dedication to writing speaks to underrepresented perspectives on the news, particularly in reporting on immigration policy. She hopes to create change and open dialogue, centring the most marginalised in her writing and reporting.

We find our answers together. Pass this page to a friend, and then another, what does a world without prisons and police need?





Lakshmi Ajay, Editor, Designer



Jj Fadaka, Editor, Designer



Richa OkhDougall, Contributor, Artist



Renite Manisha, Contributor

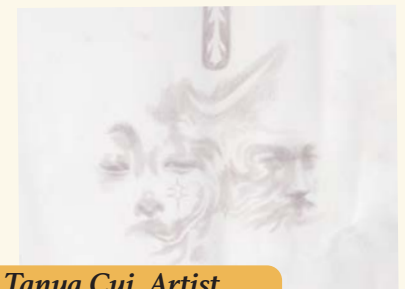
Meet the Contributors



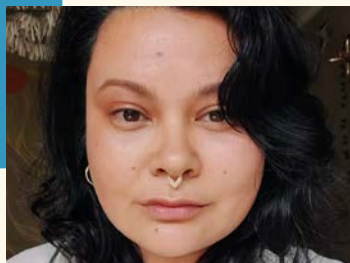
Zaki El-Slahi, Contributor



Aidan Martin (and Mark Deans), Contributor



Tanya Cui, Artist



Kima, Contributor



Louise Holland, Editor, Contributor

Josie Tohill, Contributor



Ruweyda Ahmed, Contributor, Artist



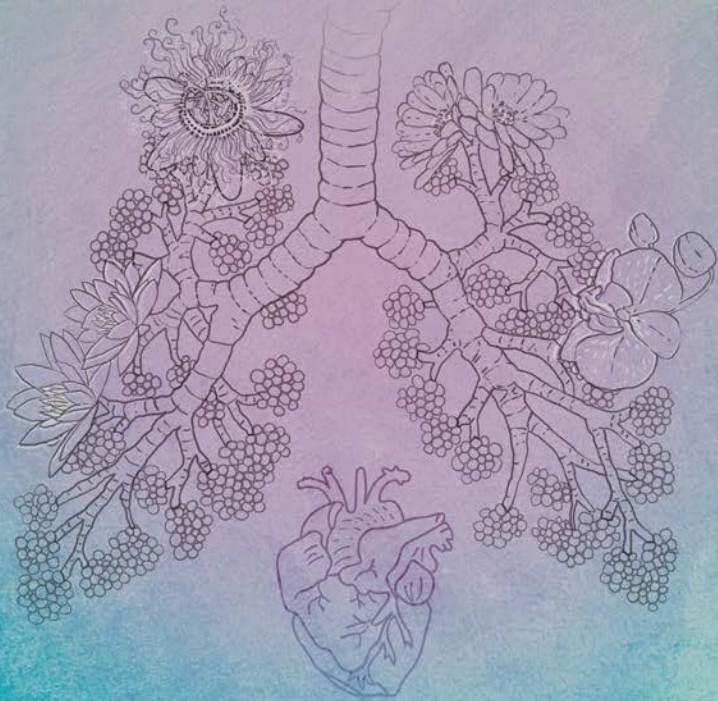
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Giusi Palomba, Contributor

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The Spit It Out community is all about coming together and sharing creative ways to heal and support our mental health, whether through arts, performance, activism, nature, or self-exploration.

Community and learning spaces make a huge change to the way we view and support ourselves and others. We wanted to shatter the prejudices that once you have experienced trauma, you are broken and are no longer welcome in everyday society. We imagine a day where sharing our difficult experiences will become easier, allowing us to help each other heal.

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