



NO MORE #4 SILENCE

Uncensored personal accounts of race and inequality
from students and staff at **UWE** Bristol.

CONTENTS

- (04) *White Black*
- (06) *Conversations*
- (10) *A Brown Girl Speaks*
- (12) *Need to do better*
- (15) *And then the discomfort*
- (16) *Calm Down*
- (18) *Pay it no mind*
- (24) *Equal Shades*
- (26) *Oops I didn't realise*



WHITE BLACK

White, black, white, black
I look around...

White, black, white, black
Why am I seeing a difference?

White, black, white, black
Should I see a difference?

White, black, white, black
Are we not all the same?

White, black, white, black
Those media stories make me think we are not!

White, black, white, black
We have experienced different things I suppose!

No More Silence #4

White, black, white, black
But why?

White, black, white, black
Why does this happen?

White, black, white, black
Help me be a change!

White, black, white, black
They are my friends! My colleagues! My family!

White, black, white, black
This needs to stop!

White, black, white, black
NOW!



CONVERSATIONS

by Yarden Woolf

No More Silence #4



When you look at me,
what is it that you see
A reflection that looks back,
or do you see the true me
You might just see an outer shell,
a costume, a disguise
But have you ever tried to look
much deeper inside

It's not all black and white,
you know, wise people like to say
Yet we all judge others as
they pass us every day
We tag each other as this or that,
not knowing what's behind
That façade that we portray,
whether harsh or kind

I have been there too and judged
and drowned in misinterpretation
But now I try and make amends,
change my future direction
I hope the next time that you look at
me you will take a little longer
To observe and watch, and not
just see, surely, we will both be stronger



**NO
MORE**

SILENCE!

A BROWN GIRL SPEAKS

by Chathushka Kiriella

My story doesn't have a sad part. Perhaps I was lucky enough to avoid the sting of racism, or maybe it was my choice to leave when the vibe didn't align with me. I choose to focus on the vibrant colours of my life and let the greys fade into the background. This might not be your way, but it is mine.

I was welcomed by many and sometimes, I wasn't. I've sat in meetings where I was embraced and included, and others where not a single eye met mine. I've walked into spaces where the walls felt too white and others where they didn't, but I never wanted to step back just because I am brown. This might not be your way, but it is mine.

Sometimes, I wasn't recognized. I wasn't given the credit I deserved. But I stayed silent and let my work shine. In the places where I was overlooked, I rose and became a star. This might not be your way, but it is mine.

At times, I was loud and openly present. At other times, I chose to be quiet and observe. I've embraced both sides of myself. This might not be your way, but it is mine.



WE ARE

**creative
reverse
kind
disruptors
open-minded
allies
visionaries
curious
ambitious
present**

Let's celebrate
Need to do better.

...makes us different. Together, we
are UWE Bristol. So, get involved.
Play your part. Make your mark.

NEED TO BE BETTER

I saw this poster on my first day at UWE. I remember taking selfies next to it, full of excitement. Even though I knew better, I convinced myself I had arrived in some kind of utopia. That's on me.

A year on and every time I see it, it hurts. It's a symbol of my naivety. The extent of the reality, though, is far worse. This is my representation of those feelings.



AND THEN THE DISCOMFORT

by Sorrel Kavanagh

We say that we're your allies
Changing actions to graphs,
percentages that sanitise
They show us our inertia
Because it's easier not to change
We accept the unacceptable
Quoting pressure, or staffing,
or "he's nice though"
We don't shoulder the burden
It's easier not to change
We say we're making progress
Putting posters in corridors,
sharing them on socials
But underneath the surface
It's easier not to change
We see problems that we don't address
Because we confuse our discomfort for distress
When you refuse to see your privilege
It's easier not to change

CALM DOWN

by A1 Vanguard

Calm down
They told me to
calm down Why
should I calm down

When I have so many
Unanswered questions,
unfinished conversations
and so many sacrifices

Has your world ever been turned
upside down Thought I was innocent but
I'm just a belligerent black boy

Have you ever thought
you were the man only to
realise your a fantasy
You see when your reality unfolds
and folds onto you like the way the
way these four walls gets smaller
and smaller as tight as a coffin

Moving closer at alarming rates
with a pace of clarity. These opaque
structures become transparent and
all I see are jail cells decorated With
Urban, gangster, angry, black, man
Layered psychotically

But all you can say is calm
down Every time you say calm
down these floats that kept me
afloat ignite eagerly aggressively

Spark

We are all only given a little spark
of madness You mustn't lose it

Betrayal

Surviving meant actions
were based on necessity
But they judged it on the
darkest complexity
Truth is but a distillation of error
There are truths but no truths
So don't betray yourself to
portray yourself
Your reality is your own spectrum

PAY IT NO MIND

by Dan Hiscox



There is a woman in New York City with flowers in her hair, crowning her a bodhisattva and the patron saint of drag queens. Her smile opens like a rose onto the sidewalks of Sheridan Square and Christopher Street. "POWER TO THE PEOPLE" reads the sign in her hand. In the other, her cigarette burns away while she asks for loose change. You'll often see her bouncing around the piers and The Village dressed in colourful plastic, lamé and hoop earrings. The woman's name is Marsha, and she lives in a sub-culture within a sub-culture as a transgender drag queen and a person of colour. Despite adversity, she blossoms, existing authentically so young gay men may one day sit in liberated glory.

"No pride for some of us,
without liberation for us all"

Nine police officers entered the bar and arrested several employees and patrons for wearing more than three pieces of 'Gender-inappropriate' clothing. "I GOT MY CIVIL RIGHTS" shouted Marsha, and threw a shot-glass, shattering the mirror in the Stonewall Inn. It was 1969 and Gay people were being scheduled for non-existence - getting sectioned, arrested or fired from their jobs. Marsha's shot glass reverberated around the U.S, and called to arms members of the 'Gay Liberation Front' and the queer street-kids of NYC. Disowned runaways denied education - with the least to lose. Marsha. P. Johnson along with activists Jackie Harmona and Zazu Nova, were the first to resist law enforcement. Their defiance sparked a series of riots by the Gay residents of Greenwich Village against the New York City police department. The Stonewall uprising incited an explosion in Gay movement organisation and political activism. Campaigns against homophobia and government-sponsored prosecution began to rise across the world. Today, Pride month is held in June to commemorate the Stonewall riots. While Pride parades honour the activism marches started in the 60s by the 'Gay Liberation Front', of which Marsha. P. Johnston became a prominent figure.

**“I was no one, nobody, from Nowheresville
until I became a Drag Queen”**

Nowheresville was in fact Elizabeth, New Jersey. Marsha was born there in 1945, sixteen years before homosexuality was legalised, at a time when the Jim Crow laws were still in place and marginalising people of colour across America. Marsha was the fifth of seven children, assigned male at birth; born into a family of practicing Christians. At age five, Marsha tip-toed into her mother's heels, raiding her wardrobe to adorn herself in Sunday-dresses far too big for her. Dressing up ceased after she was discouraged by her family and sexually assaulted by a thirteen-year-old boy. At sixteen, Marsha married Jesus. Her relationship with God continued throughout her life - questioned but never lost - fashioning the basis of her altruistic moral compass. When Marsha graduated high school in 1963, aged eighteen, she swapped New Jersey for New York City, with a carrier bag of clothes and \$15 to her name. A name that she would change to Marsha. P. Johnson once she found her place in the Village - one of the only pockets of the world that would accept her. The “P” stood for “PAY IT NO MIND”; reflecting her views on gender non-conformity, and the philosophy of her incandescent life.

Once in New York, Marsha became a fully-fledged drag queen, sporting dresses from the Salvation Army and make-up fished from charity-shop bins. At the time, it was a criminal offence for men to have worn either. Throughout the 60's, she maintained a fraught relationship with her family. Unsupported, homeless and unemployed, Marsha turned to sex work, hustling at the Dixie Hotel, where she was regularly abused by clients and often arrested for homosexual activity. When she wasn't spending the night in jail, Marsha would sleep in the movie theatres on 42nd street, and beneath the stalls in the Flower district, where vendors gifted her lilies to put into her hair. In 1963, Marsha struck up a friendship with Sylvia Rey Rivera, A seventeen-year-old drag artist and trans-rights activist. Sylvia was an early member of the Gay Liberation Front and a vibrant and indelible figure of Greenwich Village. After the Stonewall Riots in 1969, Marsha and Sylvia co-founded STAR - The Street Transvestite Activist Revolutionaries. In 1971, with the little money they had managed to save between them, Marsha and Sylvia founded STAR House. An apartment building in the slums of New York dedicated to assisting Transgender youth off of the streets. Out of everything she did, Marsha would say she was most proud of STAR House; and of cultivating a safe space she would have needed when she first arrived in New York.



By the mid 70's, Marsha. P. Johnson had become a prominent figure in New York's gay subculture and a permanent feature of the Village. She had also started performing as part of the "Hot Peaches", a drag theatre company that produced everything from spoken word poetry to full musical productions. She became something of a celebrity to the Gay communities throughout America. Her poems 'Soul' and 'Lavender balloon' her most famous pieces of spoken word. In 1975, pop-artist Andy Warhol, was captivated by Marsha's spirit and photographed her for his 'Ladies and Gentlemen' series, which is still on display at the Metropolitan Museum of Art. By the end of the 70's, Marsha vhad become adored and respected by Gay communities across the world, referred to as Saint Marsha - good, generous, simple and pure, with no agenda to her friendliness. In 1980, she was invited to ride the lead car at the 10th Pride Parade in history, out of recognition for the pivotal role Marsha played in uplifting the LGBTQIA+ community.

"They call me a legend in my own time,
because there are so many queens gone"

July 6th 1992, Marsha. P. Johnson's body was pulled from the Hudson River, and her death ruled a suicide. The people closest to Marsha believed she wouldn't have taken her own life. Angered by the lack of coverage surrounding her tragic death, and desperate for justice, Marsha's friends and members of the gay liberation front fought against the NYC judiciary's ruling. In 2002, Marsha death was reclassified as a drowning from undetermined causes. To this day, the LGBTIA+ community still emphatically believe that Marsha was murdered. 1992 was the highest record for homophobia-fuelled hate crimes, the same year Marsha. P. Johnson's body was dragged from the Hudson.

"History isn't something
you look back at and say
it was inevitable, it
happens because people
make decisions that are
sometimes very impulsive
and of the moment,
but those moments are
cumulative realities"



Theres a statue in New York City of a woman with flowers in her hair. Her chrome smile perpetually engraved in bronze. "Marsha 'Pay It No Mind' Johnson" reads the plaque on the plinth. Below that "Lover of poetry, flowers, space, and the colour purple". LGBTQIA+ People from around the world come to visit Marsha's statue. A reminder of how privileged they are to love who they love, liberated and protected by the rights that she fought for, tolerated and accepted by those who choose to pay it no mind.

EQUAL SHADES

by Kolawole Samuel Olure

No More Silence #4

Look around, see the lines,
Drawn by race and skin, old as time.
Stories deep within, whispered loud,
In busy streets and classroom crowds.

In offices where ambitions meet,
Race and skin speak before we greet.
Promises of fairness at a glance
yet looks often decide our chance.

But in our books and lessons shared,
A brighter hope is quietly prepared.
Education, clear and true,
Teaches us to view anew.

It shows we're alike, beneath the skin,
Beyond the race, from within.
Schools and workplaces, side by side,
Help us heal, with arms open wide.

Let's build a place, let's make a start,
Where race and skin don't set us apart.
Fairness in all we do and see,
In how we learn, in how we'll be.

No more whispers, no more pretence,
In unity, our hearts commence.
For a world that's truly free, Let's
start with you, let's start with me.

If you want to make the world a better
place, Look in the mirror, see your
face. The change starts here, with you,
with me, Together, we can set us free.



OOPS!

I DIDN'T REALISE...



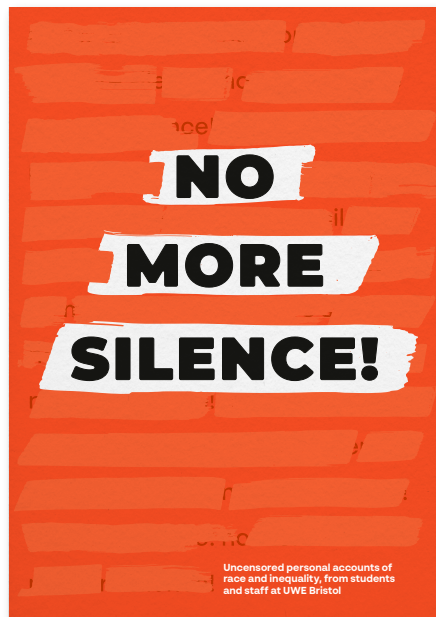
the podcast

**OOPS!
I DIDN'T
REALISE...**



Over the years, No More Silence has provided a platform for students and staff to share their experiences and thoughts on issues related to race and racism. Explore past editions and continue the conversation.

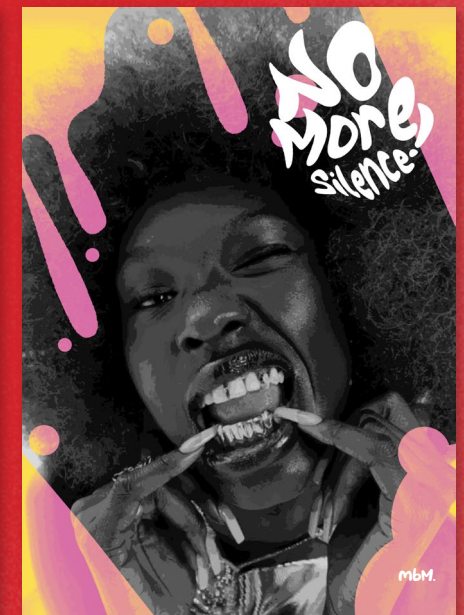
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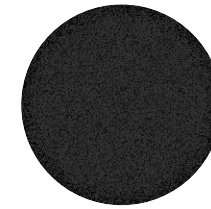


Issue 03





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