



New College Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Newsletter

We are delighted to share our first newsletter on EDI-related issues at New College and in the City of Edinburgh more broadly. The purpose of this newsletter is to strengthen communication between the EDI Committee and the NC student body, offering a brief overview of the activities held at the end of each semester, highlighting some upcoming events, and providing contacts and resources for students to access support. There are also a number of book recommendations, if you would like to learn more about social justice topics.

At the end of this newsletter we introduce the members of the EDI committee. If you see any of us in the hallways, please don't hesitate to say hi and give us a high five – we're a friendly group and always enjoy a casual chat!

This semester, we are pleased to welcome the new PG sub-committee, which represents PG students on the broader EDI committee. This PG sub-committee, comprised of students from a diverse range of ethnic, gender, and class backgrounds, was formed in February.

The PG sub-committee is keen to work with marginalised groups and individuals, as well as their allies, to make NC an inclusive and supportive space for all. Indeed, this very newsletter is one of the PG students' initiatives, and special thanks go to committee member Lauren Davies for compiling this edition.

If you have any questions about the newsletter, feel free to write to Lauren at l.davies-15@sms.ed.ac.uk. If you have any EDI questions or concerns in general, please don't hesitate to contact the EDI Director – Dr Shadaab Rahemtulla – at s.rahemtulla@ed.ac.uk.

LGBTQ+, NEW COLLEGE PRIDE



PAST EVENTS

Trans Awareness Workshop for Staff and Tutors, Feb 25 2022

In February, Staff and Tutors were invited to an online Trans Awareness Workshop run by James Morton of the Equality Network. This workshop covered definitions, concerns of the Trans community, hate crimes, Laws including the Equality Act and changes to identification, services available, microaggressions, and inclusion.

Talk by Fr Jarel Robinson-Brown, Apr 1 2022

On April 1st, New College Pride hosted a talk by Fr Jarel Robinson-Brown, who is a Church of England clergyman and the author of "Black, Gay, British, Christian, Queer: The Church and the Famine of Grace". This event was well-attended by the New College Community and members of the public and discussed the realities of being queer within the Christian Church. Fr Jarel likewise addressed the Church's historical and current buttressing of homophobia and transphobia and equally positioned it within a racially minoritised context. A recording of the talk can be watched [here](#).

UPCOMING EVENTS

June 2022 marks Pride Month in the UK, and Edinburgh will be celebrating the city Pride on June 24th-26th. New College Pride will be sending a contingent to Pride. A global email has been sent to the NC staff and student list with confirmed details.

THIS TERM'S BOOK RECOMMENDATIONS

"Black, Gay, British, Christian, Queer: The Church and the Famine of Grace" by Fr Jarel Robinson-Brown - an intersectional exploration of queer and racial identity within the context of the Christian church.

"Tell Me I'm Worthless" by Alison Rumfitt - a horror novel detailing the realities of a trans existence within a world defined by bigotry and fascism.

USEFUL CONTACTS AND RESOURCES

If you experience a hate crime, Stonewall Scotland provides a hate crime reporting guide [here](#).

New College Pride can be contacted at ncpride@ed.ac.uk with any queries or concerns, and to be added to their mailing list.

The Scottish Trans Network maintains a great list of contact points for LGBTQ+ issues which can be found [here](#).

[The Staff Pride Network](#) – PhD students are welcome to join, and they offer monthly [Rainbow Office Hours](#) which “provides a chance for staff and PhD students to make a connection with an LGBTQ+ staff member, PhD student or LGBTQ+ Ally at the University”

SOCIAL CLASS

UPCOMING EVENTS

The EDI Committee are currently planning two events on class and classism in Semester 1: a staff training session on Classism in the Classroom, just before Welcome Week and a broader student forum on class and classism during the semester.

An Evening with Darren McGarvey in Edinburgh, £5, June 14th, 18:00-19:00 at Waterstones, 128 Princes Street, EH2 4AD. A book talk by Orwell prize winning Darren McGarvey, discussing his new book, *"The Social Distance Between us"*. See more information [here](#).

THIS TERM'S BOOK RECOMMENDATIONS

"Natives: Race and Class in the Ruins of Empire" by Akala - speaks to the issues of race and class centred within the British empire, and the British denial of these realities.

USEFUL CONTACTS AND RESOURCES

[The Office for Diversity, Equity and Community Engagement](#) has compiled a useful set of resources on social class, with a focus on American social class.

DISABILITY

UPCOMING EVENTS

One Fringe event to look out for is 'Able(ish)', a performance detailing accessing disability support. More information can be found [here](#).

'Aaron Simmonds: Hot Wheels', at the Pleasance Courtyard, Bunker Three. A comic's take on life with disability. See more information [here](#).

THIS TERM'S BOOK RECOMMENDATIONS

"Disability Visibility: First-Person Stories from the Twenty-First Century" edited by Alice Wong - an anthology of works on the experience of disabled individuals, their identity, personhood and the tumultuous interaction between disability and politics.

"The Reason I Jump: The Inner Voice of a Thirteen-Year-Old Boy with Autism" by Naoki Higashida - an autobiography illuminating the lived experience of a 13-year-old non-verbal autistic individual.

USEFUL CONTACTS AND RESOURCES

The Student Disability Service at the University can be accessed [here](#).

[Disability Information Scotland](#) has a range of guides on topics related to disability, with ways in which to access support. They can also be reached on their hotline, 0300 323 9961, Monday-Friday, 10-4pm

MENTAL HEALTH

UPCOMING EVENTS

'Aye See', Pay as you can event, June 26th, 14:00-16:00 at Summerhall, EH9 1PL. This event is a screening of short documentaries with a focus on trauma, healing and mental health, followed by a Q&A. Screening and Q&A. See more information [here](#).

THIS TERM'S BOOK RECOMMENDATIONS

"*The Collected Schizophrenias*" by Esme Weijun Wang - a collection of essays relaying the experience of the author's schizoaffective disorder, providing insight into the frequently misunderstood condition.

"*The Colour of Madness: Mental Health and Race in Technicolour*" by Samara Linton and Rianna Walcott - captures mental health at the intersection of race and racism and explores this dynamic through the voices of people of colour.

USEFUL CONTACTS AND RESOURCES

[Breathing Space](#) is a free and confidential phone line for anybody experiencing low mood or depression in Scotland. The helpline number is 0800 83 85 87, Weekdays: Monday-Thursday 6pm to 2am, Weekend: Friday 6pm-Monday 6am.

[Samaritans](#) is a confidential listening service which can be accessed 24/7 on 116 123 or on email jo@samaritans.org

The University maintain a list of internal contacts which can be accessed [here](#) if you need support. The student counselling service can be accessed [here](#).

If you need urgent support, please call NHS 111 or 999.

RACE

PAST EVENTS

Decolonising the Curriculum: Student Perspectives, Feb 23 2022

On Wednesday 23 February, three students participated in a group discussion on what decolonising the curriculum means to them and how more diverse and critical education would benefit the School of Divinity. Nuam Hatzaw, a PhD student in World Christianity, gave an informative presentation of the various debates surrounding the topic of decolonising, before also giving examples of how this has informed her own work, which looks at Burmese women refugees in the diaspora. LJ Matthews, a PGT in Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations, gave an informative and personal discussion on how engaging with non-white authors has deeply enriched her own work. Finally, Laila Ghaffar, an UG student in Persian and Middle East Politics, spoke of the complexities of decolonising and the importance of moving beyond superficial or patronising forms of solidarity. The presentations were followed by a lively and interesting debate around various student experiences and perspectives on decolonising and the continued pervasiveness of whiteness in Western academic institutions, including New College. Students and staff both expressed hope that such discussions would continue and result in concrete change within the academy.

Talk by Fr Jarel Robinson-Brown, Apr 1 2022

Information about this event can be found in the LGBTQ+ section, above.

UPCOMING EVENTS

[RACE.ED](#) has compiled a list of their recorded events discussing race and decolonisation which can be found [here](#).

An event to look out for at the Fringe Festival is 'Isto é um Negro? (This is a Black?)', which investigates what is to be a black artist in Brazil today, and attempts to place and displace racism. More information can be found [here](#).

THIS TERM'S BOOK RECOMMENDATIONS

"*Why I'm No Longer Talking to White People About Race*" by Reni Eddo-Lodge - illuminates black history and the lived experience of people of colour in the UK through an intersectional perspective.

"*Minor Feelings: An Asian American Reckoning*" by Cathy Park Hong - a collection of essays about the Asian experience in America, and the Asian experience of racism and racialised identity.

"*The Wretched of the Earth*" by Frantz Fanon - critically explores colonialism and the psychological impact of colonisation.

USEFUL CONTACTS AND RESOURCES

[Stop Hate UK](#) and [Show Racism the Red Card](#) provide resources on racism in the UK and information on how to report hate crime.

INTERFAITH

PAST EVENTS

Roundtable Discussion on Religious Diversity in New College, Apr 7 2022

On 7 April, a roundtable discussion on religious diversity took place in the Rainy Hall, where students and teachers from non-Christian backgrounds were asked to share their experiences of being a religious minority in New College. Three speakers - Dr Hannah Holtschneider, Rupen Kalsi, and Sharaiz Chaudhry - coming from Jewish, Sikh, and Muslim backgrounds, respectively, presented on their experiences as minority individuals within New College, the University and Edinburgh as a whole.

Following these presentations, other students and staff shared their experiences and discussed ways in which New College could become a more welcoming space for religious minorities. The need to acknowledge and encourage diversity, as well as to challenge the School's Christian normativity, were expressed by several discussants, as well as the importance of solidarity and community.

Eid Potluck, 16 May 2022

On 16 May, the New College community came together to celebrate Eid al-Fitr, the Muslim festival that marks the end of the month of Ramadan, in which Muslims fast each day from sunrise to sunset. Students and staff from across the university, as well as their families, were invited to participate in a potluck by bringing a dish that represented their culture and come together to celebrate. We were also joined by Madinah Javed, a well-known female Qur'an reciter, who gave a beautiful recitation of some verses of the Qur'an related to fasting and the month of Ramadan, before giving a brief talk on the importance of Ramadan for her personally.

The event brought together people of many faiths and cultures, giving them an opportunity to celebrate one of the most important dates in the Muslim calendar. We hope and look forward to future events that will commemorate major festivals from various world religions, illustrating not only the diversity of the New College community, but society as a whole.

UPCOMING EVENTS

'European Islamophobia Report - the latest findings', Free event, 20th July, 16:00-17:30. Online event. Dr Farid Hafez presents the findings from the latest European Islamophobia Report (2021) for interfaith dialogue exploration and discussion. See more information [here](#).

THIS TERM'S BOOK RECOMMENDATIONS

"*The Islamophobia Industry: How the Right Manufactures Hatred of Muslims*" by Nathan Lean - uncovers the scare tactics, traces the sources of funding and exposes the ideologies that drive Islamophobia's lucrative propaganda machine in a disturbing account of the campaign to promote fear and hatred of Muslims in the United States and Europe.

"*What is Islamophobia? Racism, Social Movements and the State*" edited by Narzanin Massoumi, Tom Mills and David Miller - demonstrates that Islamophobia is not a product of abstract, or discursive, ideological processes, but of concrete social, political and cultural actions undertaken in the pursuit of certain interests.

"*Religious Hatred*" by Paul Hedges - focuses on antisemitism and Islamophobia in the global context, drawing on theories of prejudice, identity, and hatred to explain Islamophobia and antisemitism.

USEFUL CONTACTS AND RESOURCES

[Stop Hate UK](#) provides useful resources on religious hate crime and reporting hate crime.

MEET THE EDI COMMITTEE



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NEW COLLEGE PRIDE



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MEET THE STUDENT COMMITTEE MEMBERS

As previously mentioned, the Postgraduate Sub-Committee was appointed in February 2022, in order to represent a more diverse student voice within New College. We would like to introduce the PG Sub-Committee and UG Representative below - do feel free to reach out to us via email or talk to us if you see us around New College!



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