TIME AND TIME AGAIN

NATIONAL YOUTH TRENDS

A National Youth Trends Report on How Young People of Colour are Represented in the UK

TIME AND TIME AGAIN

[January 2021]

Partners:

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Birmingham City Council

@yonatantiruneh & @yonny.visuals

FOREWORD

"

I don't think there is such thing as a 'most important social issue'. Each issue is relative to each person - all are important and ALL need to be dealt with and be treated effectively and sustainably.

17 - Male - Newcastle

@fredasem

Nobody:

Absolutely no one at all:

2020:

- Kanye West runs for president of the United States
- SpaceX becomes first privately run company to launch humans into orbit in space
- Britain leaves the European Union (just about 2020)
- Trump leaves the White House (although that was touch and go for a bit)
- International pandemic takes over world
- Crisis in Yemen reaches breaking point
- Accusations of ethnic cleansing in China
- Largest strike the world has ever seen in India
- And on
- And on
- And on

2020 looked at times like the sixth season of Black Mirror dropping. The rate at which internet use rose has risen by record levels, wearing face-masks has become the norm in the UK (despite how unusual that may have looked in mid-2019), physical contact between people has become a luxury, and cash may have sung its final song long before curtain call.

Whilst it's not been everyone's experience, a huge number of people in the UK have lived 2020 much more digitally than ever before, with more frequent, more intsense exposure to digital content and more round the clock digital connection with other people. We've had to make things work, and the easiest answer has been creeping up on us quicker and quicker over the past decade: phones, laptops and smart TVs and their good pals Alexa, Cortana and Siri.

Whilst someone's hit the x2 button on the tech boom, someone else has had the finger eagerly poised over the social action accelerator. Even prior to 2020, we were beginning to understand the extent to which Gen Z are socially conscious in a way no other generation has been: awake to the multifaceted problems that the world faces, how they link together, and how it's difficult to take a stance on one without acknowledging the rest. It's meant that, by the end of 2020, 92.7% of the near 2000 16-25s we spoke to said they care about the problems the world is facing.

2020 has shed fresh light on issues which are by no means new: homelessness, strain on the NHS, the accessibility of information online (to name a few of many). The pandemic has added fuel to these fires, but along with it, it has ignited the global consciousness of society, no matter what side of the fence people sit on.

For all that 2020 has cranked the intensity level to 11, there is something missing, from the above description of our whirlwind year. For many people it hasn't been something that they've been talking about in the latter part of this year, but that they think about, discuss and experience everyday: the representation of People of Colour in the UK.

The killing of George Floyd in US police custody on 25th May 2020 saw the Black Lives Matter (BLM) movement re-enter 'mainstream' (white dominated) public affairs, news, business. Whilst for many these conversations have been ongoing long before 2020, since May, they have ranked among biggest topics of news and content of the latter half of the year. As it does each time it re-enters these media spaces, the campaign has engaged a broader and wider audience of people who may not have otherwise heard about the movement, or the ideas that it represents. But in 2020 something hit different.

In 2020, the Black Lives Matter movement instigated, and has been symptomatic, of a new way young people are addressing social issues. They've demanded that each of us, on an individual and institutional level, do more than jump on the bandwagon, wave the flag to look good, virtue signal.

COVID-19 COVID-19 COVID-19

> COVID-19 as it has affected EVERY social issue, either bringing more social injustices to light or creating more.
>
> *19 - Female - Kent*

> COVID-19, as it highlighted every existing bias, issue of marginalisation, and tool of inequality that we see in our world today. Those issues were already known and prevalent, but COVID highlighted it and amplified it even further.
>
> *19 - Male - Bedford*

COVID-19 COVID-19 COVID-19 COVID-19 COVID-19 COVID-19

> Covid-19 is important but a longer lasting and larger issue is the BLM movement and how it all but loses traction due to it no longer being "trendy"
>
> *19 - Female - Kent*

@claybanks

The Black Lives Matter movement has forced the UK, in the midst of a global pandemic, to stop, pause and assess one of the most pervasive, systemic issues we face: the representation of People of Colour in a white dominated society. Whilst BLM is specifically about the treatment of Black people - in the UK it has brought under the microscope something which, as stated, many people have been looking at and addressing day in, day out, for decades: how groups of people, based upon their personal heritages, are minoritised.

National Youth Trends has been, is, and always will be about platforming the voices of young people in the UK. This report is in response to the fact that much of the activism, campaigning, callout for greater representation for People of Colour in the UK, has come from Gen Z, regardless of their personal heritages. In conducting our research in September of 2020, we asked young people what was the most pressing social issue of 2020. Whilst 39% of young people identified covid, 40.1% of young people said racism and BLM.

The reason we're putting this research out is their spirit. Gen Z are refusing to let the conversation slip into the ether this time around. We want to further platform their campaigning, education, and pressure. It's Beatfreeks' duty to serve the voices of our future generations, so that we can continue to bridge the gap between their views and the brands, businesses and organisations who will serve their 'needs'. Doing so, together, we can start to build Institutions of the Future.

ANISA MORRIDADI

Founder & CEO Beatfreeks

ABOUT BEATFREEKS

BEATFREEKS is an engagement and insight agency with a growing community of young creatives.

We work with brands, governments and funders who see value in sharing power with young people.

Our model is simple: the more young people exercise their influence through their creativity, the more relevant institutions become and the more they can shape the world together.

www.beatfreeks.com
@Beatfreeks

NATIONAL YOUTH TRENDS

NATIONAL YOUTH TRENDS is Beatfreeks' channel for all things young people, youth voice and pop culture in the UK today. You'll find young people's thoughts on hot topics, some stone-cold memes, a truly undeniable statistics game, and a chance to benefit your organisation through free insights based on our research with thousands of young people.

The stats and stories you'll read are all collected as part of our UK-wide research and work. It's our mission to make institutions more relevant to everyone. The way we think that can happen is by organisations listening to, consulting with, then acting upon the voices and needs of young people.

By engaging with the findings and trends from this research, your business can directly respond to the needs to young people, stay relevant and start the journey of becoming an Institution of the Future.

www.beatfreeksyouthtrends.com

ABOUT BEATFREEKS

ABOUT NATIONAL YOUTH TRENDS

ABOUT DON'T SETTLE

DON'T SETTLE

History is a collection of stories. We want to make all stories visible. How? By changing who tells these stories.

DON'T SETTLE empowers 16-25 year old People of Colour in Birmingham and the Black Country to change the voice of heritage through the arts, research, and governance. The project carries out practices of codesign and co-production to give autonomy to the communities that we wish to represent, and platforms the voices of young People of Colour to unearth narratives in heritage spaces that are traditionally white dominated. Young People of Colour are centred as not only audience, but as the active change makers and thinkers guiding the project.

Don't Settle is a Beatfreeks project, funded by the National Lottery Heritage Fund, partnered with Birmingham City University, Birmingham Museums Trust, Chance Heritage Trust and Roundhouse Birmingham to make steps towards this change with us.

@sharan_dhanda

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INTRO DUCTION

In 2019 and through early 2020, the term BAME (Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic) was often used when discussing representation for people with diverse personal heritages. The latter half of 2020 has seen backlash against this use due the fact that it is homogenizing, white owned, soulless, and, crucially, lacks any sense of resonance with the people it is supposed to represent. The word 'BAME' therefore inherently epitomises the power dynamics and politics it should (in theory) be looking to dispel. 'People of Colour' is what we will use in this report, as the self-defined, people-owned antonym of the homogenizing, othering 'BAME'.

The above shift illustrates how fluidly language slips in and out of use. If one thing is to stay it is this adaptability, nuance and progression. As circumstances change, conversations progress and campaigns continue, different words and definitions will become more, and then less, relevant to how people and communities wish to be described. Institutions and media need to reflect this decision making, these shifts, back at the people they are intended to represent. In short, let People of Colour (and the infinite number of communities that the term represents) be the people and groups to decide how they are, and are not, represented.

@yonatantiruneh & @yonny.visuals
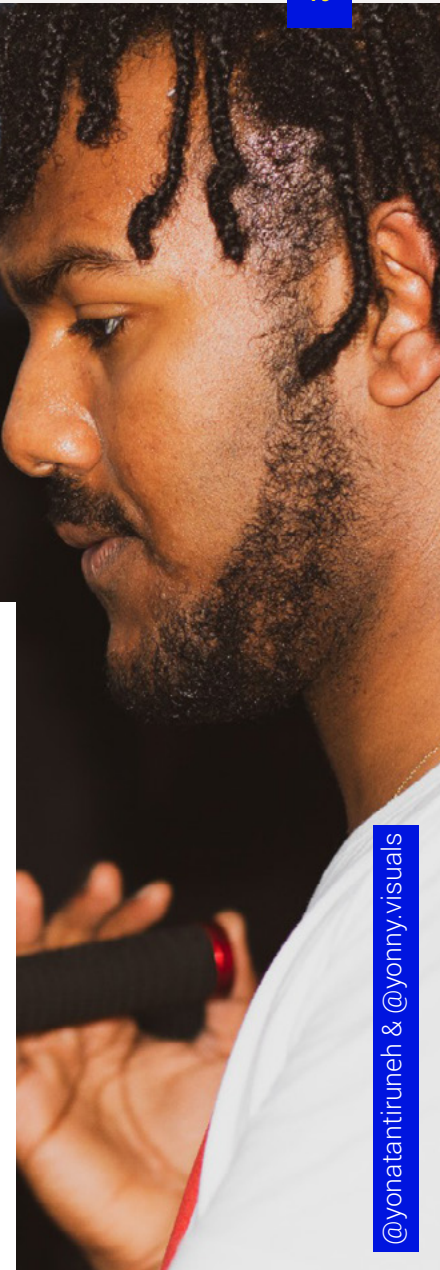
The shift from a group being represented by a word which was popularised by the structural framework of a white dominated society, to one which has organically manifested from the communities it represents, optimises the way we will discuss 'representation' (as a concept and in practise) in this report.

Representation - and how organisations, brands, businesses, governments, individuals and communities respond to it - should be directed by the people who you are attempting to represent. Therefore this report looks to platform how young People of Colour view representation: how they expect institutions to make change based upon the events of 2020; the extent to which they want brands to get involved in social action campaigns; how they want to see organisations contributing to conversations; what they expect from our leaders and each other.

The purpose is to help institutions start to achieve more authentic representation by pointing out what young People of Colour think of the good, the bad and the ugly approaches to it.

Whilst this report will principally focus on the experiences of People of Colour, we will also make reference to how the full sample of young people we spoke to answered. This is for two reasons:

1

So we can understand if being a Person of Colour affected how people answered.

2

Because when looking at our sample as a whole, an overwhelming number of young people - regardless of their personal heritages - pointed to BLM, issues of discrimination, and conversations on representation as the biggest social issue we currently face. It's a topic which a lot of Gen Z are passionate about, not solely young People of Colour.

@lucyy_scott_ & @nomncube

We draw People of Colour into one collective group. This is actively not an effort to homogenize their experience, but is rather an attempt to collectively understand the methods through which People of Colour are similarly (and differently) minoritised in the UK, by the actions of a white dominated society.

'Minoritised' (verb), playing on historic use of 'minority' (noun), aims to denote that a person or community feeling like a minority is a direct result of the actions of society. 'Minoritising' a person, group or community is an action, not a passive byproduct.

The fact that a group is a small, or the smallest, part of a population does not mean that they ought to feel excluded from, on the fringes of, or minoritised in, that population's collective culture.

Minoritised communities could refer to any group that has faced oppression, discrimination and prejudice from society, which has resulted in them feeling underrepresented, misrepresented, excluded and, in some cases, unwanted, within that society's collective culture.

This report - because of the context outlined above - focuses on how people are minoritised through the representation of their personal heritages. This is not to detract importance from the varying and intersectional ways other groups are minoritised in society. Rather, it is a reaction to the priorities young people highlighted to us, and a way in which we can offer ongoing support to the Black Lives Matter campaign and the movements inspired by it.

In the spirit of representing young People of Colour through their own terms, we have outlined the language we will use for this report. The following definitions have been drawn together based on ongoing learnings from Beatfreeks' Don't Settle project.

ANDREEA, SHARAN & EUGENE

Don't Settle Team

@chantes_view & @climbingtoglory

representation

/ˌrɛprɪzɛnˈteɪʃ(ə)n/

Representation has become a buzzword largely synonymous with tokenistic visual representation or the mere presence of a Person of Colour. Here we seek to highlight examples of this type of representation, and forge an idea of what young People of Colour expect from authentic representation. We will work on the basis that representation is not something you can 'achieve', but is something you embed and work with.

people of colour

/ˈpiːp(ə)l/ /ɒv,(ə)v/ /ˈkʌlə/

A phrase which flips the narrative from definitions that define this group by negation, or what they are not (ie. 'non-white') to actively centring what people are. Being 'of colour' inverts the power relationship by othering whiteness.

culture

/ˈkʌltʃə/

A way of navigating the world. Your personal culture is influenced by learned behaviour and your personal experiences. Individual's personal cultures fit together to form a loose idea of society's collective culture. The extent to which People of Colour don't see themselves in the UK's collective culture is a direct reflection of the extent to which they feel that their personal cultures are not authentically represented in the societal culture.

personal heritage

/ˈpəːs(ə)n(ə)l/ /ˈhɛrɪtɪdʒ/

Of course each person will interpret this individually. A varying mixture of references to ancestry, countries of origin, ethnicity, culture, faith: it allows individuals to self-define what makes up their heritage.

HOW WE GOT HERE

This report is a collaboration between National Youth Trends - a project which platforms the stories, voices, innovations of young people across the UK - and Don't Settle - a project that empowers young People of Colour to change the voice of heritage through the arts, research and governance. Both are projects run by Beatfreeks.

This report is a product of collaboration: blurring the line between young people as participants and us as researchers, between young people as co-creators and us as facilitators, between the two projects and their teams.

In short - there have been a lot of voices in the mix, and it's important to illustrate how we got to this point, so we're crystal clear on where the ideas in this report have come from. Ownership and transparency are some of the key values which lead to authentic representation. We want to do as we say.

The report, as with all National Youth Trends work, aims to bridge the gap between the people it's platforming - here, young People of Colour - and the people who we want to learn from the content - here, white dominated media, businesses, institutions. In order to achieve this in the best way possible, we've collaborated at all stages.

National Youth Trends is principally about platforming young people's voices and opinions and distilling them into insights. We work with the understanding that our role is to clearly and coherently represent other people's views and feelings. As with any piece of research, the people working on it (conscious or not) bring their own bias. This is more important than ever in this report as the principal National Youth Trends researcher is a white male.

In order to combat bias, we always have lots of different people input, critique, check and question our Youth Trends work, before anything goes out. It's the way we do things. This time, because this report is about the experiences of People of Colour, and our National Youth Trends lead is white - we've pushed this approach as far as we've been able to, by collaborating at every step with the Don't Settle team. You can read more about the process in the methodology.

COLLECTIVE CULTURE, PERSONAL HERITAGE

@opprah_ruexo & @nomncube

05

@maludewit

#1 COLLECTIVE CULTURE, PERSONAL HERITAGE

Only 1 in 5 young People of Colour said that British culture treats all cultures equally. Over double - 54.1% - said that British culture actively 'excludes and appropriates other cultures'. A large proportion of young People of Colour therefore feel unincluded, undervalued, or misrepresented in Britain's collective culture.

Part of the reason why young People of Colour are made to feel minoritised is that they are less likely to see themselves (their views, ideas, cultures and personal heritages) authentically reflected in the world around them. A huge number - 46.7% - said that they didn't feel represented at all.

"
Thinking about pride and where I live, I think I feel indifferent as to if I am proud to be from the UK. I have no feelings towards it, to me in an odd way it's simply an answer on a form or an equal opportunities questionnaire.

20 - Caribbean, British/Irish Traveller - Male - Nottingham

46.7%
Didn't feel represented at all

We asked where young people felt represented from a list of:

- Media - TV, film, news
- Social media
- History
- National holidays and celebrations
- Education
- Social action campaigns

In every single category young People of Colour were less likely to feel authentically represented.

Representation is a principal method to combat minoritisation of communities and people. We found that if young People of Colour don't see themselves authentically represented in media, then they are more likely to think that British culture is excluding, and less likely to think all cultures in Britain are respected equally. Across sectors and media, young People of Colour are less likely to feel represented, and, as a result, are more likely to feel minoritised in Britain's collective culture.

REPRESENTATION

"

When you're South Asian and Pakistani [...] your skin is different, and you look different, and you like smell different and you eat different and in an environment where other people don't do that, it led me to rejecting a lot of my culture and I didn't like wearing my South Asian clothes and eating food with other people. When I was about 15, and I was on social media and I'm seeing a lot of artists like cartoons and animations of South Asian people, like wearing the headscarf. And social media really changed that for me, it was seeing representation and movies and drawings and seeing other people that look like me doing the same things and having the same passions and that was really really important.

17 - South Asian - Female - Manchester

Lack of representation has been tackled time and time again online in campaigns like the #VogueChallenge. The campaign, started by Salma Noor, a young Woman of Colour in Oslo, provoked people all over the world to photoshop themselves onto the cover of Vogue. The movement actively epitomised what, sadly, almost seems too obvious: that we are less likely to see People of Colour visually represented in Western Media.

The #VogueChallenge pushed conversation a little further. When looking to 'represent' - it is not as simple as putting People of Colour on the cover of a magazine in which they didn't frequently feature.

Rather, Noor's campaign exemplifies how we've begun to question, push and develop the very idea of representation. Does merely seeing yourself on the cover of vogue, or in a television programme, or celebrated in a national holiday, inherently equate to feeling represented?

@haseebah_illustrations
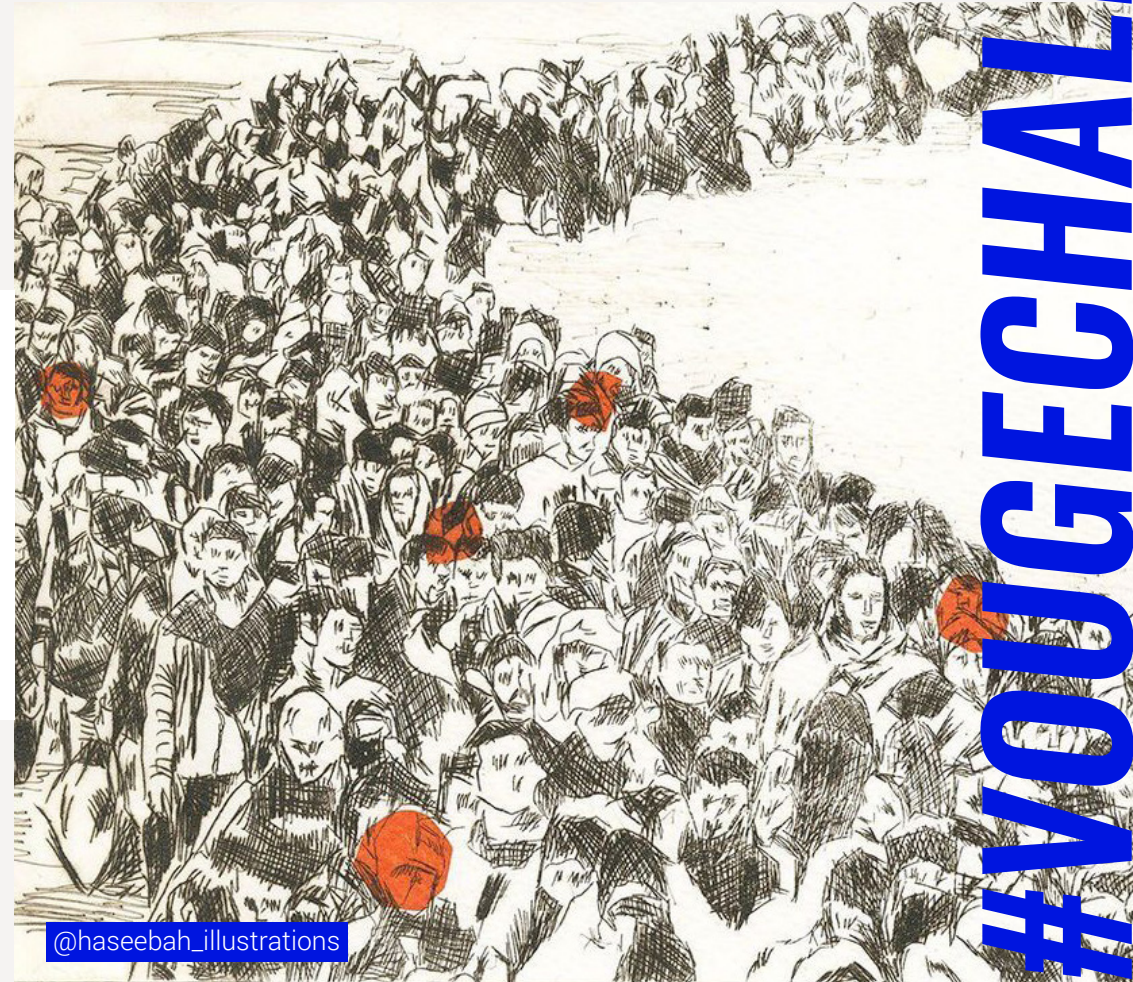
#VOUGECHALLENGE

Does this representation result in feeling that society will gain a wider sense of cultural awareness? Does it - on its own - combat the minoritisation of your personal heritage?

" *Seeing the prime minister now sending out a diwali message or eid message yearly is a nice acknowledgement of the existence of other people in the UK. For many years this has not been the case, Christmas being the main holiday to be largely acknowledged in the wider media. However in the past few years there does seem to be more of a move in taking into consideration the celebrations of other cultures and religions. Nevertheless, cultural celebrations account for a small percentage of the way in which POC live their lives on a day to day basis. The media and press do not seem to 'normalise' the lifestyle of other cultures, instead using them as points of controversy or tokenism. This still creates a sense of the 'othering.' Examples such as the initiative Salma Noor took to seek wider representation for POC is a good example of how we need to be the ones to normalise our own celebrations, cultures and lifestyles.* "

Ansen

The short answer from the young people we spoke to (as well as from numerous conversations had between People of Colour across the UK): definitely not.

By itself, seeing someone who looks like you in something, on something, participating in something, does not equate to representation, at least not the authentic representation young People of Colour asked for.

Yet in media, time and time again we see People of Colour put on screen for 'representation' without any thought about what it is the content is trying to represent.

[2017]

Dove

Black woman turns into White woman after using dove body lotion

[2020]

'That's not the representation I wanted'

The Wiggles gave an apology after 'Pappadum' video online again
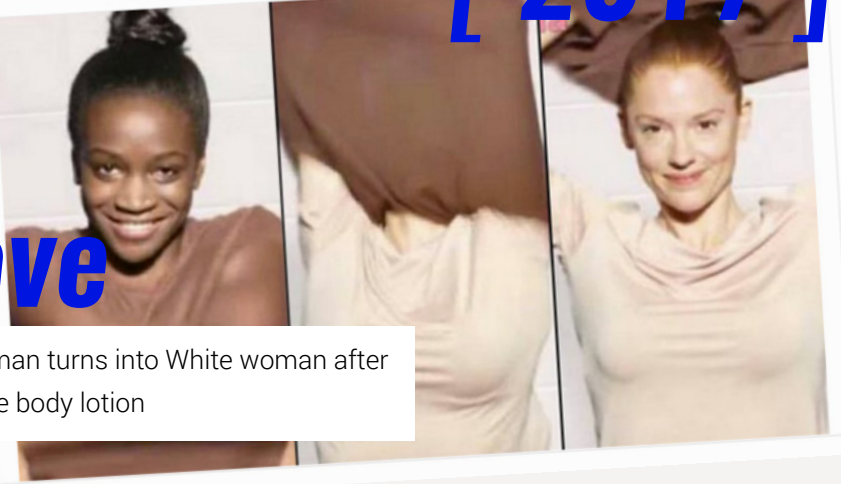
The Wiggles

Pepsi

Triviliasing Black Lives Matter

An image from a Pepsi ad posted on YouTube starring Kendall Jenner and featuring the song "Lions" by

[2017]

The general population of people who watched these adverts and are offended, would immediately question if these companies have consulted POC before assuming that this is the representation that they wanted. Pepsi advert for example - why is this activist movement led by a cis white person rather than the trans, of colour or religious groups that only got 1 second of exposure? Even though the whole advert is 3 minutes long, the saviour of the day is a white person who resolves it in a matter of seconds, undercutting any attempts to represent wider communities and resolve the issues they face. It's nice to see that global organisations are now including POC in their marketing, but at many points it feels forced and not transitional in the sense that some companies are scrapping having white people all together in their marketing, and others just having POC in the background with no real purpose.

Ahsen

As we've shown, young People of Colour are less likely to feel represented. When People of Colour are represented, it falls short of the very thing representation is set out to achieve: stronger cultural awareness, inclusion and respect; combatting minoritisation of communities; normalising the presence and cultures of People of Colour.

The representation we often see is tokenistic, inauthentic and further perpetuates the stereotypes the whole principle of representation is intended to combat.

Time and time again in advertising the token Person of Colour is present for box-ticking, as opposed to a true desire to authentically represent People of Colour in the service of combatting prejudice and discrimination.

@chantes_view

Time and time again in entertainment, culture, arts and heritage industries, People of Colour are only programmed when their work is defined solely by them being a Person of Colour.

Time and time again the celebration of difference descends into a continued practise of othering, and as a result, further minoritisation.

Just because you've got yourself a Person of Colour on the screen, doesn't mean you're authentically representing that Person of Colour's personal heritage, let alone representing the infinite diversity of experiences that People of Colour hold. Even more telling about the above examples is what they implicitly say about representation on the other side of the camera. The fact that decisions have been made to put these campaigns out into the world is symptomatic of the lack of representation in decision making processes within institutions putting them out.

@gmalhotra

"Representation in the media has increased, but sometimes it's not the "right" representation, because often brown or POC characters are often written by white writers and so they often resort to stereotypes

17 - South Asian - Female - Oldham

ALWAYS THE ACTIVIST

When People of Colour are represented, it is often in the context of their struggle, their fight against the discrimination they face, or the issues faced by their communities. All of these difficulties are (in different ways) a result of being a Person of Colour. In only presenting People of Colour in this way, we continue the practise of othering.

Authentic representation works to normalise the presence of People of Colour and their respective cultures. In doing so, it moves us from a concept of British culture as multicultural, but not respecting cultures equally, to multicultural with authentic platform and space given to those previously minoritised.

"

We don't learn enough about BAME people, the achievements, when we, when we do learn about, for example, Black history month or just Black history generally, it's always a link to slavery, and not, not often enough do we learn about the achievements of Black and Asian people, you know, whether it's in the field of medicine or politics as well.

23 - South Asian - Male - Birmingham

"

I feel like a lot of things are at that time, slavery and beyond, so you know, and up till now, and I know there's way more stuff about black people that could be in, um, and other people, um, that could be in museums as well.

17 - South Asian - Female - London

If more Black people had been present and heard in the production of the Pepsi advert, would Black Lives Matter have been trivialised in such a way? Would someone have thought twice about when the Black woman washes and becomes white?

> **I think in general just trying to have like a, a diverse group of opinions, you know, just really helps.**
>
> *17 - West African - Male - Bristol*

How is the argument not a no-brainer for businesses? If you employ well, allow space and platforms for a diversity of voices and viewpoints behind the camera, then you're much less likely to end up misjudging it and alienating members of your audience by what's being presented.

> **If we as BAME people, don't step up and influence whose stories are told, particularly our stories as well, then who's going to speak for us?**
>
> *23 - South Asian - Male - Birmingham*

Young people embodied such ideas in their response to the question 'where is it most important to see more representation'? The opinion of the full sample was also reflected in the views of People of Colour: results were split across sectors, media and culture.
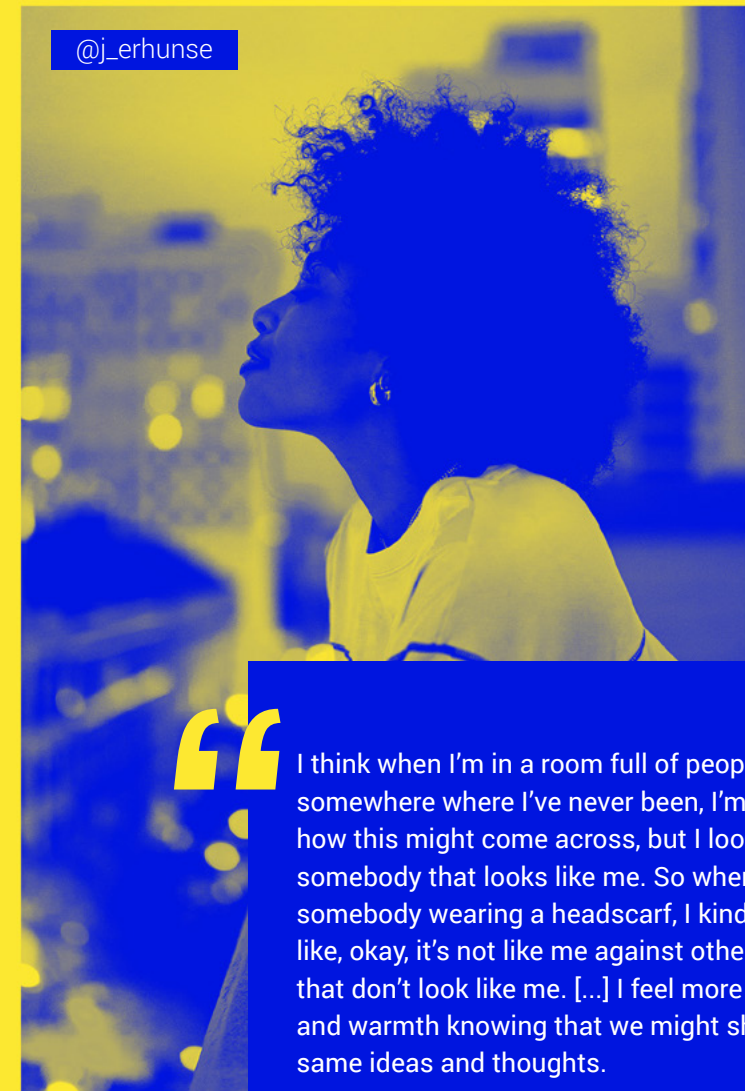
@j_erhunse

> I think when I'm in a room full of people somewhere where I've never been, I'm not sure how this might come across, but I look for somebody that looks like me. So when I see somebody wearing a headscarf, I kind of feel like, okay, it's not like me against other people that don't look like me. [...] I feel more welcome and warmth knowing that we might share the same ideas and thoughts.
>
> **17 - South Asian - Female - Manchester**

Generally, young people were more likely to say they want to see representation in positions of power: the two most popular answers were 'in our leaders' and ' in government'.

" The representation that young POC want is not the kind that is usually relegated to being in the limelight; on a magazine cover or on a stage, but the lasting kind that affords POC a seat at the table that does not disappear after talk of diversity and inclusion has died down. We are not naive enough to think tokenistic gestures of feigned interest in representation will tackle the systemic inequities that we are used to. The way this changes is by carving out our own spaces in the rooms where decisions are made all over the country. It has become very clear this year that the personal is political. So, that means having one homogeneous voice that is divorced from our experiences and values is no longer something that many of us are willing to put up with anymore. When we say 'enough is enough' that is not us cowering away in defeat, but a call to action to other young POC who are prepared and willing to put in the hard work to actively fight for change in the spaces that have long been reticent towards it. "
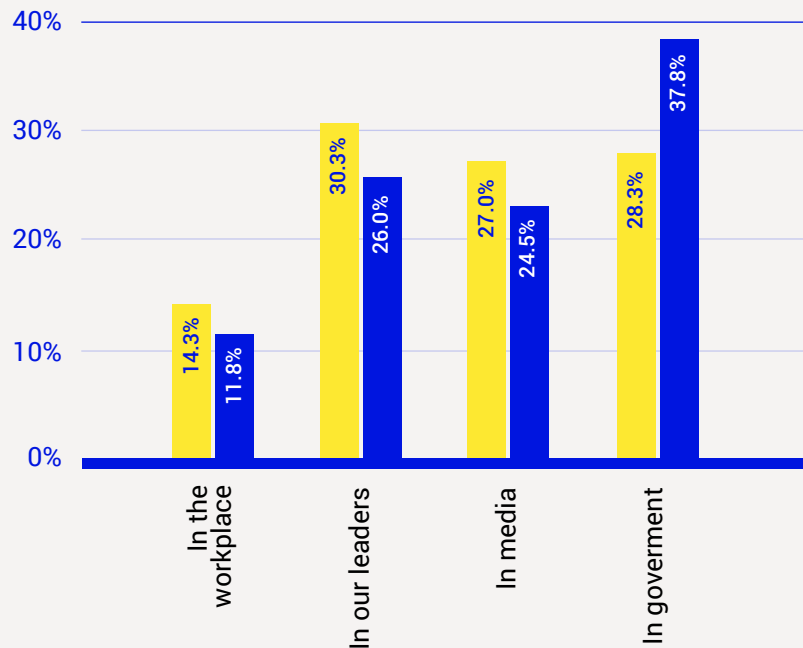
Amira

She still faces, it's so shocking to hear, she still faces so much abuse every day, threats just for being a Black MP, which is, and you'd think to yourself that was a thing of the past but actually it still happens day in day out."

23 - South Asian - Male - Birmingham

Where is it most important to see more representation?

POC
FULL

One of the main differences highlighted in the graph to the left was on representation in government. Young People of Colour were more likely to say that it's important to see representation in the workplace, in our leaders and in the media, and significantly less likely to say that it's important to see representation in government.

Young People of Colour also placed emphasis on the private sector (over the public) when asked how they wanted to make change in the world. Young People of Colour were less likely to by working in government, and were more likely to say they want to make change as a CEO. This attitude is mirrored in UK responses to BLM which focus on fostering change in the private, as opposed to the public sector such as Black Pound Day.

Part of the reason for this may be that young People of Colour were over three times more likely to say they felt heard by brands and businesses, than by the government.

Chart: Representation importance by category

Category	POC	FULL
In the workplace	14.3%	11.8%
In our leaders	30.3%	26.0%
In media	27.0%	24.5%
In goverment	28.3%	37.8%

> *What 2020 has proven is that representation in the government has had no tangible effect on policies that dictate education, climate, housing and so many other forms of social injustice that are entrenched in political and procedural ambiguities. Right now some of the most visible politicians in the current government are POC, and yet having Priti Patel and Rishi Sunak front and center has made no impact on alleviating the distrust we feel toward government, in fact it has made us more wary. When parliament released their report that outlines the stark structural racial inequality in our society at 1am, it is clear to us that politics and governance is all about optics and media coverage, not the lives of the people it impacts. Representation is not about visually ticking a box that signals diversity. What we value above all is having our values represented. We want diversity of thought and diversity of experience as these are the things that have a lasting impact on policies that influence our day to day lives.*

Amira

Young People of Colour are more likely than the full sample to say that the British Empire has a legacy in racism and exclusion in society, and are less likely to identify with the government's definition of 'British values': democracy, freedom, rule of law, respect, tolerance.

There is an inherent tie between how young People of Colour view representation and their sense of cultural belonging and awareness. The connection is central to the ongoing dichotomy about British culture: that it's often celebrated as multicultural, but at the same time it excludes the people from the cultures it is 'celebrating'.

> I'm wearing bright clothes but this does not warrant a comment. Like I don't see your tee shirt and jeans and say like oh, you know, this is very nice tee shirt and jeans like they're just clothes. This should be normal. I'm not inviting any comments on my clothing or the things I'm wearing or like what I eat.

20 - South Asian - Female - Birmingham

" *It's difficult for governmental bodies to try and represent all cultures when white people are afraid of immigrants stealing their jobs and positions in society. So, although young POC want to create a bigger presence in these boardroom environments, we have to consider the backlash that white people will create out of fears of losing their jobs. British culture will always dominate the UK because it is the native culture of this country. The same as any culture belonging to its own country. The problem here is the ability for the British culture to be inclusive of the other cultures which thrive within it and be accepting of them. British culture is comprised of different elements from other cultures due to colonialism, so it is only fair that they take ownership of this, and give POC the credit they have long been seeking.* "

Ansen

Part of the inherent frustration at the attitudes towards representation in the UK, is that it platforms people of colour when it's convenient, relevant, or even stylish to do so - using the guise of 'celebrating multiculturalism' for its own ends, as opposed to representing People of Colour's personal heritage's in order to normalise their presence in certain spaces and combat discrimination.

"
I think for me, it's about sort of, where you come from, what your roots are. I'm British as well as being Pakistani, but my heritage is Pakistani and it's sort of my grandparents' generation and beyond. I have British culture, so to speak, it's a bit less simple as that, because I have also my roots that come into play.

23 - South Asian - Male - Birmingham

@shazmeeny

What is British culture?

POC
FULL

Category	POC	FULL
Multicultural - all cultures are respected equally	20.50%	23.35%
Multicultural BUT not equal - excludes or appropriates "other" cultures	54.10%	48.25%
British values - democracy, freedom, rule of law, respect, tolerance	35.80%	41.10%
Dominated by a white christian viewpoint	37.50%	33.39%
I'm not sure	11.40%	10.87%
Other	6.43%	7.80%

BEYOND BLACK SQUARES

02

@haseebah_illustrations

TRENDS | BEYOND BLACK SQUARES

Institutions are increasingly expected to step up and play a role in tackling the issues we face as society. What's traditionally stayed firmly in the realm of comfy corporate social responsibility is playing more of a central role in how all facets of how institutions operate. From their marketing practises, to the inclusivity of their products, to increased transparency over ethical production increased transparency over ethical production practices, to scrutiny over their governance: if institutions want to survive, they need to start thinking about how to do it all, and more importantly, how to do it right.

If Gen Z are the most socially conscious generation we have seen to date, then over the next 20 years they'll begin to table the most socially conscious buying and working power we've ever seen, too.

Over 50% of young people in the UK said that they want to see brands getting involved with social issues by participating in social action campaigns - sharing information on social media, contributing to campaign calls to action, platforming the right voices.

One of the key opportunities brands had to speak up this year was Black Out Tuesday - where, amongst other activity, 28 Million users posted a black square on their instagram grid, as an act of solidarity with protests in wake of the death of George Floyd.

Only 14% of young people said that brands and businesses should only get involved with social issues when it's relevant to their product. This was particularly prevalent for young People of Colour, who are less likely to think what your business does matters when it comes to getting involved in campaigns. On Black Out Tuesday brands responded masse to this expectation, with huge numbers of organisations, and a wider variety of institutions, contributing to the hashtag.

@chantes_view & @climbingtoglory
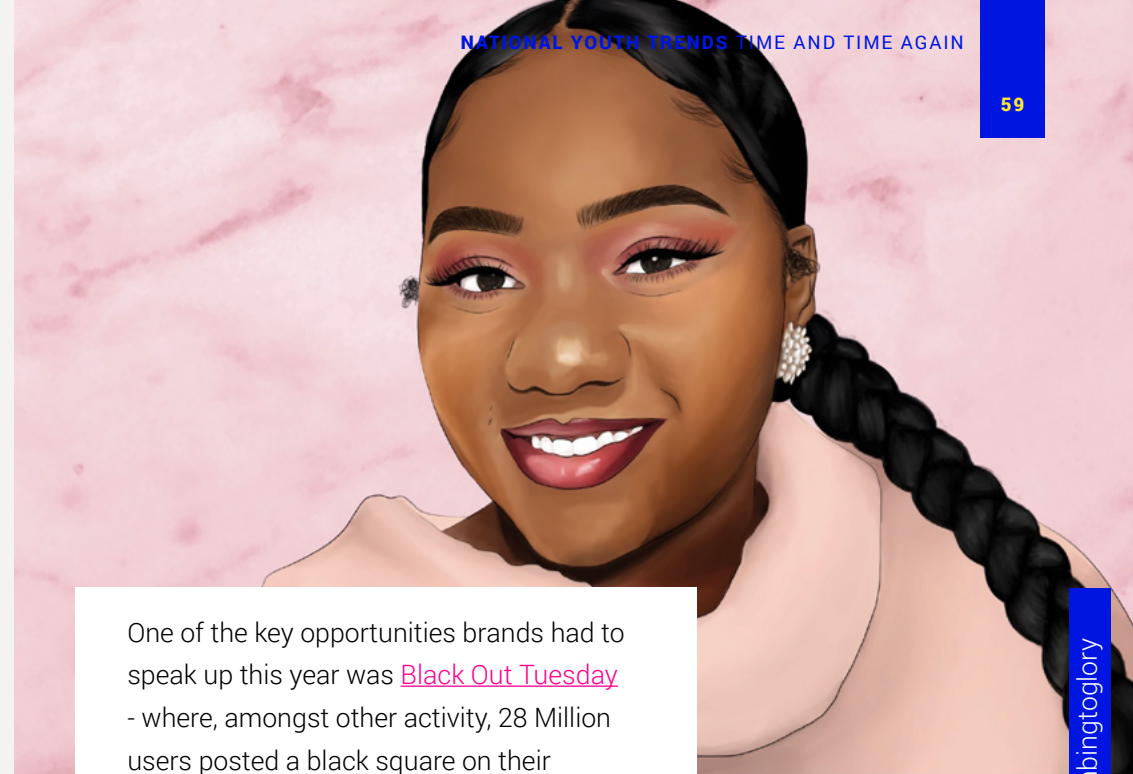
#TheShowMustBePaused #BlackLivesMatter

The day of activism is symptomatic of how social campaigns work in the context of hyper-digital 2020. The campaign was started by Jamila Thomas and Brianna Agyemang. They were aiming to get the music industry to hit pause for the day in solidarity with BLM, drawing attention to the ways in which it has profited from Black people. By the end of the week the movement had manifested in several different angles and directions, all centring around BLM, and the black square image.

The social media moment faced backlash from two principal angles.

The first, more immediate, was that as hashtags moved from the original #TheShowMustBePaused to black square images with the hashtag #BlackLivesMatter and #BLM, channels of communications were blocked for protestors on the ground. Because of the actions of people online, perhaps innocently enough, getting involved in digital campaigning, crucial information (which was previously being shared by the latter two hashtags) couldn't reach protestors in the street. The exploding digital manifestation of a social action movement

in fact acted in detriment to those protesting in physical space.

The second issue with Blackout Tuesday was deeper and longer-lasting, embodying some of the issues with representation we've discussed. In the same way as purely putting a Person of Colour on screen and calling it representation doesn't cut it, does posting a black square on your Instagram count as activism, mean that you are passionate about Black lives?

Again, in short: no.

In spite of seemingly engaging in an act of online activism, many socials users, celebrities and brands alike were called out for their posts. Primarily, criticism centered around the fact that posting seemed more concerned with the person's ego, or how a brand looked with a post on its grid, than with the actual purpose of activism. In short: posts were for personal gain and public reputation, as opposed to genuine care, empathy, passion for and commitment to the matter at hand.

Celebrities like Emma Watson were subject to criticism on these grounds.

#BLM

#blackouttuesday
#blackouttuesday
#blad
#blad
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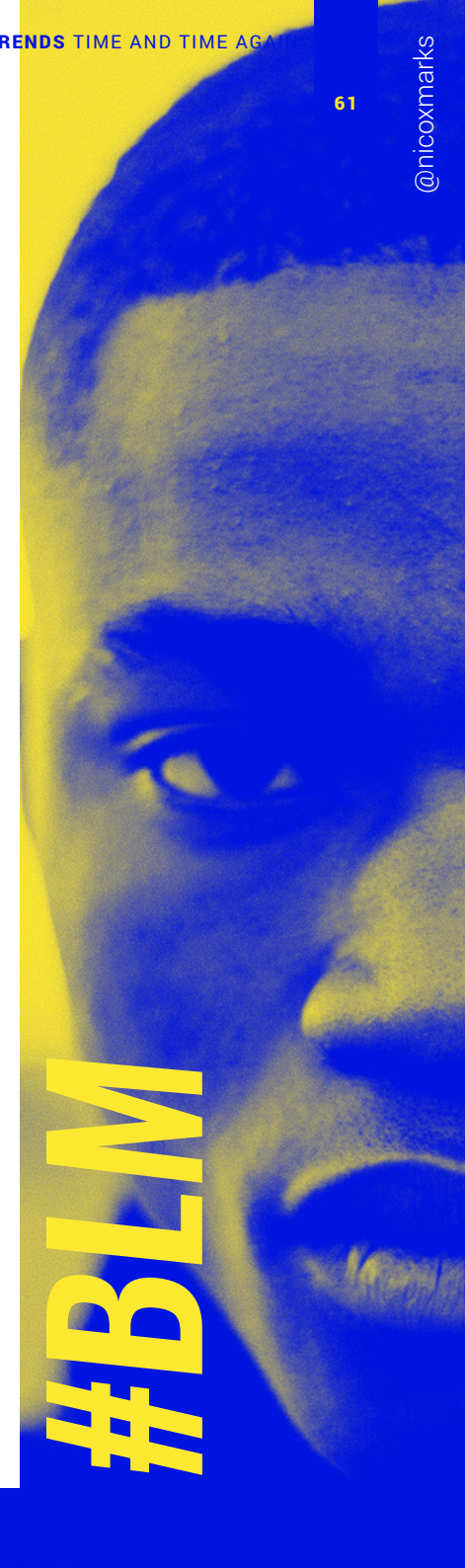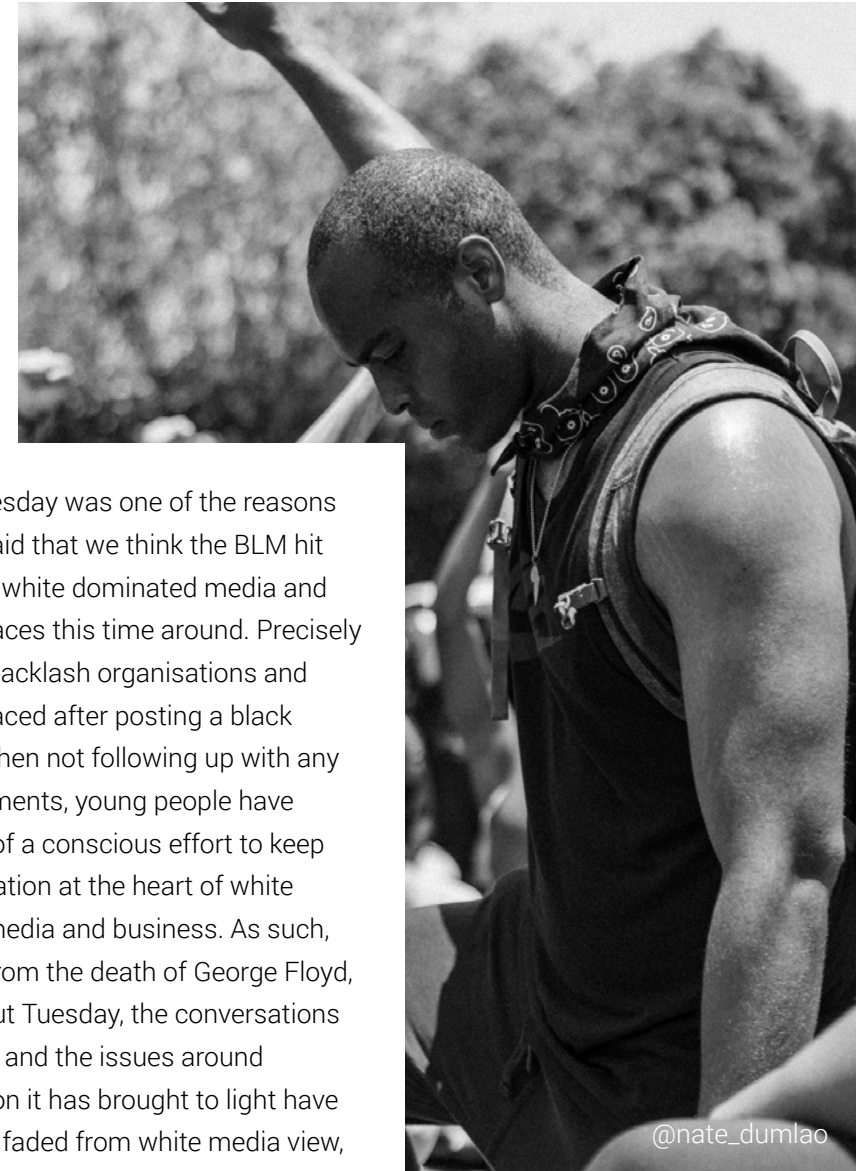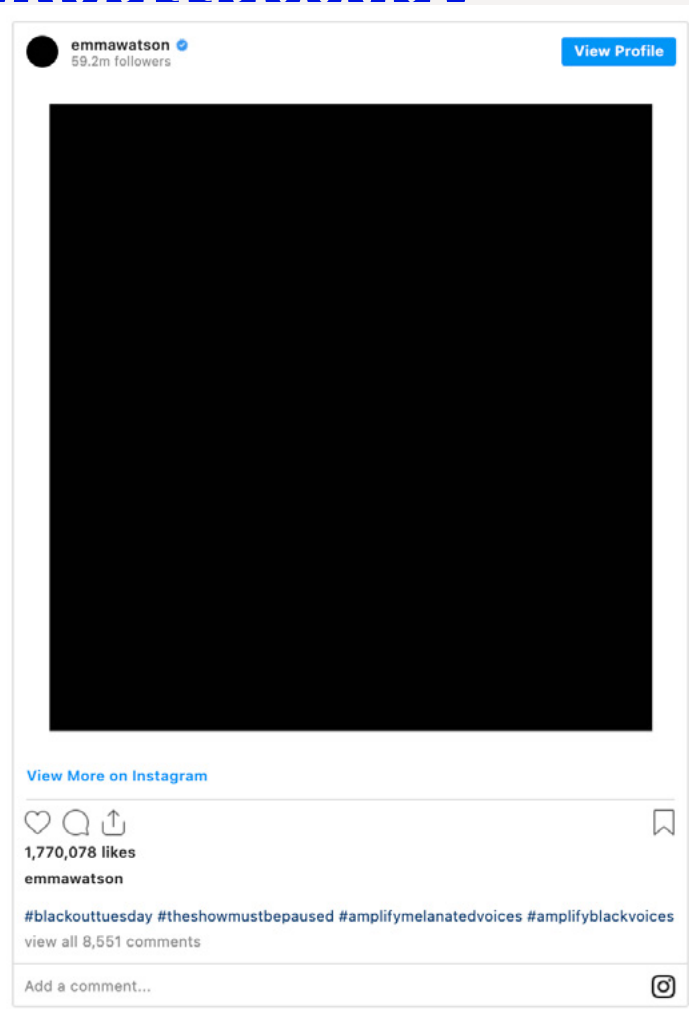
Blackout Tuesday was one of the reasons why we've said that we think the BLM hit differently in white dominated media and business spaces this time around. Precisely because of backlash organisations and individuals faced after posting a black square and then not following up with any further comments, young people have made more of a conscious effort to keep this conversation at the heart of white dominated media and business. As such, months on from the death of George Floyd, from Blackout Tuesday, the conversations around BLM, and the issues around representation it has brought to light have not instantly faded from white media view, as they may have done 2 or 3 years ago. This is in stark contrast to the often fleeting character of 21st Century 'news'.

Individuals continue to:

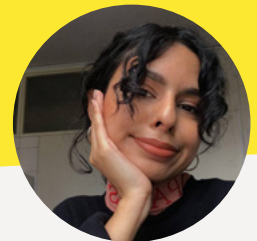- share information about where people can access resources to educate yourself, your family, your friends

- provide links to associated movements and charities which most need donations right now

- give updates on specific trials and stories connected to the movement

- promote the idea that people need to check in Black friends and colleagues

- consider individual roles in further perpetuating stereotypes.

" Exacerbated by the social restrictions due to COVID-19, young people are now more than ever relying on social media as a platform for activism. Exemplified through the BLM movement, young people's activism has manifested online through educational infographics, online petitions, monetised YouTube videos as a route of donation, and more. This kind of activism has made access to information more accessible, knowledge spread more quickly and has been able to put more pressure on brands and institutions to contribute to social change. As a result, how brands show social consciousness online is becoming increasingly important to engage their younger audiences. Brands should realise that they have a responsibility to be visibly active in their social consciousness online and utilise their platform to break the echo chamber that an individual's online activism can sometimes fall into. "

Juwairiyyah

Over 50% of young people we spoke to suggested that it is the responsibility of the people with the resources to sort out the social issues we face in the world. Gen Z are increasingly pointing to the public and private sectors for accountability, awake to the idea that these issues can't sit solely on the shoulders of the people it affects.

In response, just as individuals have gone further this time, institutions have said they will too: pledging to implement real, tangible changes that affect they way they authentically represent Black people and People of Colour alike.

Nearly 70% of the young people we spoke to, said that the main way that want to see brands get involved in social issues (above giving money to other organisations or social campaigning) is by making changes to their own organisations. It's symptomatic of the fact that you can't have your cake and eat it too, use representation as a flag to wave, but not plant it deep into your lawn when people need it most.

" *Brands have significant platforms and many brands, particularly in the beauty industry, have actively contributed to uphold systemic barriers regarding race. The black squares highlighted the hypocrisy of major brands and while many might have contributed to Black Out Tuesday, this level of performative activism barely scratches the surface of anti-racism. For instance, Olay, as well as other beauty corporations, continue to sell skin lightening creams. These products are consciously marketed in a manner that simultaneously perpetuates and profits from systems of racial oppression- namely colonialism, colourism, and white supremacy. Such hypocrisy embeds itself into brands and corporations across the board, manifesting in various formats, yet exposing a similar idea: performative activism is not enough. This statistic reflects that young people realise that to create real change, brands must recognise the systemic barriers in place within their organisations and look inwardly into how they individually contribute to systems of oppression.* "

Juwairiyyah

HISTORY TODAY

@lucyy_scott_ & @nomncube

03

TRENDS | HISTORY TODAY

HERITAGE HERITAGE HERITAGE HERITAGE HERITAGE HERITAGE HERITAGE HERITAGE

Heritage is a word with a multitude of complex meanings. In our conversations with young people, it acquired an increasingly diverse set of interpretations. When asked what it means to them, responses ranged from those which were specifically about people's personal heritages (where their family / ancestors come from); to anything at all which is valued from the past; to specific community traditions which have been passed down for generations.

WHAT DOES HERITAGE MEAN TO YOU?

As part of our focus groups we asked young people to bring along an object which defined heritage for them - this is what they brought and said.

A Picture of a Hindu Rassi Ceremony
(17- South Asian - Female - Walsall)

"In my culture (Hinduism) a series of ceremonies are conducted when the baby is born. I'm not quite sure of the one in the picture but I do know that another ceremony is done when the baby is initially born to determine the 2 letters which the baby's name can begin with, this is called a Rassi and my letters were S and G. A priest is called to do this and does so by looking at the star alignment, time and date the baby was born and also establishes whether it's inauspicious or not."

@sharan_dhanda

#Heritage

Hand Fan
(23 - South Asian - Male - Birmingham)

"It's a traditional kind of Pakistani fan. So I suppose not just in Pakistan, but also other sort of South Asian countries, in India, you'll see people who hold this fan, they sort of wave at, you know, at themselves, creates a lot of air actually, surprisingly. It's super important to me because not only is it a sort of fundamental feature of my Pakistani culture, particularly in the summer, but it was actually a gift from my grandmother."

Islamic keywords
(20 - South Asian - Female - Birmingham)

"I don't know what they mean, to be honest, but it hangs in the kitchen. [...] I'm not really practicing religious-wise, but, I think it, I don't know. I feel like the religion influences the culture a lot and even though my family were not very, I wouldn't say we're as religious as my family is back home in Pakistan. However, I think the religion still shapes the way, you know, everything like our daily life. I think this is a nice little reminder of my connection back to home."

Water/Pula
(25 - Mixed African/British - Male - Birmingham)

"I say water, but I specifically mean rain, which in our language is referred to as pula, which is also the name of our currency- 10 pula, 20 pula, 200 pula. As a really hot country, we're practically a desert, and hence why we really value rain."

A Model Truck
(22 - South Asian - Male - Coventry, Birmingham)

"I got it on my travels from Pakistan. When I was about eight or nine years old, a very long time ago. In Pakistan, and many other parts of Asia, they have these like very like painted and decorated trucks and like rickshaws and cars and many other kinds of vehicles, and it reminds me of every time, I go back there what the culture and heritage that is attached to those things the stories are being told through it."

Camel Bell
(19 - East African, Black British, Black Other - Birmingham)

"So, my grandparents were nomads and their main animal, well the most important animal they had were camels. So if you got like 200 camels, then, and one runs away, it's dangerous, right? They're worth a lot. So they tie, each family will have, a specially made camel bell that all their camels have, and it sounds different. The noise it produces sounds different to all the, everyone else's camels. So you have like two or three camel bells that are specific to your camels made, and then it sounds different to everyone else's so that's how you can differentiate the camels".

Zulu Woman and Child
(PNTS - Southern African - PNTS)

"So my mum's Zulu and, that's sort of the culture I belong to, and this is sort of a, they got this on their wedding day, my parents, it's sort of a depiction of a traditional Zulu woman with, like a child, like on her back. And the reason I liked this is cause it reminds me of how my mum used to like carry me to school on her back, like in the UK. Like she still wrapped me around when I was about, I think five, and people used to find it so weird because the trust she had in this blanket for me not to just like drop onto the floor, and just like died. They were just like, so astonished by this. So like, that's the sort of connection and like memory like I have from this like image"

@sharan_dhanda

Heritage is not simple, and it becomes even more nuanced when discussing how young People of Colour in the UK experience it. However, across the interpretations, there are two prominent strands in how young people define heritage:

1 How we represent today as the heritage of tomorrow

2 How we present history and the past today

Any action, publication, advert, artwork or policy produced today becomes tomorrow's heritage. What gets platformed and minoritised today naturally will remain minoritised in our narratives of history too, until people make a conscious effort to address this issue. In short, for young people, how we represent today contributes to our heritage as much as history does.
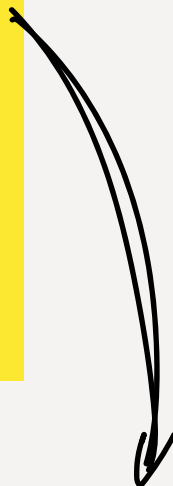
" If you hang out with a diverse group of people, you kinda make your own culture, if that makes sense. [...] everyone's got their own like ideas and stuff and it melts together. You kind of make something new and interesting and it's not something that's like came from like hundreds of years ago. Sometimes it's something that's like in the now.

17 - West African - Male - Bristol

Nearly 50% of all young people we spoke to said that the British Empire is relevant today in its ongoing legacy of racism and exclusion in society. Along with the clear lack of authentic representation for young People of Colour outlined prior, it shows that the heritage we're leaving behind through our actions today does not embody cultural awareness and tolerance, but rather the ongoing act of minoritising communities.

The very core of authentic representation is about forging a better future by combatting marginalisation. However, if the gatekeepers of what we collectively preserve, platform, and practise do not authentically represent People of Colour, then we will continue to double down on the act of minoritising groups in society.

By authentically representing young People of Colour today (in media, in our workplaces, in our decision making) we will start to build a different heritage for tomorrow, one which actively combats the whitewashing of history. In short, we need to foreground the dismantling of whitewashed narratives into our collective heritage, into our narrative of the present, in order to make it more representative.

> " *Heritage takes up so much space in our public discourse surrounding culture and identity and yet the people who decide what facets of the here and now that are valued and deemed important enough to conserve and curate do not represent young POC. When I walk into a museum anywhere in this country, the glorification of empire and the past waning legacy of colonial greatness lets me know exactly who curated the collection, who marketed it and who sits on the board. Having a sector that is predominately white deciding what stories matter will inevitably shut out and exclude young POC. So, if we are making heritage everyday, we can also make decisions EVERY DAY about creating more inclusive hiring practices and forming more representative governance structures. Young POC deserve to feel proud and seen when interacting with heritage and that can only be done if they are given the autonomy and power to shape the national narrative of heritage.* "

Amira

The second strand of interpretation - how we present history - is more aligned with the current focus of the heritage sector in the UK.

> " I think there's an element of dishonesty, to be frank, when it comes to teaching people certain parts of history.
>
> *23 - South Asian - Male - Birmingham*

The crossover between BLM and this traditional notion of heritage was exemplified when a statue of Edward Colston was rolled into Bristol Harbour in 2020. The statement became symbolic of the fact that, young people felt that society was better at celebrating colonial slave traders than People of Colour, in the UK's heritage. After Colston was toppled, the statue was replaced by an icon of a BLM protester, only to be removed less than 24 hours later by Bristol City Council. This builds on similar acts which have happened across the globe over the past couple of years.

Our data found that young People of Colour are far less likely to feel represented in British history than the general population of young people. This is in spite of the fact that they are less likely to say that heritage doesn't mean anything to them. So in spite of heritage playing a more crucial role in their lives, young People of Colour are

"

...to see something with more nuance, like we got to see not just one narrow way of looking at history I'd like to be able to hear it from all aspects, like all sides of history before I come to a decision, and maybe it has something to do with who is telling these stories or who is the person who brings the stuff in and how it's told because I feel like it is just, um, like kind of one sided, and people of colour are almost left out of the conversation.

25 - East African, African Other - Female - Wirral

less able to explore it through our public monuments and exhibitions of history. Because of this - we found that young People of Colour turn away from displays of history, when looking to explore their own heritage. If young People of Colour don't feel represented in history, then they're more likely to engage with it through community storytelling and digital media, as opposed to through formal education, museums, public monuments or statues.

"

I think if you want to acknowledge their good actions it's also really important to also talk about their negative ones.

17- Black British, Black Other - Female - Solihull

They are also more likely to conflate the term with the origin of their ancestors, and are less likely to see heritage as anything at all from the past. Therefore, in marginalising young People of Colour in public presentations of history, it forces them to look inward, to make heritage a personal act, as opposed to a cultural sense of what we collectively value from the past. It perpetuates minoritisation in collective culture.

"

Going to the library [in Handsworth, Birmingham], there's a man called Hector, he was black and he used to always talk about [rich local culture in Handsworth] and there's music and carnivals and stuff like that. So we used to go to them a lot when we were kids.

17 - South Asian - Female - Manchester

The principal way to engage with history is our heritage sector - museums, historical places, monuments, statues, blue plaques. However, time and time again young People of Colour are minoritised in these spaces. In spite of consuming museums and historical places as entertainment a similar amount to other young people, young People of Colour were less likely to engage with history through these spaces.

"

I went to Liverpool slavery museum. Um, and like I don't know I think someone was talking to me and I was just looking around and I just got really emotional, I think I was reading something on the wall and it was just like, I don't know. I felt like goosebumps. It's like, I could connect with it and it was like a weird energy but um. Yeah. Yeah. That was pretty memorable. I think because I know the history of my family and where I come from type thing, and I know like, you know, my history kind of encompasses the slave trade, so I think it was hard to just actually witness what people, what my ancestors would have went through.

18 - Black British, Caribbean - Female - Manchester

"

It's just like kind of disheartening. I do quite like learning about history and all of that kind of thing. But, I feel like, in museums, I think it's the fact that a lot of the artefacts are stolen. And it's just like, ok so you want to show this history of how like brutal your past was, but you're not acknowledging that you've stolen these

25 - East African, African Other - Female - Wirral

"

Perhaps the question this data prompts is: how can young people of colour claim to have successfully engaged with history, when the history itself is omissive, non-representative and in favour of White British narratives? The lack of transparency when acknowledging the British Empire in heritage spaces can exacerbate the historical amnesia that Britain projects onto its colonial past. We are often repeatedly fed the same historical narratives through an imperialist lens in many heritage spaces; the stories of people of colour are left out of significant historical events. For young people in the UK of South Asian heritage, this can cause us to feel disconnected from British history and lead to feeling a lack of belonging in British society. It often seems our own heritage is separated from what is portrayed as British heritage, when in fact the two not only co-exist but are undeniably linked. "

Juwairiyyah

Therefore whilst young People of Colour do search out public heritage spaces, they are less likely to engage with history through them. This is a result of their views, culture or, personal heritages being marginalised in the whitewashed narratives of history.

The result is an ongoing feeling that whilst heritage is important to them, it is a personal or community driven act, and one which they don't associate with the heritage sector in the UK.

@melodiedescoubes

Aside from our heritage sector, another way young people engage (or not) with history in the UK is through their education. This is where we often experience narratives of history for the first time.

Only 25% of the young People of Colour we spoke to said that their culture and heritage was authentically represented in their education. In a similar trend to what we see in the heritage sector, young People of Colour are more likely to feel minoritized in educational settings. It's what inspired projects like the Black Curriculum and petitions to more directly address colonialism in the curriculum.

" I engage with my culture by the music I listen to - South Asian music not just Qawwali. I feel like I've had to go out of my way to research the culture because of course it gets completely ignored in the curriculum.

17 - South Asian - Female - Oldham

In spite of a year of more mainstream attention on these issues; in spite of numerous institutions stepping up and talking about change; in spite of teachers saying they are unequipped to educate on racism in the classroom: the latter half 2020 saw the UK government make education on 'white privilege' in schools illegal.

This came following the Culture Secretary threatening museums and galleries that if they take down statues or artifacts in light of this year's conversations on discrimination, representation and racism, they face losing public funding. The treatment of the Colston statue, the banning of education on white privilege and critical race theory, and the financial threat to those taking action in the heritage sector marks a systematic attempt on behalf of the government to close doors on these conversations.

" I'm also sort of frustrated I think, and totally dissatisfied at the level of, or just how there's so much of a sort of a lack of BAME stuff in the curriculum.

23 - South Asian - Male - Birmingham

VOGUE

Salma Noor

Being black is not a crime
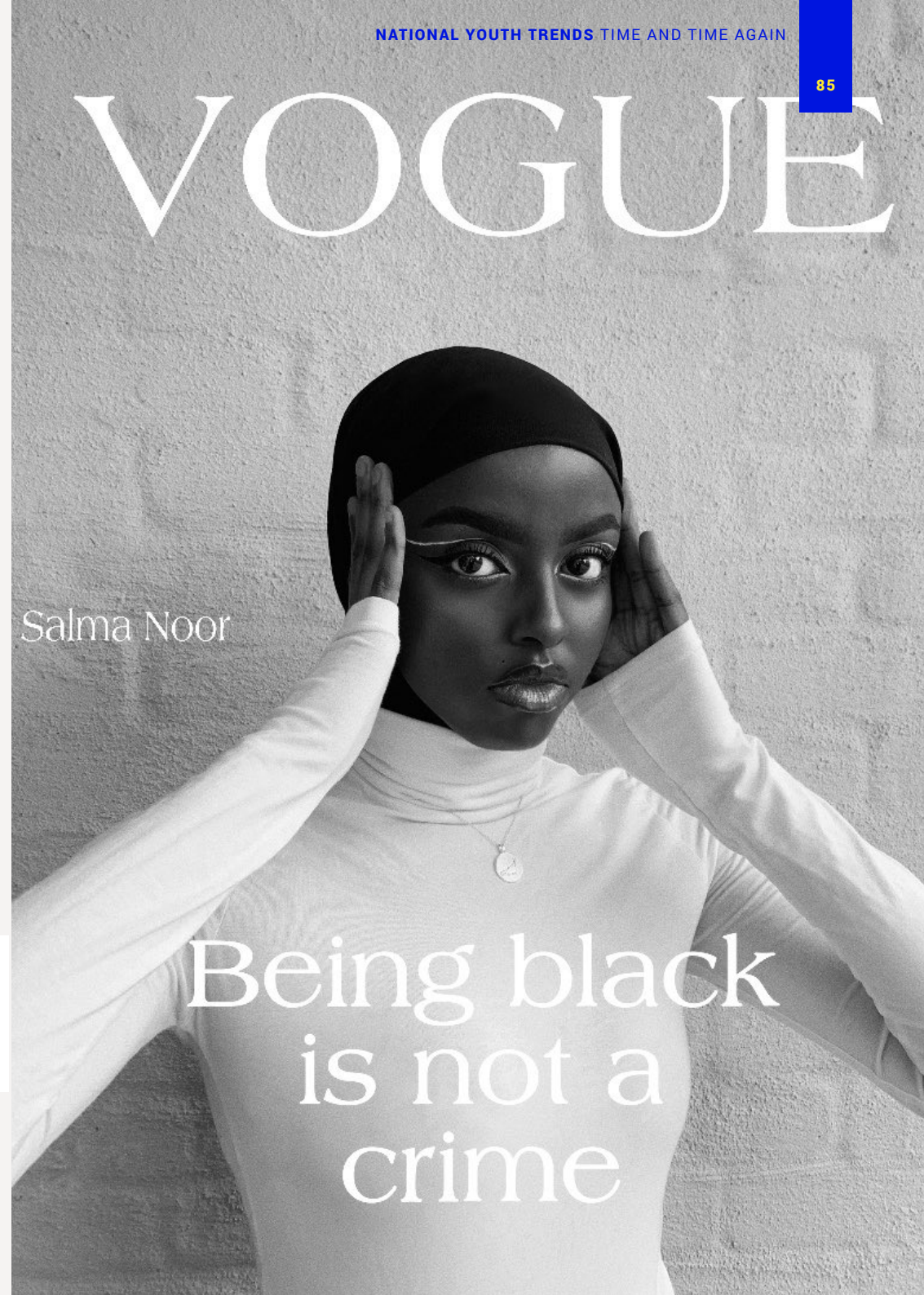
IF NOT NOW, WHEN?

@chne_

04

TRENDS / IF NOT NOW, WHEN?

In spite of 2020 being one of the most atypical years this generation has ever experienced, one of its principal concerns, the most commonly mentioned social issue, is something with history, something which we've been battling for centuries.

The fact that - after the year we've had - more young people said that Black Lives Matter is a more pressing social issue than Covid-19 displays the urgency and dedication to the ideas we've presented in this report. This is not to say that young people do not think that Covid-19 is important. Rather that in spite of covid and the devastation it has caused, we cannot let other issues - especially those steeped in such history - go unacknowledged.

So our message: if not now, then when? If we're thinking new normal, if it's business as unusual now, then this moment of pause is the time to address how you represent, and how you want to represent. 2020 saw a huge number of institutions and organisations pledge to change. Through this report we suggest a way institutions can start making good on those pledges.

Lack of authentic representation leads to the minoritisation of people and communities - it leaves People of Colour excluded from our collective view of British Culture. We therefore need to start seeking representation beyond the representation. We need to start seeing more People of Colour on both sides of the camera. We need to empower representation produced by the people you're looking to platform.

By communicating, learning, listening and making good on commitments the Institutions of the Future we build for tomorrow won't make the same mistakes we're making time and time again today.

@shazmeeny

WORK & IMPACT

So much of 2020 was commitment to making change: we want to use this report, and the voices of thousands of young people, to help organisations turn their commitments into action.

Want to act on this report but don't know how?

See that change is needed but not sure if you can be the one to make it?

We can help you find, engage and work with young people across the UK to keep your organisation relevant and future-proof. Whether thats working with you to establish a youth governance structure, or creating a user generated content campaign to engage audiences, or deliver bespoke creative research to gain useful insights, we can help.
To start your journey towards becoming an Institution of the Future, then contact General Manager Amy Clamp on **Amy@beatfreeks.com**.

#METHODOLOGY

There are two principal research strands which contribute to this report:

1 The first is the general 2020 period of National Youth Trends data collection, which took place between 17th August - 12th October. This is our annual baseline piece of research, where we talk to young people about a broad range of issues and topics.

2 The second is a heritage sector specific research strand commissioned and partially delivered by Don't Settle and their team. This included 6 questions which would be included in the above 2020 National Youth Trends baseline data collection along with a co-creation session and a series of focus groups.

Here you will find our abridged methodology, to keep the report concise. You can read the full methodology online via the National Youth Trends website, here.

RESEARCH DESIGN

@linkedinsalesnavigator

METHODOLOGY | RESEARCH DESIGN

National Youth Trends Research Design

To establish a starting point for what we wanted to find out from this year's baseline research, we drew on our previous research, our day-to-day conversations with young people and nearly a decade of experience working in the sector to come up with a long list of topics, questions and thoughts young people are passionate about. We then added to this long list by gathering opinions from young people on what would be important to ask, and talking to institutions about what they wanted to know about Gen Z.

We then worked with our National Youth Trends Advisory Group - a group of 16 - 25s from across the UK - to co-create the final research framework with us: refining the list of topics, the wordings for questions, the answers available, and the media through which they'd be asked.

@chrissieokorie, @jbw_art & 'The pain in my voice podcast'

Don't Settle Research Design

Don't Settle is a project that empowers young People of Colour to change the voice of heritage through the arts, research and governance. This strand of research was designed to collect data and insights that would inform and underpin their work, in order to spread its value wider in the heritage sector.

The first stage of this research engaged 8 young People of Colour as co-creators in the design phase, which comprised two workshops held on 2nd and 30th July 2020. In these sessions, co-creators worked with the Don't Settle team, and Associate Researcher Anousheh Haghdadi, to establish the focus, wording and answers which would be included in the National Youth Trends baseline survey. These 6 questions were then used as the basis for the Don't Settle focus groups.

DATA COLLECTION

@haseebah_illustrations

METHODOLOGY | DATA COLLECTION
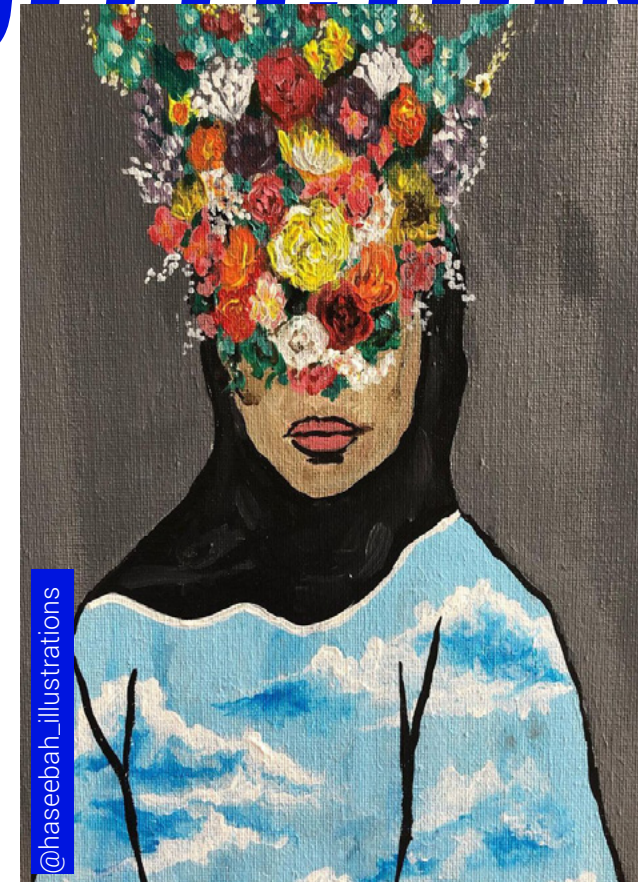
National Youth Trends 2020 Survey (baseline)

The survey was open to anyone aged 16 - 25 (inclusive) who was living in the UK between the 17th August and 12th October.

The 70 question long survey was conducted and distributed online. It collected young people's answers, demographic, data and one question where they could optionally leave contact information (email address or social media handle) to agree to being contacted by Beatfreeks for further opportunities.

This sample was self-selecting. We distributed links to complete the survey in two principal ways:

1 Sharing it with other organisations that work with young people so that they can distribute it amongst their networks

2 Targeted and promoted posts on Instagram, twitter and Facebook

During the process of data collection, we analysed demographic data collected (geographical spread, gender and ethnicity breakdown etc) to then further target groups which we have not yet reached. We map participant demographic data onto UK census data to work towards better representation of minoritised groups.

Don't Settle Focus Groups

In addition to the six questions added to the baseline survey, Don't Settle conducted 6 digital focus groups to gather qualitative data. These were delivered via Zoom by two facilitators. Groups had between 2 and 8 participants.

Focus group participants were formed from self-selected young people, who applied to be involved. Details of the opportunities were advertised through the same channels as the above baseline survey.

Applications were selected on the basis of eligibility and in order to obtain a representative sample on the basis of gender, sexuality, disability and formal education. To be eligible, participants had to live, work or study in one of our target areas; be aged 16-25; identify as a Person of Colour; and be available at dates/ times of focus groups.

Other Data Collection

As part of the 2020 National Youth Trends research, we conducted a further two strands of data collection. Data from neither of these strands have been referenced in the report. You can read more about the September Diaries and Drop Your Thoughts in our full methodology.

DATA ANALYSIS

@sulaygox
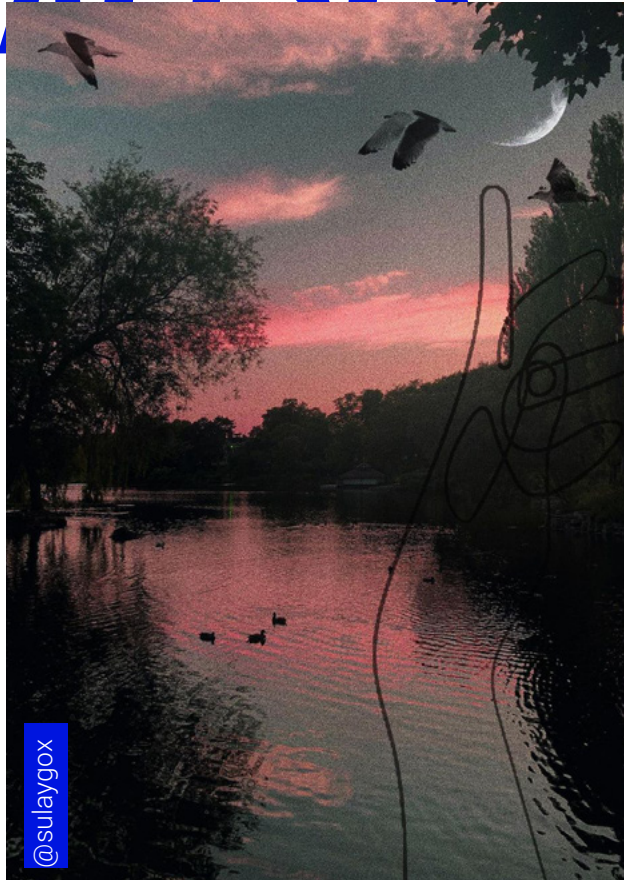
METHODOLOGY | DATA ANALYSIS

BASELINE SURVEY

Scale

Participants were given a statement and then asked to position themselves on a scale of 1 to 5 according to how far they agreed. Points 1, 3 and 5 were marked with answers, so that it was clear if the midpoint represented a positive, neutral or negative stance.

Open Ended

Some questions were qualitative to allow for self-directed answers. These were then coded into common themes where relevant.

Multiple Choice

Participants were encouraged to pick one answer from a list we had provided.

Multiple Response

Participants were encouraged to pick up to three answers, or as many as applied, from a list we had provided.

FOCUS GROUPS

Qualitative Data

This was collected through the Don't Settle Focus Groups and was analysed by narrative and content. These insights have then been used to add nuance to quantitative data, and provoke further analysis.

#SAMPLE AND DEMOGRAPHIC

A total of 1,803 16 - 25 year olds took part in our baseline data collection. They were all asked to provide demographic information alongside their answers. This was collected by a mixture of multiple choice questions and open ended questions. Below we have broken down our sample by each demographic criterion we collected.

The report refers to two sample sets: the 'full' sample of 1803 young people we spoke to and then the People of Colour specific sample of 307 young people. In order to check the diversity of people within our People of Colour sample, we have also outlined the breakdown of their demographics, alongside our full sample.

We mapped our sample onto data provided by the Office of National Statistics from the 2011 Census. By nature of our data collection methods, we will never obtain a completely representative sample of the young people in the UK. As this report has highlighted, viewing representation in this way can often be reductive. Rather, we have (during the process of data collection) continually mapped our participants back onto the ONS data, to ensure we are making an effort to represent those who have often been minoritised in such space.

@sulaygox

Generally, our sample was fairly accurate in terms of its spread. It was slightly skewed in terms of age, with more younger participants than older - peaking at 18 and 19 year olds and reaching a low at 25. Generally, our sample mapped onto the ONS breakdown for ethnicities, with our group having a higher proportion of certain ethnic groups - people from black backgrounds, for example. Regionally, we peaked in the regions with the highest populations with the exception of the West Midlands. Our largest deviation from census data was with gender, where our sample was weighted more towards females than males. The survey was accessed by a number of people with additional access needs and those who defined themselves as disabled. You can read more about each individual demographic criteria on the graphs and tables below.

AVAILABLE N

Full Sample

Any other African	4	**0.22%**
Any other Asian	28	**1.55%**
Any other Black background	14	**0.78%**
Arab	7	**0.39%**
Black British	46	**2.55%**
British/Irish Traveler	28	**1.55%**
Caribbean	25	**1.39%**
Central Asian	8	**0.44%**
East African	10	**0.55%**
East Asian	18	**1.00%**
Latina/o/x	13	**0.72%**
North African	2	**0.11%**
Other group	77	**4.27%**
Other White group	81	**4.49%**
Pacific Islander	1	**0.06%**
PNTS	2	**0.11%**
Romani	2	**0.11%**
South Asian	94	**5.21%**
Southern African	11	**0.61%**
West African	24	**1.33%**
White British	1175	**65.17%**
White European	133	**7.38%**

1803

People of Colour

Any other African background	4	**1.30%**
Any other Asian background	28	**9.12%**
Any other Black background	14	**4.56%**
Arab	7	**2.28%**
Black British	46	**14.98%**
Caribbean	25	**8.14%**
Central Asian	8	**2.61%**
East African	10	**3.26%**
East Asian	18	**5.86%**
Latina/o/x	13	**4.23%**
North African	2	**0.65%**
Pacific Islander	1	**0.33%**
Romani	2	**0.65%**
South Asian	94	**30.62%**
Southern African	11	**3.58%**
West African	24	**7.82%**

307

Participants selected their ethnicity from a multiple choice list, outlined in the full sample to the left. This question was initially designed to allow people to multi-select their answers - to allow people to pick what best represents them. Due to a clerical error, participants were only able to tick one box, meaning that they may not have been able to identify exactly how they may have wanted to.

The groups which were included as part of the People of Colour sample were selected in consultation with the Don't Settle Team.

ETHNICITY

Full Sample

People of Colour

16	14.98%	
17	19.36%	
18	13.87%	
19	9.82%	
20	8.71%	
21	8.82%	
22	6.66%	
23	7.21%	
24	5.60%	
25	4.99%	

16	14.66%	
17	20.52%	
18	12.38%	
19	7.49%	
20	9.45%	
21	6.19%	
22	6.84%	
23	8.14%	
24	9.12%	
25	5.21%	

AGE

LIVING SITUATION
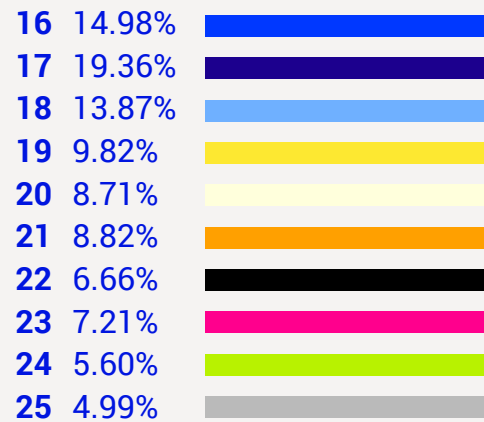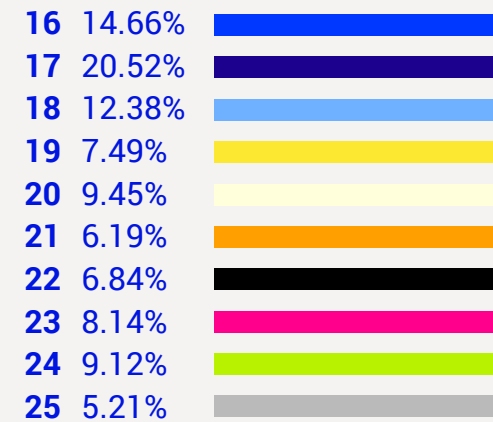
Full Sample
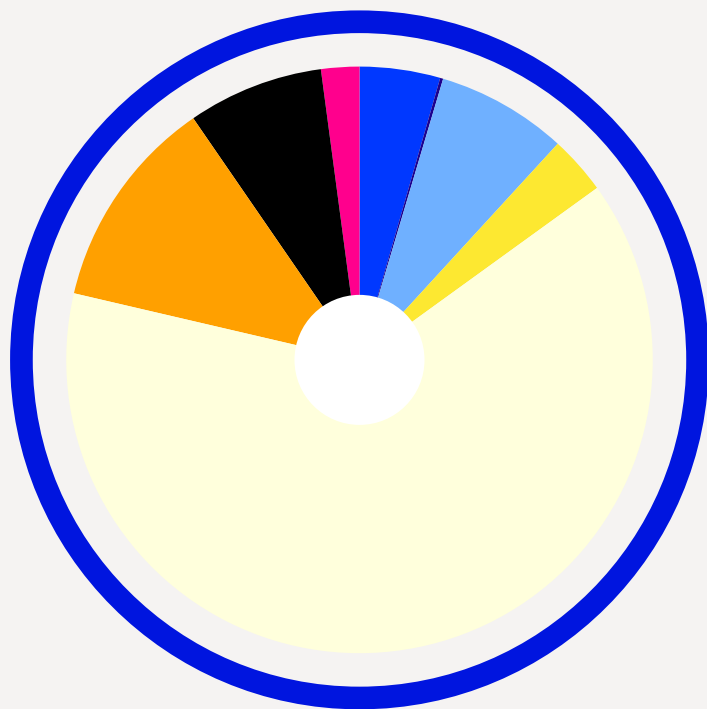
Living Situation	%	
Alone	4.44%	
Homeless	0.17%	
House Share	7.21%	
Supported Accommodation	3.22%	
With family	63.62%	
With friends	11.76%	
With my partner	7.49%	
With my partner and their/my family	2.11%	

People of Colour
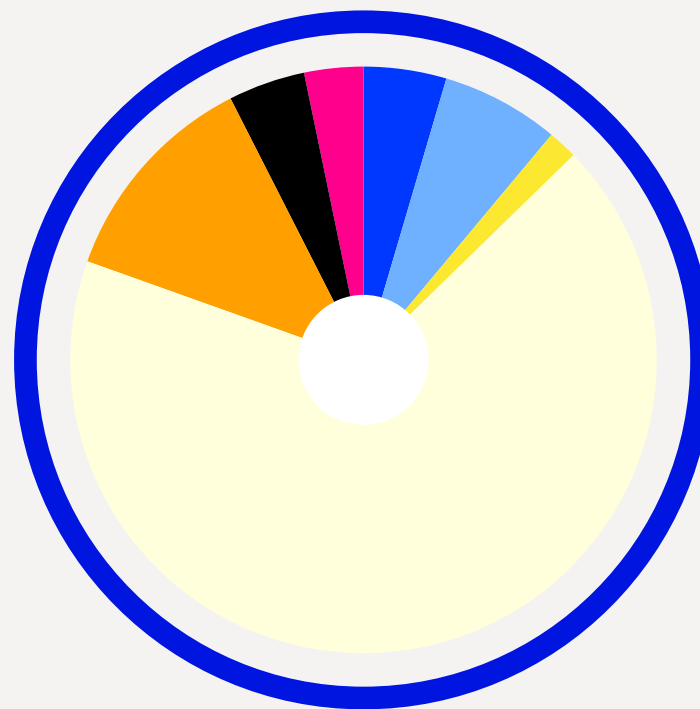
Living Situation	%	
Alone	4.56%	
Homeless	0.00%	
House Share	6.51%	
Supported Accommodation	1.63%	
With family	67.75%	
With friends	12.05%	
With my partner	4.23%	
With my partner and their/my family	3.26%	

Full Sample

People of Colour

GENDER

Full Sample
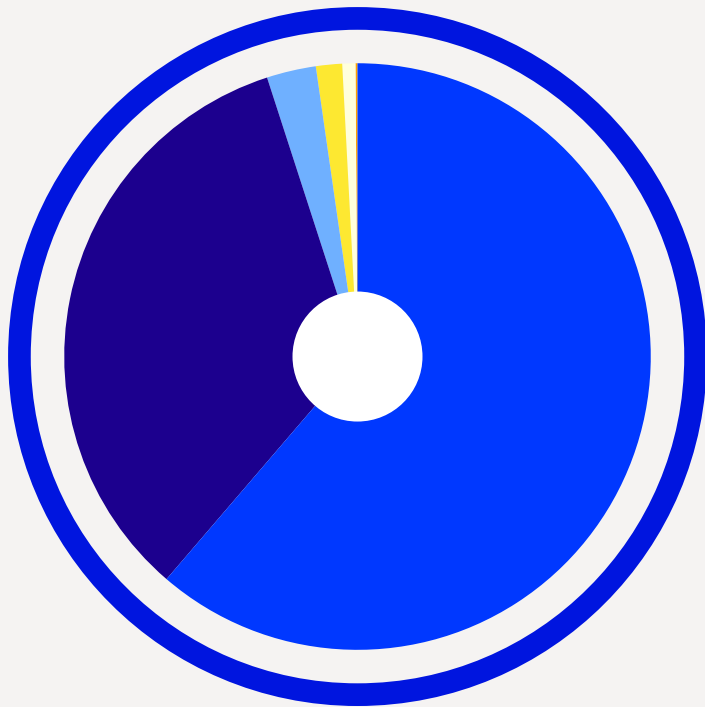
Gender	%
Female	61.29%
Male	33.72%
Non-binary	2.72%
Prefer not to say	1.44%
Other	0.72%
Intersex	0.11%

People of Colour

Gender	%
Female	69.71%
Male	26.06%
Non-binary	2.28%
Prefer not to say	1.30%
Other	0.65%

Full Sample

People of Colour

RELIGION

Full Sample (FULL)

Religion	%
Agnostic	9.65%
Atheist	22.07%
Buddist	0.39%
Christian	20.24%
Hindu	0.83%
Jewish	0.44%
Muslim	4.33%
None	22.68%
Other	2.33%
Pagan, Witch, Wicca	1.50%
PNTS	11.65%
Sikh	0.78%
Spiritual	2.27%
Unsure	0.83%

People of Colour (POC)

Religion	%
Agnostic	6.19%
Atheist	14.66%
Buddist	0.33%
Christian	26.71%
Hindu	2.61%
Jewish	0.00%
Muslim	13.36%
None	14.01%
Other	1.63%
Pagan, Witch, Wicca	0.65%
PNTS	11.73%
Sikh	2.93%
Spiritual	4.89%
Unsure	0.33%

@a.x.j.x

Hey little girl
I guess you're not so little

Hey little girl
I guess you're not so little
I know you feel the world is against you, I know you feel
life is bitter
But you've been so strong and you've made it this far
You don't need no one but you to pick your broken pieces up
from the floor
I know you learned the hard way that people are
disappointing
I know you've put up walls so high you no longer feel
anything
The world came for you and swallowed you whole
It gnawed at your heart and blackened your soul
I'm sorry I couldn't protect you, I wish I had more control

Sit there and listen to your own heartbeat
Welcome its presence be grateful for each beat
It may be broken, tattered and worn
It may be stepped on, trampled and torn
But it's still worthy, it's still needed
In such a cruel world we need good people
The bigger your heart, the deeper it is
The easier it is for others to squish
You're tired, your angry, you want to give up

You're sick of half hearted apologies, tired of ridiculous
lies
Angry that you still put others first, angry that you still
try
They say loving deep is a blessing but it feels like a curse
When your still worrying about others who never consider
your feelings first

But despite that, you still find it in you to care
Your kindness still gives, your compassion is still there
And that's beautiful, because even when it's tough
You don't let the world determine the depths of your love

-Big hearts
Aaliyah Jade
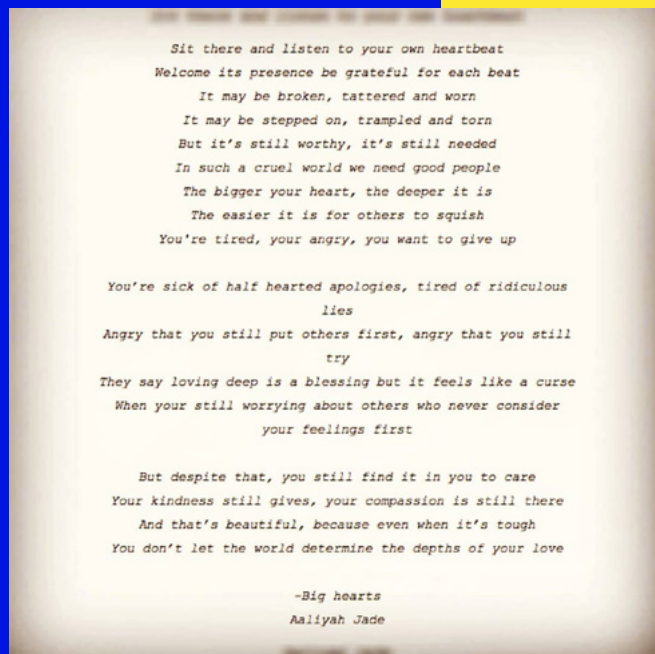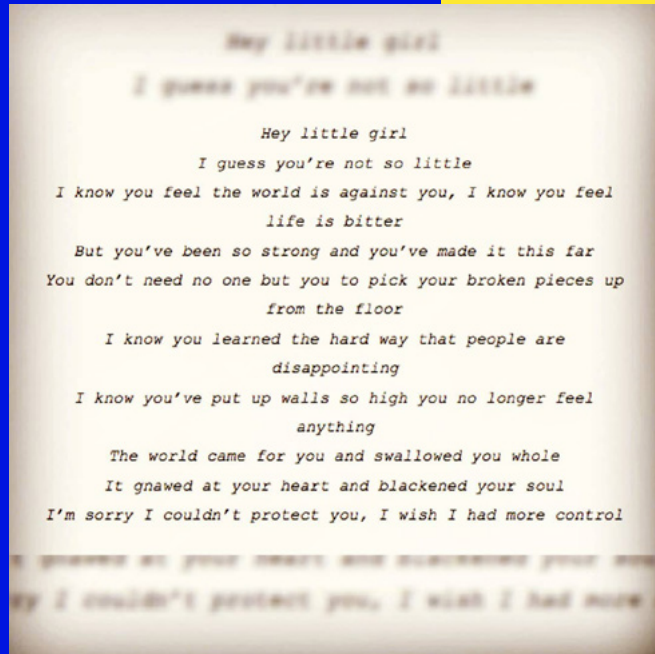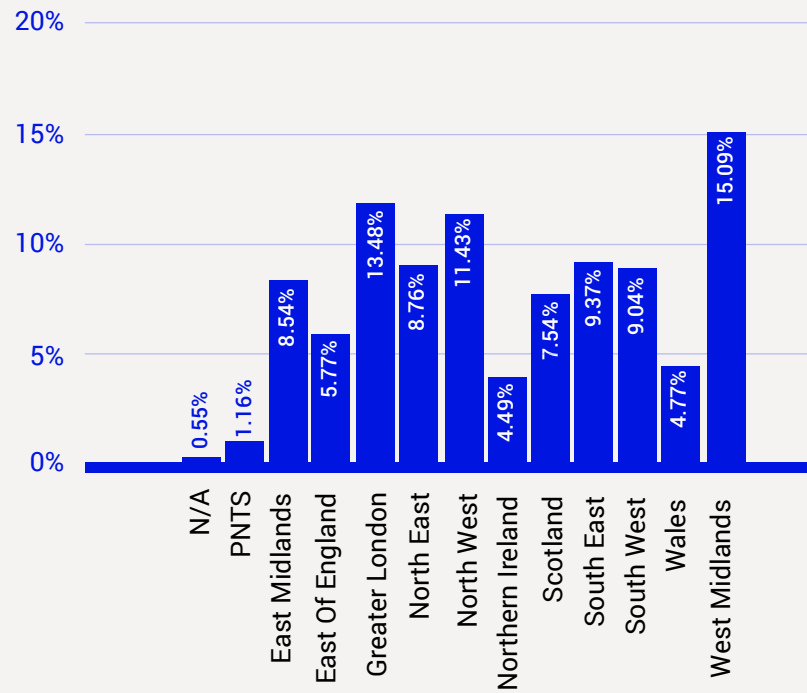
SEXUALITY

When asking participants to identify their sexuality we used an open text box in order to allow people to self-identify without the constraints of restricting labels. To avoid recategorising them now, and in order to display the number of people who sit at varying points along the spectrum of sexuality, we are presenting those who identify as heterosexual, and those who do not.

Of the full sample, 54.9% defined themselves as heterosexual or straight and 45.1% of people positioned themselves as non-heterosexual. For the People of Colour sample, this was 57.3% heterosexual or straight and 42.7% non-heterosexual.

The non-heterosexual participants gave answers which sat across the spectrum of sexualities: pansexual, omnisexual, questioning, queer, asexual, bisexual etc. You can read more about the fluid scale of sexuality and its associated language here.
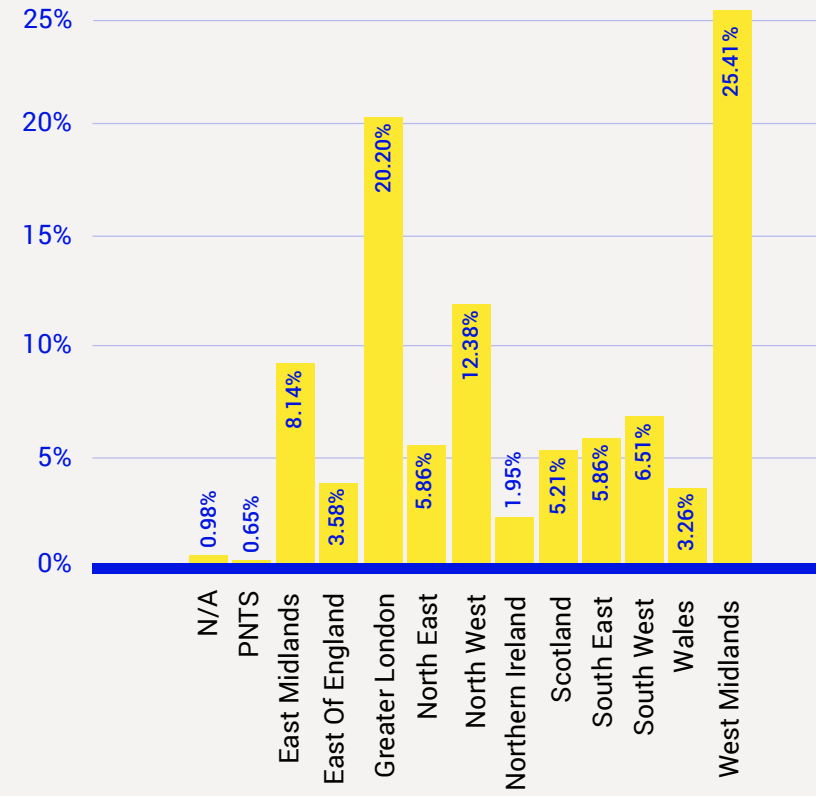
Full Sample

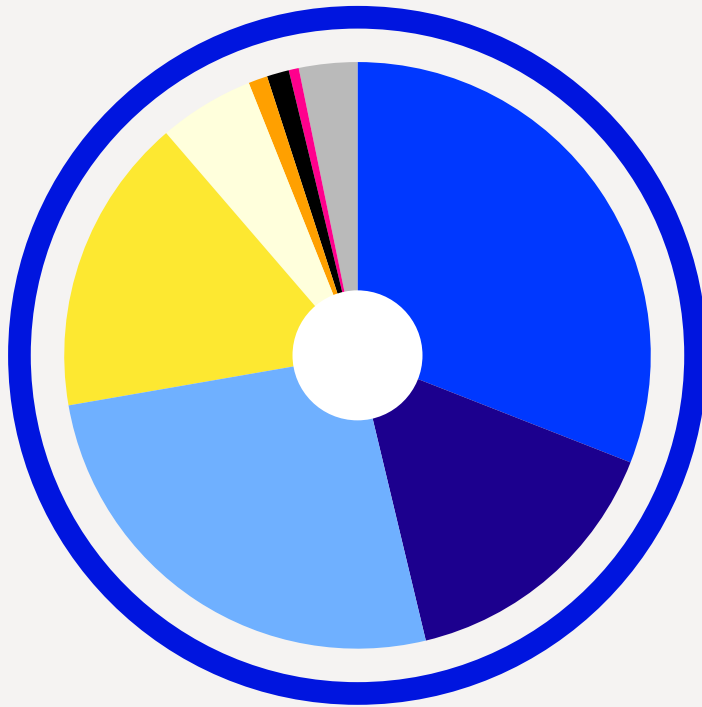# People of Colour

REGION

Full Sample

Region	%
N/A	0.55%
PNTS	1.16%
East Midlands	8.54%
East Of England	5.77%
Greater London	13.48%
North East	8.76%
North West	11.43%
Northern Ireland	4.49%
Scotland	7.54%
South East	9.37%
South West	9.04%
Wales	4.77%
West Midlands	15.09%

People of Colour

Region	%
N/A	0.98%
PNTS	0.65%
East Midlands	8.14%
East Of England	3.58%
Greater London	20.20%
North East	5.86%
North West	12.38%
Northern Ireland	1.95%
Scotland	5.21%
South East	5.86%
South West	6.51%
Wales	3.26%
West Midlands	25.41%

ARE YOU IN WORK?

Full Sample

Unemployed but looking	30.95%	
Unemployed and not looking	15.31%	
Part time	26.01%	
Full time	16.42%	
Self-empolyed/Freelancer	5.27%	
Part time, Self-employed/Freelancer	1.05%	
Internship	1.22%	
Part time, Internship	0.55%	
Other (mixture of above)	3.22%	

People of Colour
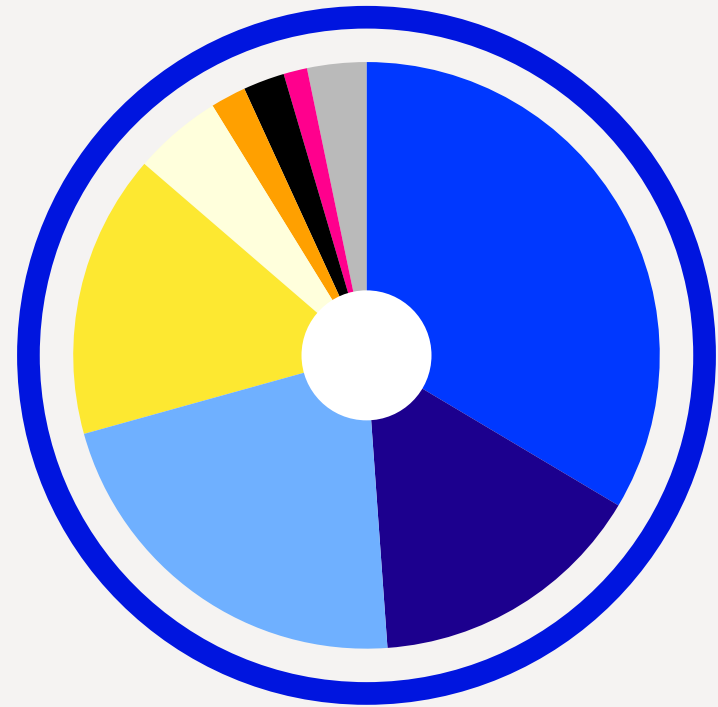
Unemployed but looking	33.55%	
Unemployed and not looking	15.31%	
Part time	21.82%	
Full time	15.64%	
Self-employed / Freelancer	4.89%	
Part time, Self-employed / Freelancer	1.95%	
Internship	2.28%	
Part time, Internship	1.30%	
Other (mixture of above)	3.26%	

Full Sample

People of Colour
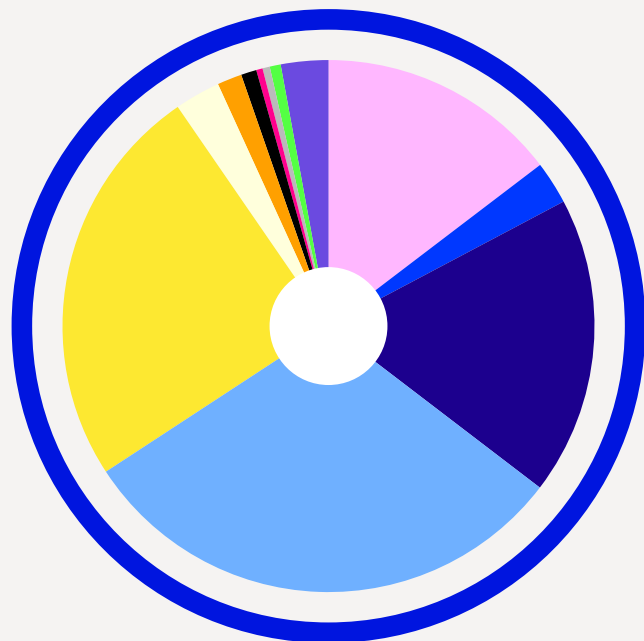
College	14.64%	
School	2.61%	
Sixth Form	18.14%	
University	30.39%	
No	24.63%	
Apprenticeship	2.77%	
College, Sixth Form	1.50%	
University, Part-time	0.94%	
Part-time, Adult Education	0.39%	
Adult Education	0.44%	
School, Sixth Form	0.67%	
Other (mixture of above)	2.88%	
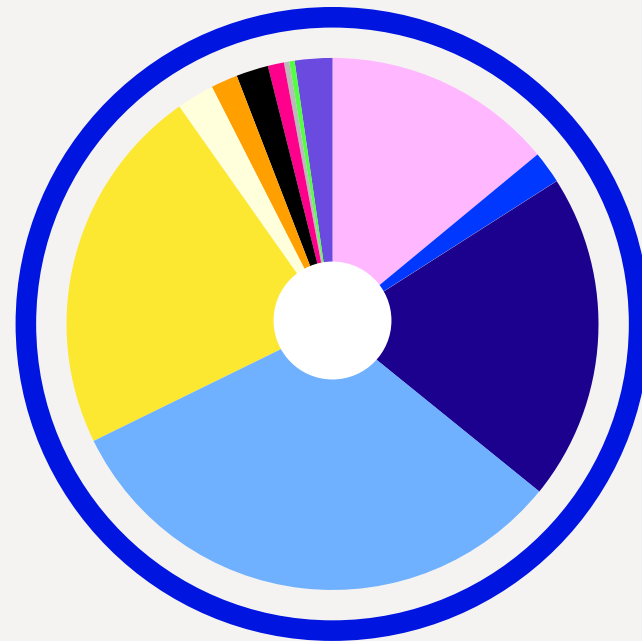
College	14.01%	
School	1.95%	
Sixth Form	19.87%	
University	31.92%	
No	22.48%	
Apprenticeship	2.28%	
College, Sixth Form	1.63%	
University, Part-time	1.95%	
Part-time, Adult Education	0.98%	
Adult Education	0.33%	
School, Sixth Form	0.33%	
Other (mixture of above)	2.28%	

Full Sample

People of Colour

Full Sample
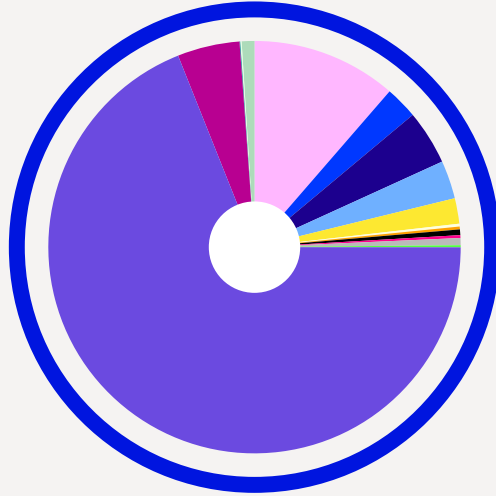
PNTS	11.4%	
Learning Difficulties	2.6%	
Mental Health Conditions	4.3%	
Physical Conditions	3.0%	
Autism, Aspergers and other related conditions	2.0%	
Autism, Aspergers and other related conditions, Learning Difficulties	0.2%	
Autism, Aspergers and other related conditions, Physical Conditions	0.2%	
Autism, Aspergers and other related conditions, Mental Health conditions	0.4%	
Other	0.2%	
Mental Health conditions, Learning Difficulties	0.6%	
Physical conditions, Learning Difficulties	0.2%	
No	68.9%	
Yes - Unspecified	4.9%	
Physical Disability, Mental Health Conditions	0.1%	
Autism, Aspergers and other related conditions, Learning Difficulties, Physical Conditions	0.1%	
Mental Health conditions, Physical Conditions	1.0%	

People of Colour
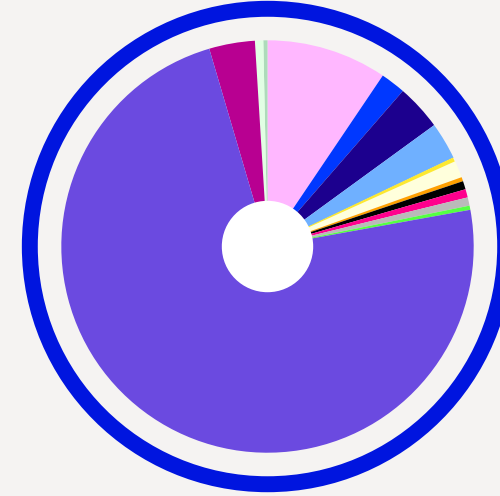
|		
PNTS	9.4%	
Learning Difficulties	2.0%	
Mental Health Conditions	3.6%	
Physical Conditions	2.9%	
Autism, Aspergers and other related conditions	1.6%	
Autism, Aspergers and other related conditions, Learning Difficulties	0.3%	
Autism, Aspergers and other related conditions, Physical Conditions	0.7%	
Autism, Aspergers and other related conditions, Mental Health conditions	0.7%	
Other	0.7%	
Mental Health conditions, Learning Difficulties	0.3%	
Physical conditions, Learning Difficulties	0.0%	
No	73.3%	
Yes - Unspecified	3.6%	
Physical Disability, Mental Health Conditions	0.7%	
Autism, Aspergers and other related conditions, Learning Difficulties, Physical Conditions	0.0%	
Mental Health conditions, Physical Conditions	0.3%	

DON'T SETTLE FOCUS GROUP PARTICIPANTS

AGE	DO YOU CONSIDER YOURSELF TO HAVE ANY DISABILITIES?	ETHNICITY	CITY	GENDER	SEXUALITY	FAITH
18	N/A	Black British, Caribbean	Manchester	Female	Heterosexual	Christian
25	Yes	South Asian	Dudley	Male	Heterosexual	Muslim
17	N/A	Black British, Other	Solihull	Female	PNTS	Christian
18	Yes	South Asian	Manchester	Female	Heterosexual	PNTS
19	N/A	Latina	Liverpool	Female	Bisexual	Christian
19	N/A	East African, Black British, Black Other	Birmingham	Male	Heterosexual	Muslim
23	PNTS	South Asian	Birmingham	Undefined	PNTS	Starseed
PNTS	PNTS	Southern African	PNTS	Female	PNTS	PNTS
17	PNTS	Black British	Manchester	Female	Heterosexual	Christian
17	N/A	Black British	Birmingham	Female	Bisexual	Christian
25	N/A	East African, African Other	Wirral	Female	Queer	Christian
17	Yes - Mild Autism	West African	Bristol	Male	Heteosexual	Muslim
17	N/A	West African, Black British	Manchester	Female	Heterosexual	Christian
22	N/A	East Asian	Birmingham	Female	Asexual	None
17	N/A	South Asian	London	Female	PNTS	Hindu
20	N/A	Central Asian	Carrickfergus	Female	Heterosexual	None
17	Yes - Preventive CBT	South Asian	Walsall	Female	Heterosexual	Hindu
23	N/A	South Asian	Birmingham	Male	Heterosexual	Muslim
22	Yes - Autism, Learning, difficulties and Anxiety	South Asian	Coventry, Birmingham	Male	Heterosexual	Muslim
17	N/A	South Asian	Oldham	Female	Heterosexual	Muslim
20	N/A	South Asian	Birmingham	Female	Heterosexual	Muslim
17	N/A	South Asian	Manchester	Female	Bisexual	Spiritual

OUTRO

MEET THE CONTRIBUTORS
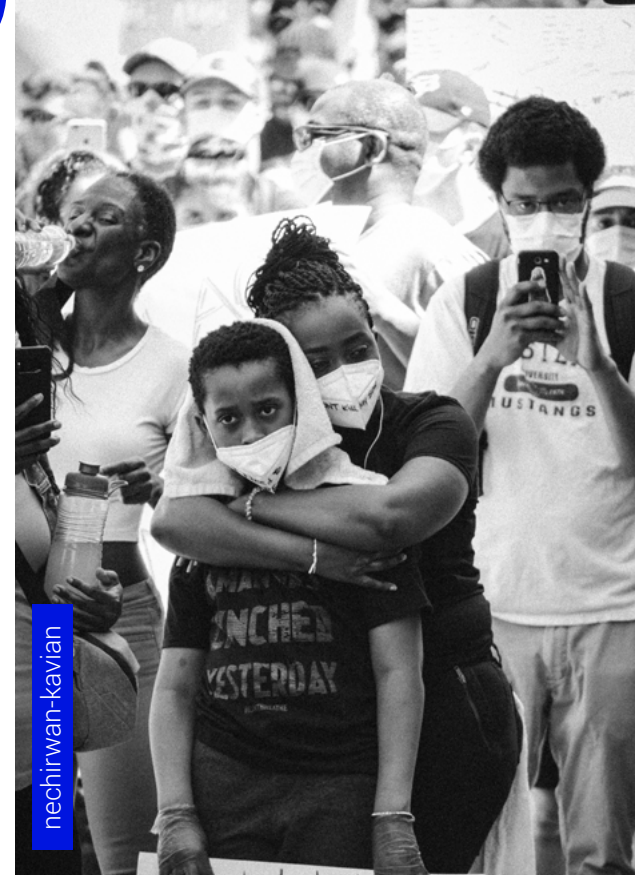
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NEXT STEPS

tandem-x-visuals

National Youth Trends is just heating up the stove. Following this report, we're going to be releasing brand new insights - through articles, young people's stories, interactive graphs, creative commissions and just plain old statistics every month through 2021 via our new website.

The best way you can stay up to date with what's going on for young people, in pop culture, and with the latest youth trends releases is to sign up to The DL. 100% you won't regret it.

OUTRO | NEXT STEPS

THANKS AND PARTNERS

gayatri-malhotra

This report would not have been possible without so many individuals and organisations. National Youth Trends is built on the principles of co-creation: between staff at Beatfreeks, partners, young people and funders.

Thanks to all of the institutions and individuals who've been in touch to help us craft our research framework and focus. Thanks to the wider team at Beatfreeks for their ongoing support, inspiration, love, guidance and motivation. Thanks to the best graphic designer in the world Nerea Pérez Rivero. Thanks to proof reader extrodanaire and all round word-wizzard Bohdan Piasecki. Thanks to our amazing partners who make the project possible.

Finally, thanks to Gen Z, and all the young people who built (and build) this research with us. Your inspiration, dedication, resilience, thoughtfulness, compassion, and intelligence motivate the work we do. You make us want to change the world for the better through the power of creativity. You're all lit af.

@sharan_dhanda

#THANKS

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