

Issue 1  
**Black Lives Matter**  
June 2020

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**Editors:**

**Maisie Ingram**

[y14maing@latymer.co.uk](mailto:y14maing@latymer.co.uk)

**Rojbin Arjen Yigit**

[y14royig@latymer.co.uk](mailto:y14royig@latymer.co.uk)

**Contributors:**

**Izzy Gray**

# EUPHRASIA

## *Latymer Literary Magazine*

Too often the stories that make up the literary canon of must-reads are 'stale, pale and male' thus narrowing our reading prospects and experiences. Surely the true value of reading is that it allows us to empathise with and understand others, to access stories otherwise inaccessible to us and to feel our own stories have been heard. In light of the current and necessary Black Lives Matter movement we decided to dedicate our first issue to sharing some of our favorite books by black authors. We've tried to compile a list that is both wide ranging and cohesive; the books all address racial politics, some more directly than others, but are written by authors of many nationalities trying to tell many different stories.

## **Fiction**

### **The Colour Purple**

-Alice walker

Published in 1982 Walker's novel *The Color Purple* explores sisterhood, first love, abuse, identity and belonging, alongside racial politics in the early 20th century American deep south. The story is told almost exclusively through the protagonist Celie's letters to God granting the reader access to her most private thoughts and desires and thus forming an intimate bond between her and the reader. It is impossible not to become incredibly invested in the family of characters you will begin to feel a part of. This is so much more than a typical coming of age novel and I would recommend it to everyone. (MI)

### **Americanah**

-Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie

Adichie perfectly balances an insightful, entertaining exploration of race in the US, UK and her native Nigeria with the heartfelt, cross-continental love story at Americanah's core. (IG)

### **The Hate U Give**

-Angie Thomas

This very readable and gripping YA novel takes the perspective of Starr, a 16-year-old thrown into the centre of the Black Lives Matter movement when she witnesses a police shooting. I found the book both incredibly emotional and educational, it allowed me to empathise with and realise the injustices of what I would otherwise have been far removed from. This fictional reflection of the ongoing situation in America is a necessary read for anyone looking to improve their understanding of the impact of police shootings. I found the book to be a gripping read. (MI)

## Fiction on our to-read list:

**Girl, Woman, Other** by Bernardine Evaristo, one of 2019's Booker prize winners, has been described as "a love song to modern Britain and black womanhood". It tells the stories of 12 people who mostly identify as women over a series of decades exploring ideas of gender, sexuality and race.

**Small Island** by Andrea Levy explores the Windrush experience in London through four voices. It discusses racial prejudices, the struggles of soldiers returning from war, immigration, the idea of belonging and much more.

## Non-Fiction

**Why I'm no longer talking to white people about race**  
-Reni Eddo-Lodge

"There is a hidden British history that no one talks about"

When I first read this book in 2017, I was horrified by the truths Lodge uncovers. Having learnt about the American civil rights movement, the strength of individuals like Martin Luther King, Rosa Parks, Malcolm X and among many others it had never occurred to me that there was also a civil rights movement in Britain. Britain's black power movement has slowly been erased perhaps because it doesn't seem to fit the utopian light in which we like to perceive our country. Lodge articulates the struggle of being black in Britain, from discussing the brutal murder of Stephen Lawrence (1997) to expressing her own personal struggles with having such a limited education about her own history. The recent events have been catalytic for BLM campaigns to gain more supporters however the thing that drew me to this book was the attention to micro-aggressions, I was confronted with the everyday harassment that Black people endure. The book changed my perspective in so many ways, a must read for all Races. A fantastic insight into how Race, feminism and class intersect. (RAY)

**I am not your baby mother**  
-Candice Braithwaite

This 'Mumoir' completely turns motherhood on its head! The glossy images of rosy cheeked young mothers who rely on Mumsnet as their first line of defence, are discarded. Braithwaite discusses what it means to be a black woman, wife and mother in a society designed for White success stories. The discussion of class and race is a significant one and Braithwaite invites us to consider that 'working class' doesn't always have to mean a White family who are struggling to make ends meet, but it can also transfigure into the images of a Black family who are struggling financially as well as navigating Britain and its distinct racial divides.

Braithwaite wrote with a certain group in mind; young black mothers. The title seeks to deconstruct the common misbelief that black mothers are dishevelled, by giving a different meaning to the phrase 'baby mother'. She articulates how one of her childhood best friends' father didn't want her in the house because of her skin colour and decades later, she has to confront the same racism whilst explaining to her 4-year-old why the little white girl didn't want to play with her.

This book is refreshingly different to the sickly positive representations of womanhood and Braithwaite's burning desire to tell her story comes across eager and charming. (RAY)

**Born A Crime**

-Trevor Noah

Noah's memoir tells the story of his remarkable journey from his criminal birth, born of a white dad and black mum in South Africa during apartheid, to hosting The Daily Show, America's largest talk show. His voice and humour shine through brilliantly (even more in the audiobook I'm told) and make this tale of youth and adventure into the most captivating and lovable autobiography I've ever read. (MI)

*June recommendations:*

**Podcast:**

The High Low podcast, they interviewed Candice Braithwaite and gave out links to lots of BLM resources.

([https://open.spotify.com/episode/5ZoQAk9h0qHHTfDfGJB10k?si=KlYW1\\_lkTEaGkEzmtOmlLQ](https://open.spotify.com/episode/5ZoQAk9h0qHHTfDfGJB10k?si=KlYW1_lkTEaGkEzmtOmlLQ))

**TEDtalk:**

Author Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie explores the importance of having access to and reading a wide variety of stories and voices.

[https://www.ted.com/talks/chimamanda\\_ngozi\\_adichie\\_the\\_danger\\_of\\_a\\_single\\_story?language=en](https://www.ted.com/talks/chimamanda_ngozi_adichie_the_danger_of_a_single_story?language=en)

**Article:**

"Prepare to cackle, weep, and live for the British PoC authors up for the Jhalak Prize"

<https://gal-dem.com/the-jhalak-prize-shortlist-prepare-to-cackle-weep-and-step-into-your-authentic-self/>

**Next Month: London**

The theme of our July issue is London and we're looking for people to contribute. We encourage you to submit a review of either fiction, non-fiction or poetry. We're looking for a wide range of submissions to help create a broad and interesting issue so please don't feel limited by the theme. As long as your submission has a tangible link to London we'd love to share your recommendations.

Please email (Rojbin) [y14royig@latymer.co.uk](mailto:y14royig@latymer.co.uk) or (Maisie) [y14maing@latymer.co.uk](mailto:y14maing@latymer.co.uk)