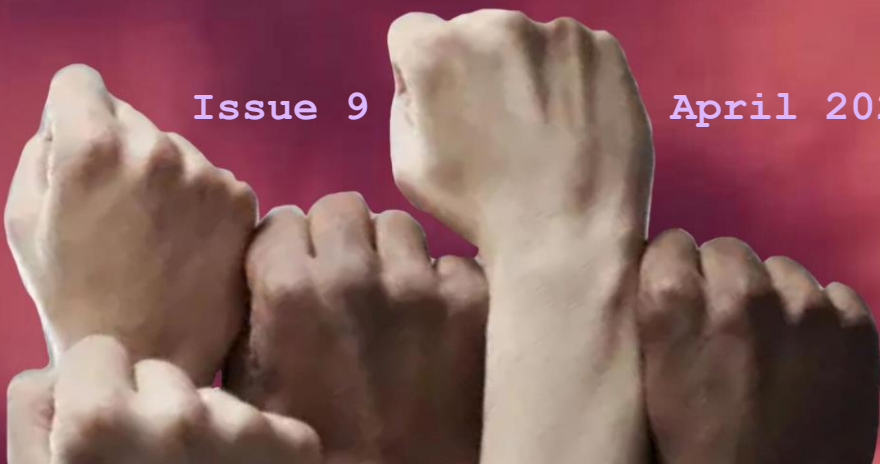


See Through



Issue 9

April 2021



Writers

Kate McCaughey (She/Her)

([@kateallicemcc](#) on Instagram)

Magda N-W (She/Her)

([@xan6ua](#) on Instagram)

Emma Nwachuku (She/Her)

([@emmanwachuku](#) on Instagram)

Artists

Caleb (They/Them)

([@artby_cali](#) on Instagram)

Adam Davies (He/Him)

([@adamxdavies](#) on Instagram)

Interview

Aaron Spencer, Proudly.blog (He/Him)

([@proudly_aaron](#) on Instagram)

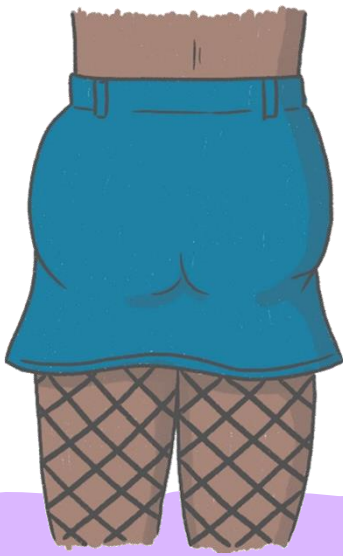
Tab (She/Her) and Jade (She/They), Leftbians

([@leftbians](#) on Instagram)

Edited by Kate McCaughey

Illustrated by Erica Donnelly ([@ed.does.art](#) on Instagram)





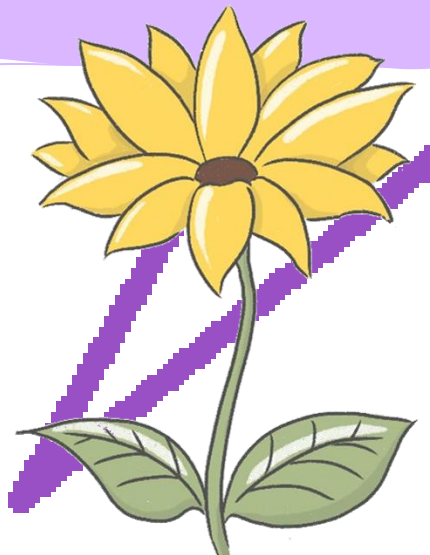
Here at See Through, we often focus on the softer, more mundane elements of life. But for this Aries season, we want you all to think big. Our contributors have been inspired by the issues important to them, showing us that there is something so loving and gentle at the heart of the acting out.

If you'd like to submit work to future issues, or just keep up with the zine, please follow our Instagram

[@seethroughzine](#)

And check out our website

<https://katemccaughey.wixsite.com/seethroughzine>

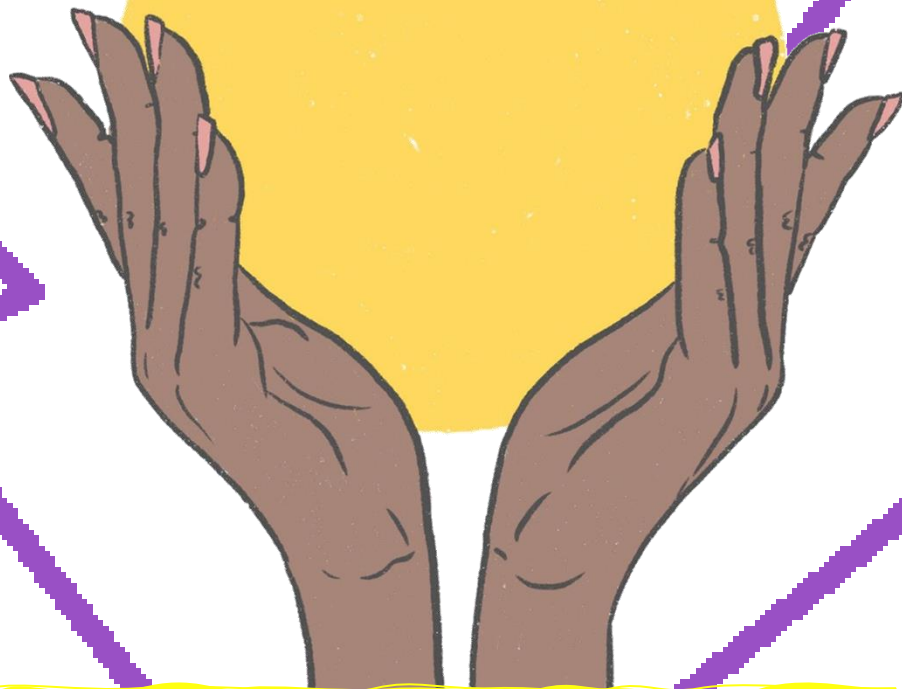


It was after the school banned Afro Hair
That she found her voice
The rejection of the hair that grew freely
from her scalp.

She took it as a war on her race.
A war on her gender.
For being both black and a female is a
punishable crime in certain parts of the
world.

If they expected fire in the form of
retaliation.
She would give them ice.
Shouts would be made into whispers.

A sea of textured hair that rose high towards
the sun
Began to appear in droves.
A blanket of thick curls, coils and kinks
bouncing rhythmically in the air.
A silent uprising.



My name is Emma Nwachuku and I am a born and bred Londoner with a passion for creative writing. When I'm not working, I can be found writing short stories or poems on my phone a notebook or my hand if creativity strikes. My ultimate goal in life is to become a full-time writer/author/screenwriter/producer ... the list is endless. I basically want to become the British version of Oprah and have my hands in all different pots. I am also very passionate about two things that affect everyone; anti-racism and climate change.



I'm an illustrator based in London and graduated from Brighton University studying Illustration in 2017. Predominantly creating digital artwork, I tend to create dystopian landscapes featuring expressive characters and narratives. It's nice to be able to create work more thought provoking and idealisms that I can share through my creative practise.



The in-between years,
though they wouldn't want
to be called that
I did a lot of acting out

Those patterns and ideas
I thought were needed
be good , drink that,
like boys, though in this
I found no solace

These liminal years
Soon stared me down
Asked me what I was
performing for, and
came no good answer

but still, I started acting
"out! And watched the change
shrugged off rebellion
with new found flames.



Magda is a poet, witch and scrap-gardener. She is currently in Colorado learning how to become a seed farmer while running a weekly newsletter about simple climate action/food waste (Scrap Kitchen). Website: xandua.substack.com



PLAYLIST

★ Paradisin' / Rina Sawayama

@chloelbower

★ Bondage Up Yours / X Ray Spex

@gingerjoanna

★ House Arrest / Bryan Adams

@lillibethchung

★ Jumpsuit / Twenty One Pilots

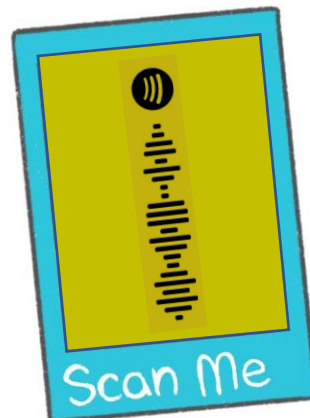
@ed.does.art

★ Yuk Foo / Wolf Alice

@katealicemcc

★ Children of the Revolution / T.Rex

@ooshalia



#KILL THIS BILL



We are Not a virus!

Bad Reputation / Joan Jett

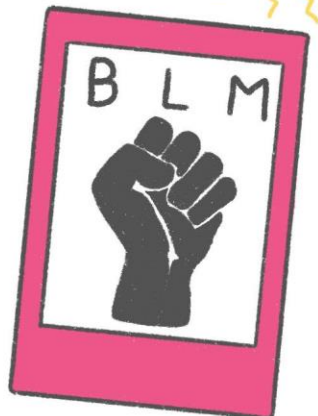
Ghost Town / The Specials

F*CK tha Police / N.W.A

Killing in the Name / Rage Against the Machine

It's a Sin / Pet Shop Boys

Standing in the Way Of Control / Gossip




The Nature of Rebelling

Kate McCaughey

To an extent, I think we're all somewhat infatuated with the idea of being a rebel. Maybe it's just the angry 15-year-old still lurking somewhere inside me, but I think many of us will always crave that feeling the first time you do something that causes a scene. Perhaps it was something small, like getting a secret piercing or tattoo, or maybe you had an escape route you used regularly from your bedroom to parties.

The feeling of doing or saying something daring - whatever scale 'daring' exists on - brings with it a myriad of emotions. There's the rush of knowing some people will be impressed with you, expertly balanced by the fact that some people will be disappointed. Sometimes there's the ecstasy of the secretive element; the double life. Last but of course not least, is the feeling of being an adult. I'm 23 this year, so I've been making my own decisions for a while. At 16 I had free reign to get a septum piercing, even though my Mum hates it, and at 18 I had moved away from home and got tattoos. I smoked, drank and partied weekly and had complete right to do so. But I still felt a buzz from how grown up it all felt, sometimes shocked that I was even allowed to make that decision for myself. Even now I waltz into a supermarket and get euphoria buying myself alcohol, feeling for some reason like I'm doing something I shouldn't be (a sales assistant yesterday thought I was over 25 and I'm still shocked that she didn't see the utter baby hiding in me).



The interesting thing with acting out, however, is that it only feels good when it was intentional. When I was really young, a bracelet in Claire's Accessories looped onto my bag and I didn't realise until we'd left the shopping centre (it sounds like a lie, I promise it isn't). My parents trusted me and said I might as well keep it; it was just a mistake. But I felt terrible. I wasn't excited by my rebellion, because I hadn't planned it. I didn't have a burning desire to do something radical, I just wanted to browse their Pepsi flavoured lip glosses (those were the days).

The first time I kissed a girl was in a club in Leeds. I'd seen her dancing for a little while and decided to ask if I could buy her a drink. I wasn't doing anything wrong, and my friends knew I had talked about girls, but for whatever reason, it felt like a rebellion. My parents didn't know, and I hadn't even really come to terms with being attracted to girls properly, I just knew I wanted to kiss them. Another time, I kissed another girl in a different club, and when I lost her, a boy tapped me on the shoulder and said, "she's over there." It was the first time someone else had acknowledged girls and me together, in a romantic pairing. This was when I was still 'heteroflexible', and it gave me a buzz, because doing something radical on the premise of it being 'just for fun' gave me wiggle room to opt-out later.



Secret
Tattoos
Shhh!



Almost 4 years later, now aware of my lack of attraction to men, I suddenly don't want the rebellion that comes with lesbianism. Now, if someone gave me a hard time about my actions, I don't have wiggle room to pretend it was for fun, or I actually like boys. My rebellion has genuine fear attached to it, where it never has before.

As we're getting older, our tiny victories of doing something 'rebellious' have evolved. Wearing lip-gloss to school has become opting out of marriage, a secret boyfriend has become questioning the value of the police force, and a cider at a party has become calling out racism in the workplace. In my attempts to understand more about Queer Theory, I've been reading a lot about Poststructuralism. It's the theory that we can't ever prove the truth of anything - there is no 'essence' to a thing, that makes it undoubtably *that* thing. It's the deconstruction of language and systems that we all put blind faith in as a universal truth. If your housemate presented you with a flat they want you both to buy, but only told you about it and didn't show you any pictures, you wouldn't agree until you had substantial evidence of why it's a good flat. You'd want details of how long it's been there, who owns it, who has full control of it, what their rights are, what *your* rights are, etc. In this instance, say that when you see the flat in person, and hear its full history, it's terrible. But only through you interrogating your flatmate did you find this out. As a society, we all buy the flat instantly, no questions asked. Poststructuralism is the little kid who constantly asks why - the tiny rebel who leads you to question everything.

Kids don't care about sounding clever or conforming to what everyone else thinks, they simply want the answer. As adults, we could learn a lesson or two about this. Maybe we're past getting secret piercings or having daring opinions about bands, but we're at the perfect point to question everything put in front of us, and hopefully, pull it all apart.

Why?

Kate McCaughey (She/Her) is a writer living and working in her hometown, Newcastle Upon Tyne. She writes poetry and articles, usually focusing on the LGBTQ+ experience, contemporary social issues, classism and nature. She is currently working part-time to save up for a Masters in Publishing and Creative Writing, as well as (trying) to finish her first novel. When she's not busy working or typing, she's usually analysing people's birth charts, playing with her dog or thinking about making a cup of tea.

I acted out

Anonymous

I acted out of fear when I was abused by my dad for years.
I acted out of courage when I stood up to him through tears.
I acted out of anger the first time I hit him back.
I acted out of love when I started to heal the cracks.
I acted out of compassion when I rebuilt a relationship with him.
Now I know he's there for me through the thick and thin.



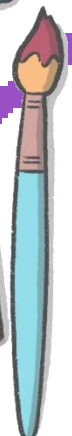
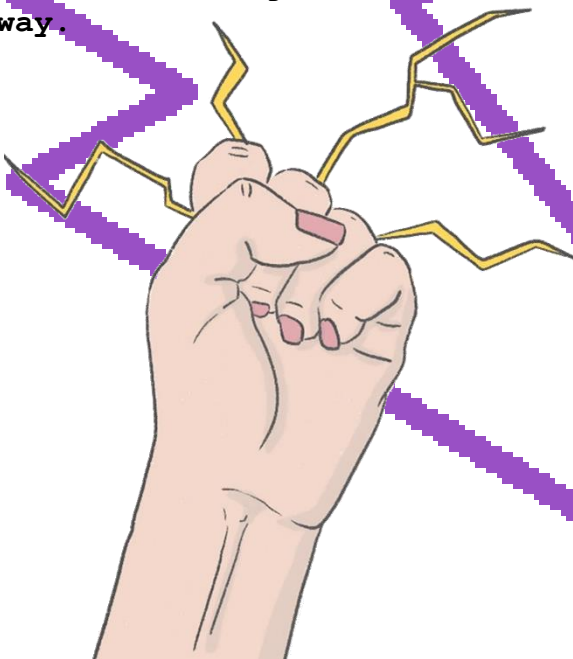
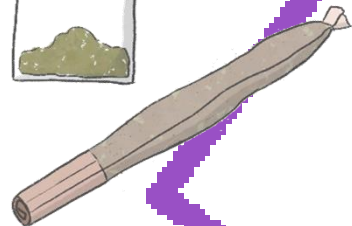
I acted out of compliance when I lost my virginity.
I acted out of spite when he fell for someone new.
I acted out of ignorance because I thought I was supposed to.

I acted out of passion when I fell for an older boy.
I acted out of desperation when he played me like a toy.
I acted out of despair when he raped me in vulnerability.
I acted out of loneliness when I stayed loyal to him anyway.
I acted out of rage when he was the one who disposed of me.
Now I know he was never even deserving of knowing me.

I acted out of pain when it all became too much.
I acted out of feeling lost when I started taking drugs.
I acted out of hollowness when I tried to take my life.

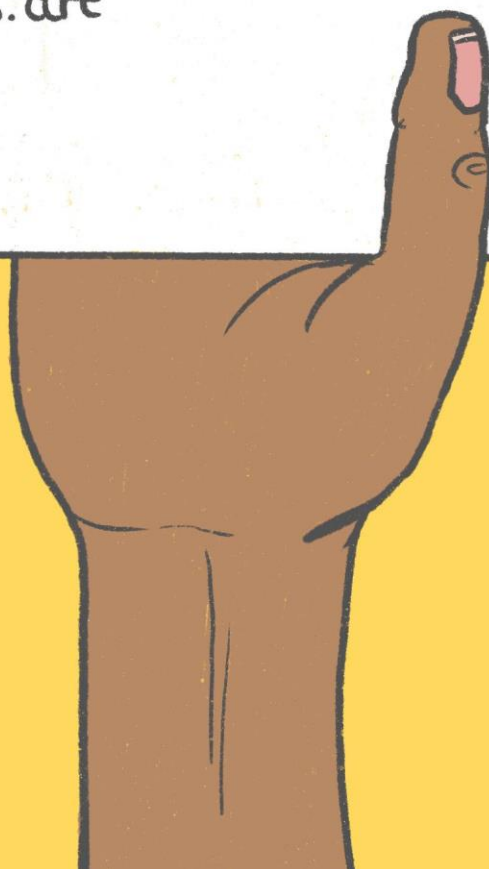


I acted out of disbelief when the system wouldn't help.
I acted out of pride when I trudged my way through life.
I acted out of self-preservation when I denied my true self.
I acted out of resilience when I sought to recover myself.
I acted out of hope that I'd fall in love with living someday.
I acted out of gratitude when feeling suicidal started to go away.



How Do You DEFINE REBELLION?

- Protest! @ifrakandrollisdead
- Taking what is deemed 'normal' and **acting how you want to** regardless @victoriagibsonx
- Standing up for something you believe in or **refusing to conform** @ed.does.art





IS REBELLION A GOOD THING?

Yes! Rebellion is
necessary to oppose
fascist regimes.

@ifrakandrollisdead

17 votes Yes

1 vote No

no because I
was rebellious & IDK
how I'm not dead.

@taylah_harley

Yes. Without
Rebellion, things
would never change,
Such a boring, unjust
world that would
be.

@victoriagibsonx

Yes! You learn a
lot about yourself
and your views
about the world.


@ed.does.art



What is the most rebellious thing you've done?



tattoos, piercings & drugs all when I have a heart condition @taylah_harley



Be a brown skinned, mentally ill, female bisexual in a world that hates me @ifrakandrollisdead



Kept Alive @rednblackthanku



Move half way across the country to escape my family and establish a life with my girlfriend @victoriagibsonx



Pinched a radio on my last day of working at a gallery, set it off, sat outside, listened to chaos @ljmc_



Ran away to London to join Extinction Rebellion @ed.does.art

Who is your
favourite rebel?

Jeremy
Corbyn

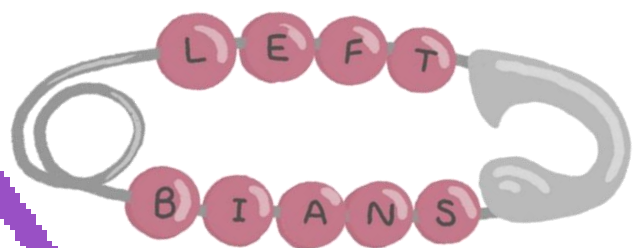
@ifrakandrollisdead





Projects who Protest

This issue's long read asks 2 LGBTQ+ owned businesses about their experiences running projects with queerness at the heart of them.



In your own words, tell us a little bit about your project.

We are a small online business called 'leftbians' and we're a couple; Tab (she/her) and Jade (she/they). We make jewelry, accessories, clothing and other bits. Most of our products uplift queer identities and/or anti-capitalist and socialist messages, but we also have just plain ol' fun pieces too. Everything is handmade and sold on Etsy and Depop (the goal is to have our own website up and running in a few months too!)

What inspired you to begin the project?

We met in art school and collaborated on protest art together, zines, exhibitions and more. This love of DIY art, combined with our shared enthusiasm for unique accessories (we would always try to find each-other gay socialist trinkets on Etsy but found it surprising difficult!) just naturally lead to us trying our hand at making things we'd like to wear that were also affordable and inclusive. Thanks to an amazing supportive online community, we were able to make this our full time job!



What societal changes would you like to come from your project? What are you striving for?

On the one hand, we just want people who would enjoy our products to have them there as an option; like we said, it was hard to find anything under the niche of 'gay communist' years ago haha. On the other hand, it's cool that, in some way, we are putting political messages out there. People are making statements in their ears and on their tote bags in small acts of daily protest.

Would you say your project is a form of 'acting out' or rebellion? A sort of extension of this; what do you think of the idea that queer identities are inherently political? Do you think queer people have a responsibility to uphold?

Aside from our products having some very direct messages (like about beheading Jeff Bezos), I guess it's a f**k you to rainbow capitalism when more people buy from queer businesses over corporations, when it comes to pride products! In no way, is it ever your 'responsibility' as a queer person to politicise yourself, however, you are a part of a community with so much culture, history and overlap into liberation groups; it's so special. People power!

Finally, just for a bit of fun, who is your favourite famous rebel and why?

Is it too basic to say Angela Davis? We saw her speak a couple of years ago and we were both blown away by her love of listening and learning from young people, even when so many of us learnt a lot of what know from her. She really sees her work as an activist part of an on-going inter-generational struggle for collective liberation hand-in-hand with the dismantlement of capitalism and neoliberalism.



@leftbians on Instagram

<https://www.etsy.com/uk/shop/Leftbians>



Projects who Protest



In your own words, tell us a little bit about your blog.

Proudly is an LGBTQ+ based blog with the aim to share extraordinary stories from everyday people within the community. From personal interviews to breaking news stories, Proudly is a safe space that wants to cover everything and anything in the aim to help and inspire readers who are going through something similar.

What inspired you to begin the project?

Originally set up as a personal mental health blog following the sudden passing of my best friend. The more stories I shared, I began receiving more real kind feedback from my followers on social media who I have never come across before just to say that they resonated with my experiences and it was nice to know I was not alone. It got to a point I could not just share my story alone, as more contributors came forward and more viewers increased what was once my personal diary now became a designated safe space for people within the LGBTQ+ community.

What societal changes would you like to come from your project? What are you striving for?

I would like to create a safe space for all visitors to feel that I represent every element of the LGBTQ+ community. We cannot just cover a specific demographic because then Proudly is not following the mission statement that I pride myself on for what I have created. To know that one of my creations has helped influence or inspire somebody positively then the purpose of the blog has been fulfilled.

Would you say your project is a form of 'acting out' or rebellion? A sort of extension of this; what do you think of the idea that queer identities are inherently political? Do you think queer people have a responsibility to uphold?

Personally I would say that my blog is making a political statement with the certain stories that I share. It is biased towards the LGBTQ+ community as the whole purpose of the site is to provide a voice and platform for the people Proudly represents so will always spread positive stories from the community for every protest, support LGBTQ+ businesses and hopefully influence change towards equality. Our responsibility lies with the content we create, if we remain voiceless then we are just as bad as those who oppose us. The only way we can inspire change is if we all play our part and never give up the fight.

Finally, just for a bit of fun, who is your favourite famous rebel and why?

It has to be Marsha P. Johnson. Without the Stonewall Riots we would not have come so far or had the same acceptance and equality that we have right now. Pride was once a protest before it was a parade. If Marsha never threw that brick in 1969 we would have never come so far. This is why we must pay homage to our past but never give up the fight to make it a brighter and a safer future for us all.



@proudly_aaron on Instagram

<https://proudly.blog/>



I am a trans digital and acrylic artist who focuses on different types of work. Some of my work is psychedelic, others are minimalist and my favourite are "political" pieces like the one I produced for this magazine. The phrase "cis-tem offender" comes from Bimini Bon-Boulash's verse in a song from RuPaul's Drag Race UK and it inspired me to create this fun piece. Bimini identifies as non-binary and is a very big inspiration of mine.