Representation, marginalisation and funding in the literary industry

By Serafina Lee

Introduction

The publishing industry, like all facets of modern society, contains systemic prejudice towards certain groups. Increasing public awareness of racism means that dismantling prejudiced structures is more easily within reach. Within all industries, the impetus of education is a duty that falls upon every individual, particularly those benefitting from systems of oppression. We must be active in understanding the multiple barriers that specific groups face, as each marginalised group is presented with their own unique obstacles. In this essay, I shall examine the challenges that marginalised groups are confronted with when striving for exposure in literature. Particularly focusing on BAME and people from low-income backgrounds, I shall outline how the publishing industry has underrepresented some groups due to an emphasis on perceived commercial visibility. It must also be acknowledged that BAME groups are more likely to come from low-income backgrounds, and therefore face intersectional challenges within the publishing industry. I shall examine how endorsing small publishers and charities is a necessary step in promoting BAME and low-income groups, due to their increased commitment to platforming a diverse array of voices. It is marginalised groups who will bear the brunt of the COVID-19 recession, excluded from the job market as publishing houses focus on easy sales to generate profit.[1] Now more than ever, independent publishing houses are vital in platforming a diverse range of voices.

It is important to first establish what it means for BAME or people from low-income backgrounds to be marginalised. Joan G Mowat outlines how marginalisation is *'often considered at the broader, societal level in public policy and in terms of marginalised populations of groups'* as opposed to the *'subjective and emotional aspects of human life and the interpretative framework of the individual'*.[2] Marginalisation is psychological and plays a major role in personal lived experience as well as affecting wider communities. Literature has a dual capacity to confront marginalisation, both by changing wider societal conceptions of marginalised groups but also by providing marginalised individuals with voices and experiences similar to their own, reducing personal feelings of solitude and ostracisation. Literature can redefine lived experiences of marginalisation by altering an individual's self-perception, becoming a means of expression that lasts for generations. Therefore, having an inclusive and authentic range of publications is directly related to improving individual mental wellbeing, confidence and security. Increasingly, problems such as poverty or racism are viewed as *'problems of the*

---

[1] Winston Morgan, 'Genetics is not why more BAME people die of coronavirus: structural racism is', *The Guardian*, 4 June 2020. <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2020/jun/04/genetics-bame-people-die-coronavirus-structural-racism> [accessed 20 June 2020].

[2] Joan G Mowat, 'Towards a new conceptualisation of marginalisation', *European Educational Research Journal*, 14.5 (2015) <https://strathprints.strath.ac.uk/50672/1/Mowat_EERJ_2015_Towards_a_new_conceptualisation_of_marginalisation.pdf> [accessed 25 June 2020] (p. 4).

wrong mindset', or individual problems that are caused by lack of merit.[3] Whilst the belief in meritocracy prevails, marginalisation will be attributed more strongly to individual failure, as opposed to acknowledging the systemic prejudice that Western capitalism is predicated upon. Literature also has the potential to tackle systemic prejudice by informing social debate, challenging injustices and widening awareness. My arguments shall therefore concentrate on the systemic problems that fuel disparities within the publishing industry, and the absolute vitality of literature in decreasing social exclusion and feelings of isolation for marginalised groups.

Lived experiences of marginalization within publishing are also incredibly pertinent to multiple groups, such as prisoners, ex-offenders and disabled people. These groups suffer the same but often totally unchallenged or even encouraged prejudice. Whilst my focus shall specifically be on authors from low-income and BAME backgrounds, the structural issues that face them also confront a multitude of other marginalized groups. Finding solutions and ways of tackling oppressive structures is essential in decreasing all lived experiences of marginalization, not just economic and ethnic backgrounds.

Challenges facing writers from BAME and low-economic backgrounds

Conceptions of literary merit have long been steeped in elitism, with literary awards often neglecting minorities' voices. Professor Squires illuminates how '*the Carnegie, judged by librarians, is the most prestigious awards for children's books in the UK, but has never been awarded to a BAME author*'.[4] Indeed, even when BAME writers are published, their work is often pigeonholed into comparative affiliation with other BAME writers. Their name and work will first and foremost be affiliated with their ethnicity, despite their subject matter. This form of racial 'othering' functions to separate and segregate BAME writers whilst capitalising on and fetishizing their cultural backgrounds. Marketability comes into conflict with nuanced and sensitive platforming of minorities' voices, racializing '*cultural commodity in a deeply reductive manner framed […] through the orientalist gaze of the dominant culture that in effect runs the media industries*'.[5] BAME writer's work is therefore largely only endorsed under a problematic white gaze in order to garner profit as opposed to listening and responding to their individual voices. This kind of homogenous approach simply perpetuates marginalisation.

---

[3] Mowat, p.2.

[4] Claire Squires, 'Publishing's Diversity Deficit', *CAMEo Cuts*, 2 (2017) <https://le.ac.uk/cameo/publications/cameo-cuts> [accessed 5 June 2020] (p. 3).

[5] Saha, as quoted by Squires, p. 7.

However, even accessing the publishing industry is a major feat for BAME writers. Booktrust revealed in a 2019 report that in 2017, fewer than 6% of children's authors and illustrators were people of colour, and less than 2% of these were British people of colour.[6] In addition, a 2018 study by UCL lecturer, Dr. Melanie Ramdarshan Bold, revealed that among British young adult books, just 8% of the titles published between the decade of 2006-2016 were by writers of colour.[7] Clearly, there is a huge disparity in BAME access to publishing. Reni Eddo-Lodge is the first and only black woman to top Britain's non-fiction book bestseller chart. She states that she '*can't help but be dismayed by this – the tragic circumstances in which this achievement came about. The fact that it's 2020 and I'm the first. Let's be honest. Reader demand aside, that it took this long is a horrible indictment of the publishing industry'.*[8] BAME writers are still not being heard or platformed in bestseller charts, casting light upon the way the publishing industry, particularly the larger houses, predominantly promote white authors.

Ethnicity of children's authors and illustrators in 2017
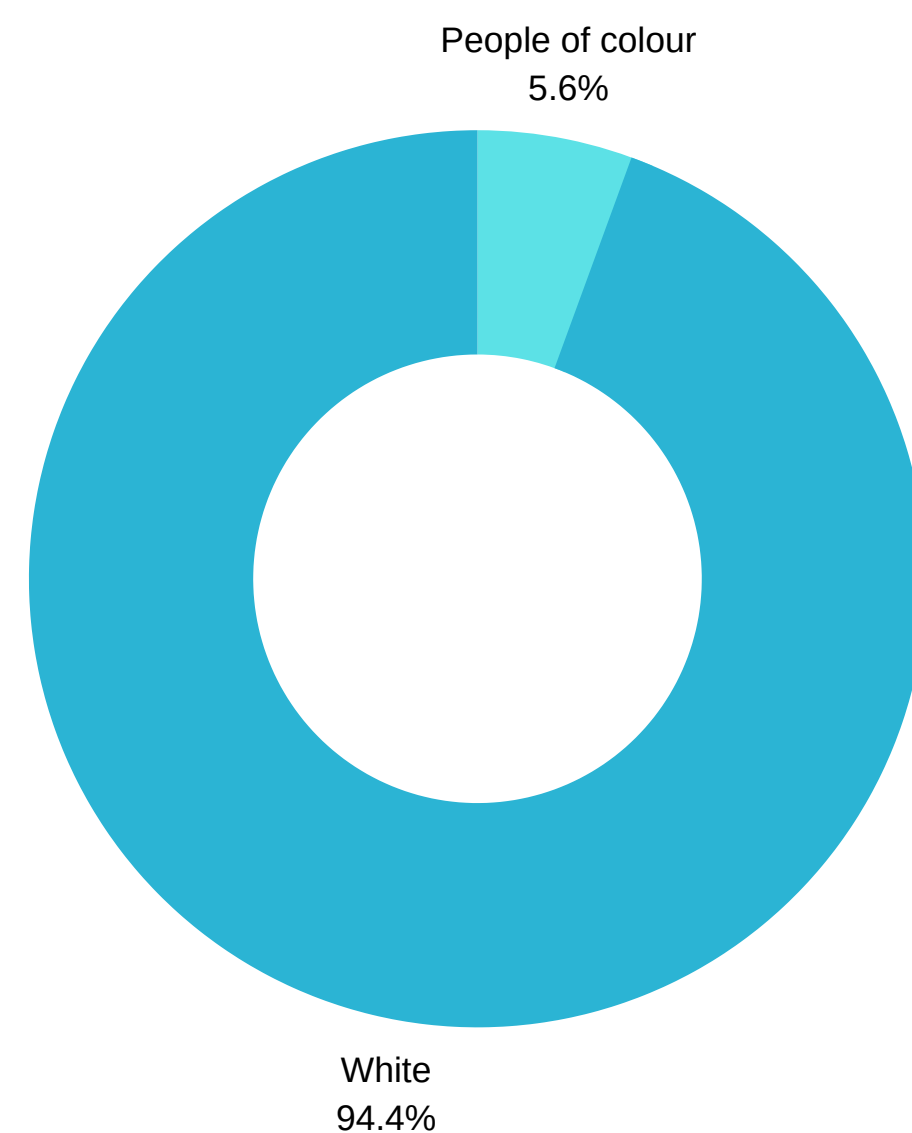

Figure 1. Data from Dr. Melanie Ramdarshan Bold, 'Representation of people of colour among children's book authors and illustrators', *Booktrust,* 2019. <https://www.booktrust.org.uk/what-we-do/programmes-and-campaigns/booktrust-represents/representation-of-people-of-colour-among-childrens-book-authors-and-illustrators/> [accessed 19 August 2020].

Regional differences also massively influence the accessibility of the publishing industry, as placements are only viable for people with connections or the ability to finance accommodation whilst working for low paid positions in London or other large cities. The Panic! study concludes that '*disproportionately creative businesses in the UK are clustered in the South East of England, particularly in London'*.[9] These affluent areas also have the highest living costs, therefore making employment at the Living Wage or over even more important. For working class professionals, this

---

[6] BookTrust, 'Less than 2% of the published authors and illustrators in the UK are British people of colour says new BookTrust research', 15 April 2019. <https://www.booktrust.org.uk/news-and-features/news/news-2019/less-than-two-per-cent-of-published-authors-and-illustrators-in-the-uk-are-british-people-of-colour-says-new-booktrust-research/> [accessed 23 August 2020].

[7] Dr. Melanie Ramdarshan Bold, 'The Eight Percent Problem: Authors of Colour in the British Young Adult Market (2006-2016)', *Publishing Research Quarterly*, 34, (2018). <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12109-018-9600-5> [accessed 23 August 2020].

[8] Louis Chilton, "I can't help but be dismayed': Reni Eddo-Lodge becomes first black author to top paperback non-fiction charts', *Independent*, 11 June 2020. <https://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/books/news/reni-eddo-lodge-george-floyd-talking-white-people-about-race-book-chart-a9560236.html> [accessed 16 July 2020].

[9] Dr Orion Brook, Dr David O'Brien and Dr. Mark Taylor, 'Panic! Social Class, Taste and Inequalities in the Creative Industries', <https://createlondon.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/Panic-Social-Class-Taste-and-Inequalities-in-the-Creative-Industries1.pdf> [accessed 2 June 2020].

quickly becomes a form of inescapable exploitation as individuals will believe that their career will suffer unless they continue working for free. At the same time, smaller independent publishers are put in a position of constantly seeking funding and fighting against the dominant, larger publishers over book distribution and promotion.

The *Panic!* study notes the damaging belief in meritocracy, with higher paid, mostly white employees more strongly believing that success is garnered through merit alone and is unhindered by race or class.[10] Those in positions of power have unconscious or conscious bias against both BAME people and those from low economic backgrounds and are therefore even less likely to pursue diversity employment whilst the overwhelming contention that merit corresponds to success prevails. In reality, social reproduction explanations (defined as '*networks, family background and wealth, along with gender and ethnicity*') account for success in the industry.[11] Nepotism is a major issue especially within positions of power, as the highly paid are more likely to know other cultural and creative workers in positions of power and influence. It is therefore most advantageous to them, personally to perpetuate this elitism as opposed to striving to diversify the sector. The lack of staff diversity within the industry also means that manuscript submissions are judged by people from privileged backgrounds. The fact that those at the top of the editorial hierarchy with the most influence are from largely white and affluent backgrounds means that writers from marginalised backgrounds are often excluded. They will judge commercial viability through narratives familiar to them, not necessarily platforming those voices that need to be heard the most.

> The fact that those at the top of the editorial hierarchy with the most influence are from largely white and affluent backgrounds means that writers from marginalised backgrounds are often excluded.

Structural disparities within the industry

Having commercial viability at the heart of publishing aims also limits the scope of voices promoted. Large publishing companies also dominate the industry; Amazon, for example, is estimated to control 95% of the market share of ebook sales in the UK.[12] Alice Revel argues that '*like all monopolies, Amazon relies on homogeneity: driving customers to a select number of discounted titles to take advantage of economies*

---

[10] Brook, O'Brien and Taylor.

[11] Brook, O'Brien and Taylor.

[12] Michael Kozlowski, 'Amazon Controls 95% of the eBook Market in the UK', *Good E Reader,* 27 March 2015. <https://goodereader.com/blog/electronic-readers/amazon-controls-95-of-the-ebook-market-in-the-uk> [accessed 16 July 2020].

of scale. By advocating for books that would otherwise be ignored, smaller bookshops can sidestep their monopolistic advantage'.[13] Therefore, larger publishers will only '*put real marketing muscle behind one or two books per year that they truly believe has a shot at becoming a bestseller. If a publisher brings out a hundred books per year, it's expecting that one of those will outsell the other 99-combined'.* These select few books that are intensely marketed will also mostly be from writers from privileged backgrounds.[14] Despite more available self-publishing channels through companies such as Amazon, the marketing skills and budget required for self-published authors to actually sell a book renders this an inaccessible and arduous pathway to publication. Self-published books are also not eligible for major prizes like the Bailey, the Costa and Man Booker, with getting shortlisted for major prizes being the main way a literary novel will become a bestseller. As such, the act of producing a book has been widened, but the reach of each book produced has narrowed.[15] This is why independent publishers with literary merit at their core - as opposed to just commercial viability - are so essential in platforming an array of publications to the general public, as well as supporting the careers of marginalised writers.

While there are over 6000 companies which comprise the UK publishing sector, most of the English-language titles on the shelves are represented by 'The Big 5' publishing houses / media conglomerates in the US and the UK: Penguin Random House (Bertelsmann), Hachette (Ladardère), HarperCollins (News Corp), Simon & Schuster (National Amusements) and Macmillan (Holtzbrinck). Current statistics are not readily available, however it was estimated that approximately 60% of books on the shelves were represented by these publishers circa 2013.[16] With over half of the industry dominated by 'The Big 5', a significant amount of strain is placed upon independent publishers to compete for shelf space. Small publishers are at the disadvantage of not having expansive marketing budgets or networks of sales reps who liaise with retailers. Over half of publications will therefore fall short on diversity, and therefore are missing out from literary merit provided by marginalized groups.

---

[13] Alice Revel, 'Amazon is more dangerous than ever - and publishers need a plan', *The Bookseller*, 5 December 2018. <https://www.thebookseller.com/futurebook/amazon-more-dangerous-ever-and-publishers-need-plan-899551> [accessed 24 June 2020].

[14] Nick Morgan, 2016. 'Which Is Better: Self- Publishing Or Traditional Publishing?', *Forbes*, 5 May 2016. <https://www.forbes.com/sites/nickmorgan/2016/05/05/which-is-better-self-publishing-or-traditional-publishing/#10df13a11d98> [accessed 24 June 2020].

[15] Ros Barber, 'For me, traditional publishing means poverty. But self-publish? No way', *The Guardian*, 21 March 2016. <https://www.theguardian.com/books/booksblog/2016/mar/21/for-me-traditional-publishing-means-poverty-but-self-publish-no-way> [accessed 25 June 2020].

[16] Andrew Losowsky, 'DRM Lawsuit Filed By Independent Bookstores Against Amazon, 'Big Six' Publishers', *Huffington Post*, 20 February 2013. <https://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/entry/drm-lawsuit-independent-bookstores-amazon_n_2727519?ri18n=true&ncid=edlinkusaolp00000003> [accessed 24 June 2020].

How do we then begin to rebalance the tacit endorsement of white privilege that permeates the industry? Smaller publishing houses, such as Peepal Tree Press, are more willing to publish new voices and take risks on subject matter, aiming to support 'international writing from the Caribbean, its diaporas and the UK'.[17] For example, they recently published *A Portable Paradise* by Roger Robinson, winner of the T.S. Eliot Prize 2020 and the RSL Ondaatje Prize. Unmediated minority voices must be allowed to permeate into the mainstream, therefore publishing their work and distributing it to educational institutions would expand the reach of their words. Incorporating BAME experience into the curriculum is necessary in order to dispel prejudice, racism and stereotyping. Only publishers that recognise the importance and value of BAME writers, rather than ingrained perceptions of commercial viability, can address the disparity.

One of the main challenges facing independent and charitable publishers is finding funding opportunities. There are numerous obstacles and issues prevalent within the application process, such as complex funding forms that only allow well connected organisations with enough resources to hire paid fundraisers to complete the forms. Funding is largely given to larger organisations who are for profit and there is little monitoring of the work that well-funded awardees do. Public money is currently not distributed to enough diversity led charitable organisations. The Arts Council, for example, currently fund 828 organisations, out of which only 53 are BAME led, constituting a mere 6.4% of total funding. Based on the population size of BAME people in the UK alone, this figure should be up to 14% with at least 116 BAME led organisations being funded.[18] BAME led organisations

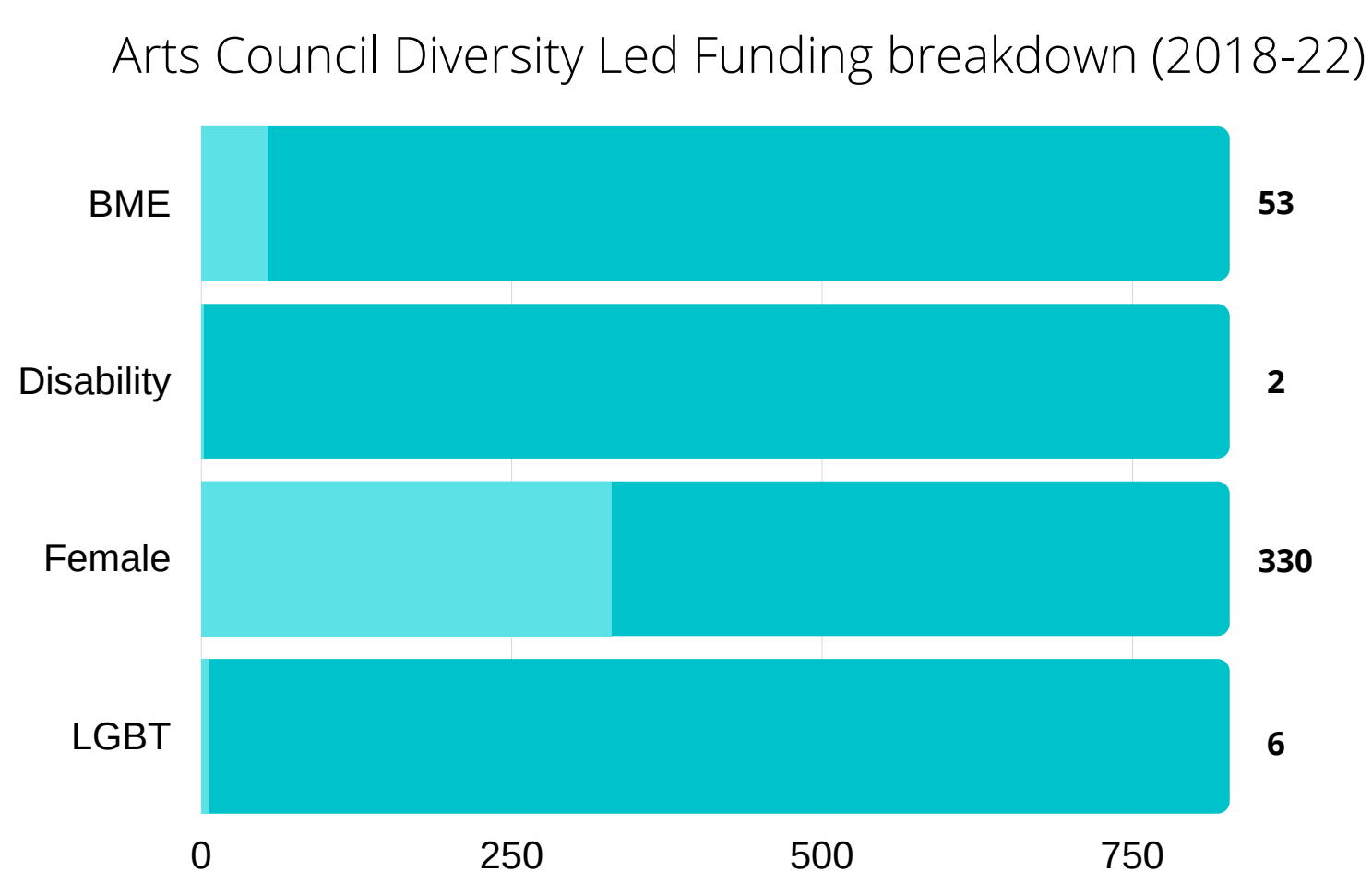### Arts Council Diversity Led Funding breakdown (2018-22)

Figure 2. Total number of diverse led* organisations with successful applications out of 828 total successful funding agreements from the Arts Council National Portfolio of Organisations for the period 2018-22
*diverse led defined as an organisation where 51% or more of their board and senior management declare as BME, Disabled, LGBT and/or female.

[17] Peepal Tree Press, <https://www.peepaltreepress.com/about-us> [accessed 23 August 2020].

[18] Arts Council, 'Investment Factsheet', <https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/sites/default/files/download-file/Investment__factsheet_14062019_0.pdf> [accessed 23 August 2020].

are therefore significantly underrepresented, particularly in London, where they make up 40% of the population.

Organisations who therefore have the most social impact in terms of reaching marginalized communities are being neglected whilst already established organisations have increased access to funding resources. Representation needs to be improved in order to actually align with public benefit rather than commercial returns. In addition, the Art Council's policy of not researching complaints into their funded organisations means that the usage of public money cannot be held to account in any meaningful way by members of the public. This is a structural barrier to smaller organisations that work directly with underrepresented groups whilst providing no accountability for the larger organisations. In fact, the Art Council's Equality Analysis 10 year strategy from 2020-30[19] identified that there was a need for the Arts Council to '*write better inclusivity into diversity clauses into investment and deliver this; provide more support and funding to a wider range of individuals; simplify reporting and monitoring requirements and application processes; and redistribute a greater proportion of funding to smaller and community based organisations, instead of making large investments in bigger, more established organisations*'.[20] Therefore, smaller charities face numerous structural barriers when competing for funding, which is unevenly distributed already, in many cases, to for-profit organisations. In terms of diversity, the decision making behind this funding also has an issue with diversity. For example, on the Arts Council's National Council in 2018/2019, only 2 out of 15 people were BAME and only 1 person was disabled. In this way, the power of decision-making still lies within the hands of a privileged few, therefore perpetuating systemic racism.

COVID-19

It is more necessary than ever to understand the nature of BAME underrepresentation during COVID-19 as BAME people are proven to be disproportionately affected by it, especially those from low-economic backgrounds. We must take practical preventative action against discrimination in an uncertain job market.[21] As Winston Morgan, a journalist at *The Guardian* argues, '*In the absence of any genetic link between racial groups and susceptibility to the virus, we are left with*

---

[19] Arts Council, 'Equality Analysis: Development of Arts Council England's 10-year strategy, 2020-30', <https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/sites/default/files/download-file/Equality%20Analysis_Arts%20Council%20England_Strategy%202020-2030.pdf> [accessed 16 July 2020].

[20] Arts Council, 'Equality, Diversity and the Creative Case: A Data Report, 2018-19', 17 February 2020. <https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/publication/equality-diversity-and-creative-case-data-report-2018-19> [accessed 16 July 2020].

[21] Winston Morgan, 'Genetics is not why more BAME people die of coronavirus: structural racism is', *The Guardian*, 4 June 2020. <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2020/jun/04/genetics-bame-people-die-coronavirus-structural-racism> [accessed 20 June 2020].

the reality, which seems more difficult to accept: that these groups are suffering more from how our societies are organised'.[22] BAME people are more susceptible because they suffer from systemic oppression which inevitably diffuses across society. COVID-19 has only exacerbated pre-existing issues within the industry. With a strain on resources and employment prospects, discrimination in the workplace will only intensify. Increased entry points into the industry must therefore be provided for BAME people as well as increased monitoring of workplace discrimination.

The long-term effects of COVID-19 are still incomprehensible and unprecedented. COVID-19 elucidates the pre-existing inequalities in the publishing industry and threatens the longevity of small independent presses that cannot adapt their approaches. The long-term effects of a report led by the University of Edinburgh and the University of Sheffield in 2018 highlights a *'class pay gap in publishing of up to £23,000 a year and found that people from working class origins make up just 12.6% of the sector in the UK'*. [23] A class pay gap is an obvious demonstration of inequality, as those from financially privileged white backgrounds will have access to greater financial and vocational advantages. There are a host of factors that prevent those from working class backgrounds succeeding in the industry. The requirement of unpaid labour, for example, is simply not viable for those who cannot afford to privately pay for living and accommodation costs whilst working in the city. This also directly affects writers from low-economic backgrounds seeking publishing, as less staff representation within the industry will directly correlate with the types of books being represented and published. Particularly following COVID-19, the strain on resources means that those from marginalised backgrounds will be less likely to acquire paid positions due to systemic prejudice.

> COVID-19 elucidates the pre-existing inequalities in the publishing industry and threatens the longevity of small independent presses that cannot adapt their approaches.

Conclusions

All industries must provide internal measures to address discrimination in the workplace such as racial and class bias training solutions in order to dispel discriminatory attitudes. One strategy is to implement compulsory education schemes in all workplaces and set externally monitored diversity requirements in all industries. Publishers should be required to produce internal reports on the practical ways in which they are tackling disparities and also on the demographics

---

[22] Morgan.

[23] Dr Orion Brook, Dr David O'Brien and Dr. Mark Taylor, '*Panic! Social Class, Taste and Inequalities in the Creative Industries'*, <https://createlondon.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/Panic-Social-Class-Taste-and-Inequalities-in-the-Creative-Industries1.pdf> [accessed 2 June 2020].

of their staff. Reporting incidents of discrimination in the workplace and consequently removing the perpetrators of injustice from positions of power is also essential in insuring that unconscious and conscious bias does not seep into the structure of the company, informing recruitment or publication decisions. However, it must also be acknowledged that measures such as these can easily become hollow marketing strategies in order to propagate a veneer of diversity without actually implementing any changes within the structure of the company. These internal measures can also lead to issues of tokenism in the workplace.

These measures also only result in progressive action within our current system and long-lasting change will only happen once we dismantle these power structures. Ensuring that leadership positions in the industry are diverse would have a much larger impact on the overall decision making of the company and therefore affect a larger reach of people. Having those from BAME and low-income backgrounds in positions of power would alter the way in which minority authors are represented and marketed. In addition, there must be increased education on the issue of the white gaze in literature as curriculums contribute to underrepresentation by fueling reductive stereotypes and culturally fetishizing BAME heritage. By changing the narrative of how marginalized groups are commonly depicted by mandatory education within schools, the need for a diverse platform of voices can be emphasised. The UK also has a largely imperialistic attitude to creativity, excluding those with language barriers. In order to confront prejudice towards certain dialects and languages, the UK's colonial past and continuing imperialist attitudes must be delineated, largely through revising the curriculum and taking accountability. All of this can also be achieved through increasing public awareness through creative channels, something that publishing as an industry is also inherently capable of. The more marginalised voices are platformed, the easier it will be for others to gain a platform and a channel for their expression.

Small publishers must be actively supported and funded in order to tackle the underrepresentation of BAME and low-income writers. Large companies are the only ones capable of selling books for cheap prices: for example, Amazon relies on overcoming its competition through its low prices.[24] However, lower prices often result in unethical production and also endangers small businesses, allowing '*corporations to amass uncountable fortunes*'.[25] In addition, growing profit margins will depend upon '*continually getting a better deal from suppliers*', and therefore exploiting workers as costs are cut.[26] Within this current model, in order for small

---

[24] Robin Kaiser-Schatzlein, 'How to Break Up Corporate Giants', *Critical Mass*, 19 November 2019. <https://newrepublic.com/article/155769/break-corporate-giants> [accessed 16 July 2020].

[25] Kaiser-Schatzlein.

[26] Franklin Foer, 'Amazon Must Be Stopped', *The New Republic*, 10 October 2014. <https://newrepublic.com/article/119769/amazons-monopoly-must-be-broken-radical-plan-tech-giant> [accessed 16 July 2020].

presses to survive, they must also cut down their costs to match Amazon or risk losing customers. A government response is needed for business models such as Amazons', which will ultimately work to monopolise the market by reducing consumer costs and workers' rights. Such profit driven focus will stamp out smaller independent publishers who ethically supply their publications and therefore sell at a higher cost. Prices should be regulated to ensure that these publications be given a fair chance in the market so that consumers will not prioritise Amazon simply due to lower costs, but rather seek out independent presses with a more diverse selection of publications. The market is not truly competitive when giant corporations such as Amazon have a vast ability to dominate prices and distribution.

Funding opportunities that distribute public money, such as Arts Council, could simplify their application process and ensure that all their funded organisations have a proven commitment to diversity and are not for profit. Due to the issues in funding distribution, '*nearly 74% of charities are expected to explore a broader range of activities in the next three years*'.[27] Philanthropy Impact notes that charities' top challenge continues to be seeking funding.[28] To counter this, public funding needs to be distributed equitably to smaller charities and there needs to be increased regulation to ensure that this happens. The Art Councils' internal diversity policies must be kept to and a more thorough complaints policy should be put in place to ensure that organisations who are not fulfilling their aims will also be kept to good standards. The public will therefore have more agency over the distribution of their money and be able to have more of a direct impact within the funded areas. In addition, all funding should be given to not-for-profit organisations to avoid any conflict of interests or prioratisation of profit. Smaller organisations will have more of a direct community focus and will therefore be able to actively target and reduce lived experiences of marginalisation through their work. Smaller organisations that are centred around a community will be the most effective in platforming diversity, as they will be able to reach out to the most isolated groups.

More initiatives such as Impress Books, the '*UK's specialist in selling books by independent publishers*', should be put in place in order to address the disadvantages that small publishers face.[29] Such schemes work to promote the work of small presses and provide increased exposure in order to attract consumers. Support networks such as the Independent Publishers Guild are also essential in having solidarity between independent presses in order to promote each other. If more schemes such as those were funded, then independent publishers would have access to a far greater number of resources in order to

[27] David Britton, 'Top challenges facing charities', *Philanthropy Impact,* 17 April 2018. <https://www.philanthropy-impact.org/article/top-challenges-facing-charities> [accessed 16 July 2020].

[28] Britton.

[29] Impress Books, <https://inpressbooks.co.uk/pages/about-us> [accessed 16 July 2020].

actually compete with the larger companies and form a wider space within the market.

Once these disparities are addressed, marginalised groups will benefit immensely. Providing more entry points to the industry and promoting affirmative action schemes will give marginalised groups key vocational skills in order to enhance their career trajectory and prospects. Promoting regional initiatives will broaden audiences and initiate community-centric measures to platform minority voices into mainstream culture. By having a wide range of publications from writers of all backgrounds, negative stereotyping will be challenged as these voices will go on to inform wider society about their individual experiences. Minority writers' voices cannot be pigeonholed and having a thriving independent publishing sector is vital in ensuring that true merit of work is at the heart of publishing aims. Having these experiences platformed will then reduce feelings of isolation within certain communities and generally improve mental health as these kinds of lived experiences will be represented. Research has demonstrated that creative activities such as writing reduce stress, promote relaxation and self- expression; benefitting psychological and social recovery, relationships and social identity.[30] For these reasons, creative writing comprises a large portion of participatory arts projects and workshops with the aim of improving community mental health.[31] Therefore, the self-perception of marginalised groups will be altered as well as wider societal perceptions of marginalised communities. Breaking down these boundaries in order to platform a mélange of voices and perspectives will ultimately equate to a more tolerant and inclusive society.

[30] J. Leckey, 'The therapeutic effectiveness of creative activities on mental well-being: a systematic review of the literature', *Journal of Psychiatric and Mental Health Nursing*, 2011. <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1111/j.1365-2850.2011.01693.x> [accessed 23 August 2020]; Lith et al., 'Identifying the evidence-base for art-based practices and their potential benefit for mental health recovery: A critical review', Disability and Rehabilitation, 35 (16), November 2012. <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/232764267_Identifying_the_evidence-base_for_art-based_practices_and_their_potential_benefit_for_mental_health_recovery_A_critical_review> [accessed 23 August 2020].

[31] Suzanne Hacking, Jenny Secker, Lyn Kent, Jo Shenton and Helen Spandler, 'Mental health and arts participation: The state of the art in England', *The Journal of the Royal Society for the Promotion of Health*. 126. 121-7; Daisy Fancourt, and Saoirse Finn, 'What is the evidence of the role of the arts in improving health and wellbeing? A scoping review', *World Health Organization*, 2019.

References

Alice Revel, 'Amazon is more dangerous than ever - and publishers need a plan', *The Bookseller*, 5 December 2018. <https://www.thebookseller.com/futurebook/amazon-more-dangerous-ever-and-publishers-need-plan-899551> [accessed 24 June 2020].

Andrew Losowsky, 'DRM Lawsuit Filed By Independent Bookstores Against Amazon, 'Big Six' Publishers', *Huffington Post*, 20 February 2013. <https://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/entry/drm-lawsuit-independent-bookstores-amazon_n_2727519?ri18n=true&ncid=edlinkusaolp00000003> [accessed 24 June 2020].

Arts Council, 'Equality Analysis: Development of Arts Council England's 10-year strategy, 2020-30', <https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/sites/default/files/download-file/Equality%20Analysis_Arts%20Council%20England_Strategy%202020-2030.pdf> [accessed 16 July 2020].

Arts Council, 'Equality, Diversity and the Creative Case: A Data Report, 2018-19', 17 February 2020. <https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/publication/equality-diversity-and-creative-case-data-report-2018-19> [accessed 16 July 2020].

Arts Council, 'Investment Factsheet', <https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/sites/default/files/download-file/Investment__factsheet_14062019_0.pdf> [accessed 23 August 2020].

BookTrust, 'Less than 2% of the published authors and illustrators in the UK are British people of colour says new BookTrust research', 15 April 2019. <https://www.booktrust.org.uk/news-and-features/news/news-2019/less-than-two-per-cent-of-published-authors-and-illustrators-in-the-uk-are-british-people-of-colour-says-new-booktrust-research/> [accessed 23 August 2020].

Claire Squires, 'Publishing's Diversity Deficit', *CAMEo Cuts*, 2 (2017) <https://le.ac.uk/cameo/publications/cameo-cuts> [accessed 5 June 2020] (p. 3).

Daisy Fancourt, and Saoirse Finn, 'What is the evidence of the role of the arts in improving health and wellbeing? A scoping review', *World Health Organization,* 2019.

David Britton, 'Top challenges facing charities', *Philanthropy Impact*, 17 April 2018. <https://www.philanthropy-impact.org/article/top-challenges-facing-charities> [accessed 16 July 2020].

Franklin Foer, 'Amazon Must Be Stopped', *The New Republic*, 10 October 2014. <https://newrepublic.com/article/119769/amazons-monopoly-must-be-broken-radical-plan-tech-giant> [accessed 16 July 2020].

Impress Books, <https://inpressbooks.co.uk/pages/about-us> [accessed 16 July 2020].

Joan G Mowat, 'Towards a new conceptualisation of marginalisation', *European Educational Research Journal*, 14.5 (2015) <https://strathprints.strath.ac.uk/50672/1/Mowat_EERJ_2015_Towards_a_new_conceptualisation_of_marginalisation.pdf> [accessed 25 June 2020] (p. 4).

Lith et al., 'Identifying the evidence-base for art-based practices and their potential benefit for mental health recovery: A critical review', *Disability and Rehabilitation*, 35 (16), November 2012. <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/232764267_Identifying_the_evidence-base_for_art-based_practices_and_their_potential_benefit_for_mental_health_recovery_A_critical_review> [accessed 23 August 2020].

Louis Chilton, "I can't help but be dismayed': Reni Eddo-Lodge becomes first black author to top paperback non-fiction charts', *Independent*, 11 June 2020. <https://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/books/news/reni-eddo-lodge-george-floyd-talking-white-people-about-race-book-chart-a9560236.html> [accessed 16 July 2020].

J. Leckey, 'The therapeutic effectiveness of creative activities on mental well-being: a systematic review of the literature', *Journal of Psychiatric and Mental Health Nursing*, 2011. <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1111/j.1365-2850.2011.01693.x> [accessed 23 August 2020].

Dr. Melanie Ramdarshan Bold, 'The Eight Percent Problem: Authors of Colour in the British Young Adult Market (2006-2016)', *Publishing Research Quarterly*, 34, (2018). <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12109-018-9600-5> [accessed 23 August 2020].

Dr. Melanie Ramdarshan Bold, 'Representation of people of colour among children's book authors and illustrators', *Booktrust*, 2019. <https://www.booktrust.org.uk/what-we-do/programmes-and-campaigns/booktrust-represents/representation-of-people-of-colour-among-childrens-book-authors-and-illustrators/> [accessed 19 August 2020].

Michael Kozlowski, 'Amazon Controls 95% of the eBook Market in the UK', *Good E Reader,* 27 March 2015. <https://goodereader.com/blog/electronic-readers/amazon-controls-95-of-the-ebook-market-in-the-uk> [accessed 16 July 2020].

Nick Morgan, 2016. 'Which Is Better: Self- Publishing Or Traditional Publishing?', *Forbes*, 5 May 2016. <https://www.forbes.com/sites/nickmorgan/2016/05/05/which-is-better-self-publishing-or-traditional-publishing/#10df13a11d98> [accessed 24 June 2020].

Dr Orion Brook, Dr David O'Brien and Dr. Mark Taylor, 'Panic! Social Class, Taste and Inequalities in the Creative Industries', <https://createlondon.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/Panic-Social-Class-Taste-and-Inequalities-in-the-Creative-Industries1.pdf> [accessed 2 June 2020].

Peepal Tree Press, <https://www.peepaltreepress.com/about-us> [accessed 23 August 2020].

Robin Kaiser-Schatzlein, 'How to Break Up Corporate Giants', *Critical Mass*, 19 November 2019. <https://newrepublic.com/article/155769/break-corporate-giants> [accessed 16 July 2020].

Ros Barber, 'For me, traditional publishing means poverty. But self-publish? No way', *The Guardian*, 21 March 2016. <https://www.theguardian.com/books/booksblog/2016/mar/21/for-me-traditional-publishing-means-poverty-but-self-publish-no-way> [accessed 25 June 2020].

Suzanne Hacking, Jenny Secker, Lyn Kent, Jo Shenton and Helen Spandler, 'Mental health and arts participation: The state of the art in England', *The Journal of the Royal Society for the Promotion of Health*. 126. 121-7.

Winston Morgan, 'Genetics is not why more BAME people die of coronavirus: structural racism is', *The Guardian*, 4 June 2020. <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2020/jun/04/genetics-bame-people-die-coronavirus-structural-racism> [accessed 20 June 2020].