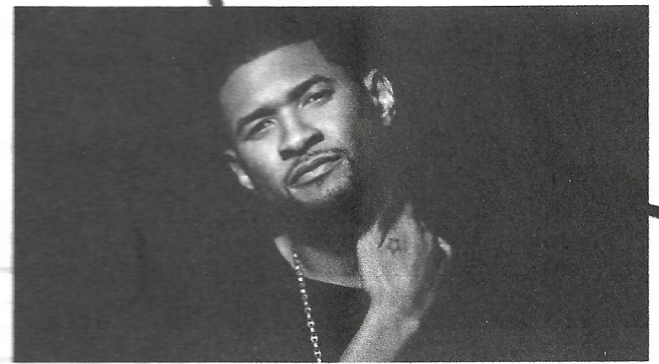


# The Usher

JUNE 11TH

#6

FREE



## Black Lives Matter

We're thinking about how this affects our community and the area that we live in. We started this newsletter wanting to hear from people in the area on all things big and small, and while we usually like leading with the lols, that isn't where we're at this week.

There's a bit of a Scottish myth that we're not as complicit in colonialism and racism as England or the US. Jock Tamson's bairns and aw that. **In fact, Scottish people owned more slaves, more plantations, and owned a higher percentage of tobacco and sugar plantations than England and most other European countries.**

In St Andrew's Square, not far from where you've picked this up, stands a monument to Henry Dundas, the man who delayed the abolition of the slave trade by 15 years. He and his family built and owned many of the buildings you can still see in St Andrews Square, with money that came almost entirely from plantations. There's not only a statue of him on a massive column in the centre of the city, but also one of the city's central streets is named after him. Bute House (where Nicola Sturgeon lives) was the property of slave owners, and most of New Town was built on money generated by the slavery of Black people. By extension, given its wealth, that means most of Edinburgh too.

This is not 'just' ancient history. The parallels with the USA are clear. Five years ago in Kirkcaldy, nine police officers restrained Sheku Bayoh, a black man, with CS spray and batons, and killed him. Not before days of riots and rage. George Floyd's killer is being charged with 2nd degree murder and the three other cops are being charged with aiding and abetting. Here in not-racist Scotland, nobody will face criminal charges. It's our complacency that lets these things get swept under the carpet.

In her recent article for *The National* on the 7th June, Tomiwa Folorunso said:

'History can easily explain why we should not be shocked, because what is happening is not new, it is not an isolated incident or an American problem. It is the past, present and future. I do not think we need history to tell us why we should feel sad, and angry and outraged and scared. We do not need another murder to feel those things.'

We won't change that future by ignoring the violence. We won't change it either by putting on another collective performance of 'reflection', to be retired once more until the next murder. We will change it by speaking up now, and continuing to speak up and fight racism each day, whether current affairs move us or not, and by building neighbourhood safety from within, through solidarity with our neighbours.

*Skip Henshaw & Saoirse Hammer*

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## CAMPAIGNS & LOCAL ORGS

These organisations need support and money, and work for black empowerment in the UK and Scotland

**Edinburgh in Solidarity Black Lives Matter** is on Instagram and Facebook. They're currently pushing with petitions for Black history to be taught in Scottish schools, and for the removal of the Henry Dundas statue.

**The Black Curriculum:** Working to mobilise and empower young people and to change school curriculums so that Black British history is properly reflected. [www.theblackcurriculum.com](http://www.theblackcurriculum.com)

**Saheliya** - Mental health counselling service for BME women: [saheliya.co.uk](http://saheliya.co.uk)

**Shakti Women's Aid** - support services for BME women and children experiencing domestic abuse: [shaktiedinburgh.co.uk](http://shaktiedinburgh.co.uk)

**Intercultural Youth Scotland** - a youth led charity providing services for Young Black, Indigenous and People of Colour (BIPOC) Scots [interculturalyouthscotland.org](http://interculturalyouthscotland.org)

If you have no money but would still like to donate, search on Youtube for a video posted by Zoe Amira called 'how to financially help BLM with NO MONEY/leaving your house (Invest in the future for FREE)' and just let it play, without skipping the ads - all of the ad revenue raised will be donated to the associations that offer protester bail funds, help pay for family funerals, and advocacy listed in the beginning of the video.

### Books

'No Problem Here: Racism in Scotland'  
Neil Davidson, Minna Liinmaa, Maureen McBride, Satham Virdee

'Why I'm No Longer Talking to White People About Race'  
Reni Eddo-Lodge



## MONTROSE TERRACE IS ANGRY! (EVEN WITH HEAVIER POLICE AND SQUIRREL PRESENCE)

Only 27% of people think serial adulterer and dishonest liar Boris Johnson is dishonest. 3% said so despite catching him in the act of being dishonest at least twice. 5% said you 'respect your betters and that's what you do'. Such lobotomised sentimental thinking is why we have billboards telling us to 'be kind' while people continue to attack each other for not following un-follow-able guidelines. I scribbled out steps 2 and 6 of your recipe but I still expect you to follow it completely. WE ARE NOT NED FLANDERS say dead chancers aka benefit scroungers.

Meanwhile Local MPs have been harnessing community spirit to power children's virtual babysitters.

A man writing a tongue-in-cheek blog will realise the joke is in fact on him.

Computer game enthusiast discovers there are other things to do, like Ketamine.

Ketamine for sale, follow the stench of molly-coddled entitlement masquerading as wilful neglect.

Finally to the aggressive, topless, possibly dishonest skin-headed Polish men who ruined my jogging experience to ask me for cigarette papers... I bet you both have tattoos of kids you'll never see and mothers you stole money from. I know, it's just more fun to gang up on people than have your own papers.

"A socially conscious social climber  
Climbing in through windows of higher thought  
Except its not and you're devoid of thought  
Waving at the idiot's parade  
Getting stupid-er every day"

- Pete the Pusillanamous Poetry Pr\*ck

*The Usher* is based on the hunch that folk round here might have something to say to each other. If you have nothing to say, that's fine, but it will mean 'our work here is done'.

Of course, we enjoy using this to broadcast our own things, but we can't under our own steam generate the weekly quantity needed of essays, stories, poems, thoughts, written interpretations of music, hot strangers and decrepit professional divorcees. Hard to believe, we know, but we're just not *that* interesting.

To give you all time, next Tuesday we'll be taking a break (we're thinking Durham again) and handing guest editorship to DAVID LLOYD, who we introduced back in issue #4. That means you've got until **22nd June** to send us stuff.

We won't ask again, we're actually very relaxed about winding up when the time is right, but that time might come sooner than you think.

As the marketing executives say over in Glasgow:  
'People Make *The Usher*'.

-SHSH

Well, would you look at all this space?

Regular readers might have noticed the distribution points looking rather bare on Tuesday morning. Among other things, part of the delay was we weren't sent much. Only Pete, the Pusillanamous Poetry Pr\*ck, pitched his pisspoor prattle for our pithy print. Is that what you want? A newsletter so derelict all it can do is alliteratively insult its only contributor? We hope not.

We know we're in Phase 1 of lockdown easing, and you're beginning to get 'real social contact' with 'other households' who might even be 'friends'. So yeah, we get it, you don't need us anymore. We're the imaginary friend you casually disbelieved out of existence, the teddy bear you dumped in the attic, the handwashing routine you sorta forgot about around mid-April. We understand.

But part of us hopes we're wrong, and that in fact you are still anxiously rocking on the floor, chewing your knees and wondering what to do with yourself until the next *Usher* hits the lamppost. If that's you, we'd like to hear from you. We promise we'll be nicer to you than we are to Pete - what a prick, eh?

### NEWS, ANNOUNCEMENTS, MISCELL

IONA STREET TAKEAWAY PUB BRINGS WORST ASPECTS OF PUB CULTURE TO PEOPLES ACTUAL DOORSTEPS

DAVID LLOYD RETWEETS THE BLACK SQUARE POSTED BY HIS FINANCIAL FIRM, RECEIVES TWO LIKES.

HARD-HITTING OPPOSITION STATEMENT FROM SIR KEIR STARMER IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS: 'I'M PUTTING THE PEOPLE BROADLY WITHIN NORTH EAST EDINBURGH **ON NOTICE**. I'M EXPECTING *THE USHER* TO RECEIVE CONTRIBUTIONS BY MONDAY 22ND JUNE.

SAOIRSE IS READING: DEPARTMENT OF SPECULATION BY JENNY OFFILL, WATCHING: MARILYN MONROE FILMS BACK-TO-BACK

SKIP IS READING: NOTHING. HE'S HAD A BORING WEEK, SO INSTEAD HE'LL USE THIS SPACE TO SUGGEST YOUSE ALL SEND IN YOUR PROBLEMS FOR AN AGONY AUNT COLUMN???