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CUTTING THROUGH

THE QM BAR SOCIETY NEWSLETTER



QUEEN MARY
BAR SOCIETY

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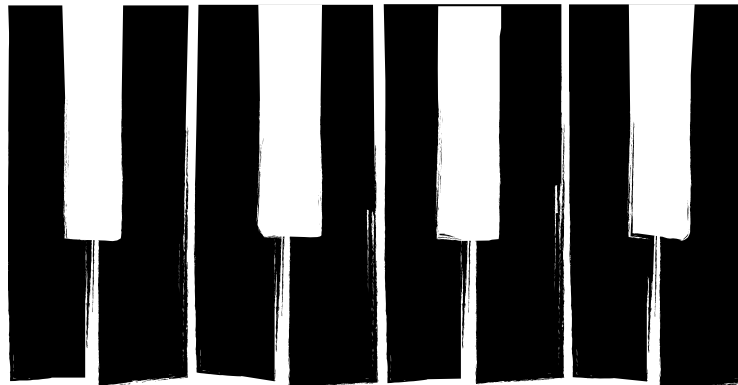
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WELCOME

Welcome to the 9th edition of Cutting Through! We hope you will enjoy reading this issue and from all of us at QMBS, Happy Black History Month!

- Asteropi

Articles

Tina Tan, 'Principles of Inclusion, Diversity, Access, and Equity' (2019) 220 (Suppl 2) The Journal of Infectious Diseases 30.

Bethan Harries and others, 'Diversity in place: narrations of diversity in an ethnically mixed, urban area' (2019) 45 (17) Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies 3225.

CALENDAR

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We designed this cover with the question 'what diversity feels to me' in mind. Do you have a picture or design that would mean diversity to you? Let us know! It could be the next cover of Cutting Through.

INTERVIEW

MASS NDOW-NJIE

CALL: 2020

Mass is a Barrister at the Government Legal Department. During his pupillage, he spent a six-month secondment at Blackstone Chambers practising Human Rights Law, Commercial Law, Public Law, Financial Regulatory Law, and Sports Law.



Mass is the Founder and Chairman of Bridging the Bar, and graduated from Queen Mary in 2016.

How does it feel to be the first ever pupil barrister to be awarded "Barrister of the Week" by The Lawyer publication?

I was pleasantly surprised, and of course, proud when I found out that I would become the first pupil barrister ever to receive the honour. I received the award primarily in recognition of my work in launching Bridging the Bar – a charity aiming to support aspiring barristers from statistically underrepresented groups.

In launching Bridging the Bar, I have been supported by a fantastic committee, and so I wanted to ensure that they also received recognition for their hard work. As a team, we were all Barristers of the Week!

In what ways do you believe the obstacles you encountered during your journey to the Bar will contribute to your practice in the future?

I previously gave up on becoming a Barrister because I did not think it was possible without an Oxbridge degree or without a first-class degree. It turns out that I was wrong. It is possible with an upper second-class degree from Queen Mary.

During the period in which I had given up on a career at the Bar, I gained various experiences working in different sectors and even running my own business. As a Barrister, you can gain an advantage in your cases by having a unique insight into the different industries that your clients operate in. Having an understanding of their practical objectives and day-to-day responsibilities will position you to represent them best and help them achieve their objectives.

"I previously gave up on becoming a Barrister because I did not think it was possible without an Oxbridge degree or without a first-class degree. It turns out that I was wrong. It is possible with an upper second-class degree from Queen Mary"

What would you wish to change for the next generation of barristers from non-traditional backgrounds with Bridging the Bar?

Bridging the Bar is not about lowering the standard of practitioners at the Bar.

It is about highlighting the fact that there are diverse and talented individuals who are equally capable of forging successful careers at the Bar.

Over the next generation, I hope that the conscious and unconscious biases that pose an additional hurdle for some candidates are recognised and addressed. I hope that aspiring barristers from all backgrounds can have equal opportunities to access the profession.

Do you think that diversifying the Bar will be facilitated or hindered by the challenges and digitalised routine imposed by Covid-19?

A member of the Bridging the Bar committee named Blessing Park, recently said, "social intimacy is not a prerequisite in order to get things done anymore."

I agree with Blessing. However, I would add that any progress will simply depend on willpower. Chambers could use Covid-19 as an excuse for lack of progress. But those same organisations could also use the new digitalised routine as an opportunity to progress at pace.

"I hope that aspiring barristers from all backgrounds can have equal opportunities to access the profession"

How do you feel returning to your former university for this interview, having achieved your goals, and what would you advise aspiring barristers to stay motivated throughout their journeys?

When I left Queen Mary in 2016, I did not think that I would become a Barrister. I had already given up on that dream. In moments when you believe that you will accomplish your goals, use that energy to perform at your very best.

In moments when you may lose that belief, ensure that you keep moving forwards anyway. That way, you will continually be improving your skills and gaining new experiences. Those skills and experiences will be appreciated at the Bar as well as in various other industries. If you can do that, you will always have options.

"In moments when you believe that you will accomplish your goals, use that energy to perform at your very best"

Share Your Story

Celebrate Black History Month in your own unique way and share your story with us. Why is Black History Month important to you?

- Email us at info@queenmarybar.society.org with the subject line: 'Black History Month: My story'.

We will publish the most inspiring and original stories in our next issue!

Find more about Bridging the Bar

Find more about Bridging the Bar and its mission [here](#). Have a look at the mini-pupillage programme and work experience opportunities [here](#).

#BlackHistoryMonth

Clifford Chance Events Hub

Do not miss two fantastic events this October celebrating Black History Month:

- Black History Month: Thriving Through Uncertainty | 22/10 (4-7pm)
- Black History Month: Advocating for Race Equality and Celebrating Heritage | 30/10 2-3pm

See more details and register [here](#).



THEMIS

The Intersectional Women Barristers' Alliance
by Emily Jermin- Steering Group Committee Member at Themis

Themis provides something that has been lacking at the Bar for a long time; a space for women of all backgrounds to collaborate and share ideas about their journey to, and progression through, the barristerial profession, whatever stage of their career they are at. Intersectionality remains central to Themis' aims. We recognise that women have different experiences attributable to their unique characteristics, and thus, a career at the Bar will accordingly present different barriers. Themis seeks to challenge those barriers by hosting an array of events, blog posts, and research reports to advance the rights of women at the Bar whilst informing it more generally about the challenges women continue to face within the profession.

I initially contacted Themis' founding members as a post-BPTC student in the divide between the Bar Course and pupillage, with the desire to keep abreast of changes in the profession and how they would affect me personally. However, since becoming part of the steering committee, I have realised Themis is so much more. As a working-class, neuro-diverse woman, I have realised how important it is to share experience and struggle with others in the hope of making the journey better. I know that being a part of Themis will allow me to learn from the experiences of other women, similar to myself, to bridge the gap between student and barrister and I am so looking forward to sharing what we to come with you all.

If you wish to contact Themis, visit our website [here](#)!

DOCUMENTARIES

Being Black at Cambridge, BBC iPlayer

How is life for black British freshers at one of the top universities in the world? Is academic pressure the only challenge? Could the new wave of black British students still feel 'out of place'? Ashley John-Baptiste (a Cambridge alumnus himself) follows the lives of Fabianna, Success, and Sharon, students at Cambridge, examining issues of diversity, inclusion, and racial discrimination through their everyday stories.

Freedom Riders, Youtube

Stanley Nelson's documentary film follows the fight for freedom and equality of civil rights activists who challenged racial segregation in American public transportation. An insightful diary of racial discrimination and the courageous response of the Freedom Riders, the documentary film is a vivid and suspenseful depiction of the violent and unjust events of the 1960s.

Black Classical Music, BBC iPlayer

Lenny Henry and Suzy Klein set the challenge: name as many classical composers you can, and as quickly as you can. Now, count how many of those are black. This fantastic 90-minute documentary attempts to correct some wrongs and lead us through a rediscovery of the black classical musicians and composers and their contributions to music throughout the centuries.

PODCASTS

Nice White Parents,**Serial & The New York Times**

After the award-winning *This American Life*, Chana Joffe-Walt hosts a five-part podcast series about the relationship between white parents and public schools in America and examines how their presence or absence, their powers, and notions could determine the aspects of public education.

Witness Black History, BBC

Follow the landmark case of *Brown v Board of Education* in 1954. The US Supreme Court turned the tide in the civil rights movement when it ruled that segregation of public schools on the basis of race was unconstitutional. A 9-minute insight into the years-long fight for justice.

Humanity Archive, Jermaine Fowler

Jermaine Fowler explores the Haitian revolution and fight for independence and narrates the story of Toussaint L'Ouverture (1743-1803) in two parts. Jermaine's engaging way of historical narration couples with the most extraordinary topics of revolution, anti-colonial war, and race, and offers a wealth of information for further reading and thinking.

Black History Year, PushBlack

"What does black liberation look like to you? A world where one's race in no way is an impediment to achieving all of the things that one's mind can conceive." How can we decode racism in advertising? How can we embrace black culture through food? PushBlack brings a podcast full of insights, history, and fantastic stories, and Season 2 starts tomorrow!

ARTICLES

In the supplementary article '**Principles of Inclusion, Diversity, Access, and Equity**' (2019), Tina Tan outlines these areas of policy and goals within an organisation and the community. Although the legal professionals do not colour the context of the discussion, the article concisely articulates what diversity is, underlining that strength and success lie in the difference. Of particular interest is the differentiation between diversity and inclusion. The author, citing Verna Myers, successfully paints the following picture:

[D]iversity is being asked to the party. Inclusion is being asked to dance. The goal is to have all members being asked to dance.

The second article, '**Diversity in place: narrations of diversity in an ethnically mixed, urban area**' (2019), examines the meaning of 'diversity' or 'super-diversity' in relation to space and the experiences of people living in such areas. The study explores the example of Cheetham Hill in Manchester, cited to be the most diverse neighbourhood in the UK.

The study highlights that often, diversity is a means to outline only ethnic differences, failing, thus, to consider social and other differences and inequalities, missing the 'texture' of places. The authors argue that the adoption of a simplistic use of diversity language can obscure the complexities of diverse or non-diverse communities and that a multifaceted approach engaging multidisciplinary methods is required to understand diversity as a narrative, policy, and social fact.

FILMS

The Wind of Change (1961) is one of the earliest British drama films discussing the issue of race and racial crime, taking its title from Harold Macmillan's homonymous speech in Cape Town in 1960. Vernon Sewell's film is a riveting black and white movie discussing black and white issues through an ordinary-life lens. Set around Portobello road and the streets of Notting Hill, the plot revolves around the unemployed and rebellious Frank (Johnny Briggs) who viciously attacks a black boy with his gang, annoyed that he was on a date with a white girl; Frank's sister Josie (Ann Lynn). The boy later dies from his wounds. The film depicts the turbulent social climate of Britain's early 60's following the Notting Hill race riots of 1958. One of the memorable moments of the film is when Frank's father (Donald Pleasence) explains that he has three white rabbits and one black treating them all equally. The conclusion comes poetically upon Frank's arrest by the police, with his father staying in the garden holding his black rabbit in his arms as justice prevails.

If you are looking for a film of mystery and suspense to fill in your Halloween weekend, then Gilles Paquet-Brenner's 2017 adaptation of Agatha Christie's **Crooked House** (1949) will not disappoint. Aristide Leonides, a Greek-British wealthy businessman, is dead. Someone may have poisoned him deliberately, and as Lady Edith de Haviland (Glenn Close) said at the dinner table, everyone in the family could fit the description of a murderer. Aristide's granddaughter, Sophia (Stefanie Martini), hires Charles Hayward (Max Irons), a private detective, to investigate Aristide's possible murder. The film is a charming rollercoaster, full of twists, colourful characters, and unexpected turns, and at times, it feels like you are about to fall off a cliff (!).

Alfred Hitchcock's **The Lady Vanishes** (1938), based on Ethel Lina White's novel *The Wheel Spins* (1936), would also be a fantastic Halloween-evening watch. Iris Henderson (Margaret Lockwood), a British woman returning home by train from Europe, falls asleep in the train's wagon after a pleasant small talk and tea with Miss Froy (Dame May Whitty), also returning to England. When Iris wakes up, her travelling companion is mysteriously disappeared. Even more curiously, every passenger on the train denies Miss Froy's existence. One of Hitchcock's most famous films, *The Lady Vanishes*, is an absolute classic where a constant search for clues and the discovery of the truth will keep you on your toes until the very end.

#tomorrow

New Directions in Black British History

A live webinar chaired by Rob Waters (Queen Mary University of London) that will bring together Deanna Lyn Cook, Olivia Wyatt, and Satya Gunput, to discuss their current research on Black British History in the context of Black Lives Matter, Rhodes Must Fall, and COVID-19. Register [here](#).

#BlackHistoryMonth

Do you want more?

Have a look at the Black History Month Magazine [here](#)!

New Writers

Do you like reading books and sharing your thoughts? Researching new developments on the law and the Bar? Then you could write for *Cutting Through*!

- Email us at info@queenmarybar.society.org with the subject line: 'Cutting Through New Writer'.

CALENDAR

DEADLINES

Mini-pupillage

Farrar's Building
21 October

2 Temple Gardens
23 October

Fountain Court Chambers
30 October

4 New Square Chambers
30 October

Maitland Chambers
15 November

One Essex Court
30 November

EVENTS

STEM at the Bar
19th October

BTP/GDL/Scholarship Evening
21st October

How to Network
2nd November

Judge Rea Talk on COVID-19 & Judicial Technology
9th November

Public Law & Human Rights Panel
11th November

See more events [here](#).

COMPETITIONS

Two days left for BARFIGHT 2K20!

Find out more [here](#).