

With Eyes Wide Open

Portsmouth College's Student Newspaper

The Myth about Racism

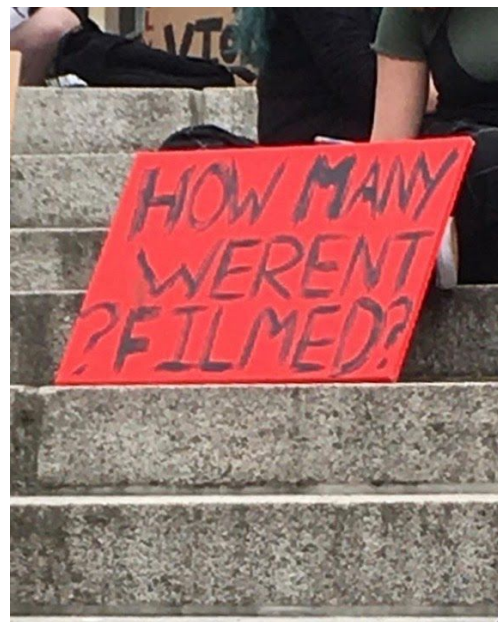
Part one: The Black Experience

By Jess Sabushimike

Racism. At this moment in time, it is an intense word with many connotations hanging from it. In order to dismantle it within our society we must be able to recognise it in all its forms. A common misconception is that the only form it takes is as degrading phrases and slurs being yelled, however that is only one aspect.

On the 4th of June there was a black lives matter protest in Portsmouth as a response to the murder of George Floyd.

Throughout the day many people of colour shared their harrowing experiences with racism and how it has affected their lives. The following story was told by a person who lives in Portsmouth however their name has been changed to hide their identity.



Vanessa's experiences:

When Vanessa was a little girl she would stay at an afternoon club with her peers, playing until she was picked up by her parents. One day at the club her and her white friends decided to play with the dolls that were available to them, one of which was a black doll. Her friend picked up the black doll, threw it at her and told her that she should play with it. To make matters worse the friend described the doll as “disgusting” and that she did not like black

while sticking out her tongue and pretending to vomit. When Vanessa reported the incident to the person in charge of the club, who was white, they downplayed the incident. The carer looked Vanessa in the eye and proclaimed that the little girl was not talking about the race, but the colour black and that she should just “get over it”.

At the age of 11 the white boys in Vanessa’s school discovered that racism was a sensitive subject to her and that it was an easy way to get her angry. One of the many events that had occurred was when one of the white boys called Vanessa the racial slur “p*ki” despite Vanessa having no link to Pakistan. When Vanessa went to tell her white teachers about the racist incident she was greeted with little outrage and several victim-blaming comments such as, “why are you angry? You are not from Pakistan, why would it offend you?” and “you know when you straighten your hair you look a bit Asian”. It was after this incident that Vanessa said that she realised that her white teachers who were meant to care and protect her did not care enough about her race and

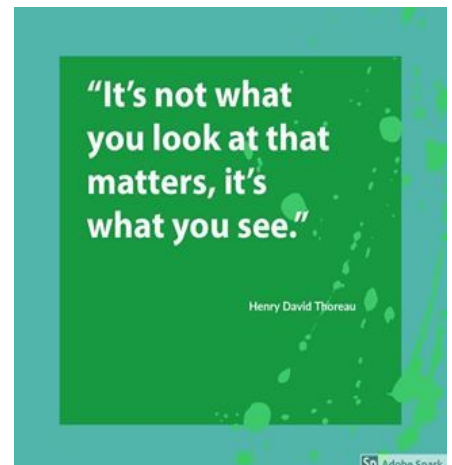
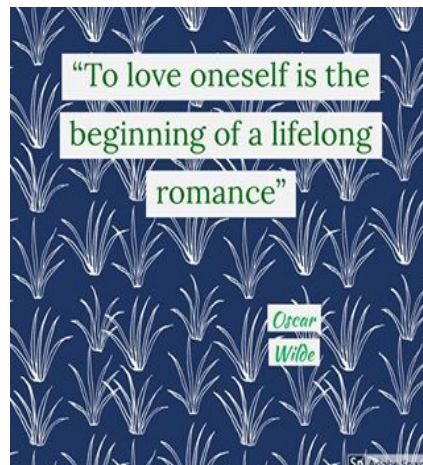
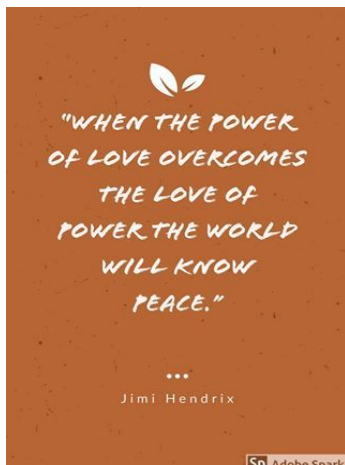
were willing to let the racist incidents slide.

Unfortunately incidents like this are more common than many think, how many people of colour can say they haven't experienced racism in one form or another? Most have dozens of stories from



micro aggression to being called a racial slur. There are many ways that you can show support for the black lives matter movement from signing petitions to going to protests however the most important way to help is by educating yourself. This series of articles will cover a variety of topics linked to racism as a way to inform those wanting to make a change.

QUOTES OF THE MONTH



Pride month and the Stonewall riots

By Lois Bishop

It's finally June so happy Pride month everyone! Pride is a time to celebrate who we are, and come together as a community. Of course if it wasn't for the Stonewall riots in 1969, pride month would not exist and I would not be writing this column.

But what are the Stonewall riots? Also called the Stonewall uprising, the riots were led by a woman called Marsha Johnson. After the police arrived at a gay pub named 'Stonewall', a series of violent confrontations began. It was in the early hours of June 28th when the gay rights activists began fighting against the police. That day, formed the start of the Stonewall riots. As the riots progressed, an international gay rights movement was born.

That's not all, the LGBTQ+ community has so many major moments in history that will be remembered forever. In 1951, Roberta Cowell made history as the first UK trans woman to undergo gender-reassignment surgery. This was a big step in transgender recognition. 1970 was the year of the very first of many pride parades in London and in 1973, being gay was no longer described as a 'mental illness'.

Pride month is such an important part of LGBTQ+ culture, it is a time for us all to



celebrate our love and truly be proud of who we are. Although we still may not be treated equally, the LGBTQ+ community has now got rights that people like Marsha Johnson would have only dreamed about. For example, gay marriage was made legal in the UK in 2014. Before that, couples of the same sex were not allowed to celebrate their love for each other like a straight couple could.

Here at Portsmouth college, we firmly believe that all love is equal, and your gender or sexuality does not define you. On Friday lunch times from 1-1:45, three year 2 students run a club. Although the students attending are mainly LGBTQ+, everyone is welcome! It is a safe space for all students to come along and meet new people. As well as this, we also do fundraisers and other events in the hope to raise money, and donate it to charities aimed at improving the lives of LGBTQ+ people.

Happy Pride month everyone!

The Common Ground of Culture

The American poet Maya Angelou once said “The human heart...tells us that we are more alike than we are unlike.” which I can’t help but agree with. On the face of it, we are all human. However, nothing is ever that simple.

Humans have always had a *talent* for oppressing differences rather than embracing them. Looking at the legacy of British culture in particular, many of its strongest influences were different to the norm that was the every-man. Should we take it as a blessing or an overdue action that the true lives of these men are now taught to the wider public? In this case the men I refer to are Wilfred Owen, Siegfried Sassoon and Brian Epstein. Active in different periods, famous for different achievements and with different endings...so what common ground do they all share? These men were homosexual living in a Britain where that was considered an illegal act.

In June 1917 Wilfred Owen was sent to a war hospital in Edinburgh, having served in the British army since 1915. The majority of his poems, now staples of English literature, were written there such as ‘Exposure’ and ‘Dulce et Decorum Est’. Importantly, it was there that Owen met fellow poet Siegfried Sassoon. Through Sassoon, Owen met some key literary figures of the time including Robert Ross and H.G Wells. Many of the members of this literary circle were gay, including

Ross and Sassoon. Based on analysis of his works, is now recognised by many literary professionals that Owen himself was also gay; unconfirmed due to his early death a week before the armistice.

The loss of Owen greatly affected Sassoon, and he was never "able to accept that disappearance philosophically." Following the war, Sassoon had a succession of male lovers, speculated to have been a quest for emotional fulfilment. While Sassoon’s homosexuality has long been known, during his life he referred to it as his “dark secret” and was unable to be openly gay outside of literary circles. Later in life he continued to be unable to find a compromise between the solitude he enjoyed and the companionship he craved. Regardless of his sexuality, Sassoon was able to leave a lasting impact on British literature and was awarded a CBE for his work.

Skipping ahead to the swinging 60s, the manager of the Beatles was homosexual. Brian Epstein was referred to as the "fifth Beatle" due to his role in the group's business affairs, image and rise to global fame. Epstein managed the ‘fab four’, as the band were known, until his early death in 1967. Here it is important to remember that homosexuality was illegal in Britain until 1967 and even after that it was to be kept private. Prior to becoming the Beatles’ manager, Epstein spent a year studying acting at RADA, but dropped out shortly after his arrest for ‘gross

indecent' outside a men's public toilet in London; cottaging, as it was called, was one of the few public ways that gay and bisexual men could meet at the time, especially if they were closeted.

The band were aware of Epstein's homosexuality, but did not care as he was their manager, professionally. Although, Lennon often made sarcastic comments about Epstein's homosexuality to friends, no one outside the group's inner circle was allowed to comment. Ian Sharp, one of Lennon's art-school friends, once made a sarcastic remark about Epstein, saying, "Which one of you [Beatles] does he fancy?" Sharp was sent a letter by Epstein's office within 48 hours that demanded a complete apology. While comments were dealt with and Epstein was the manager of the most successful band in the world, in 1967 he passed away aged

32. Epstein died lonely, never having had a proper boyfriend, and with the colloquially known "Oscar Wilde laws" declaring homosexuality illegal still in force. Able to be professionally accepted, yet his sexuality was deemed unequal to the mop-tops he managed.

How different would the lives of Owen, Sassoon and Epstein be had they lived today? Could the prejudices of the time be the cause of their cultural impact? Same-sex marriage became legal in the UK in 2014 which signified further equality for the LGBTQ+ community. Long after the lives of Sassoon, Owen and Epstein, the lives of homosexuals are largely *legally* equal and Pride, as the verb suggests, is something to celebrate and support.

By Susanna Robertson-Sheath

To Kill A Mockingbird and racism.

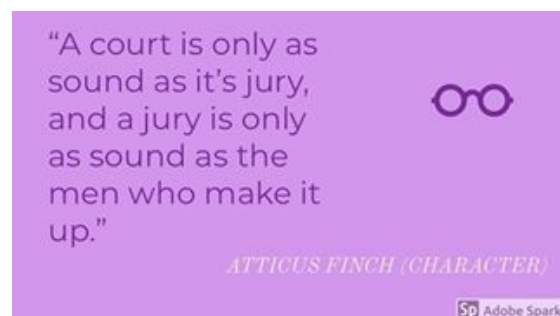
By Ellie Brackenbury

Most people have heard of Harper Lee's classic novel centred around a town which is deeply rooted in prejudice and violence.

In the novel we are presented with a man's struggle against injustice in a town that is deeply pitted against his case, despite his apparent innocence. The accused, Tom Robinson, stands trial for the rape of a white woman. The terms of the case are clearly incriminating but not of Tom. After

suffering an accident that leaves him with a crippling injury there is no way he could be guilty, however, due to blatant racism within the community the Ewell's take the case to court and prosecute Tom successfully. The miscarriage of justice is clear as the evidence obviously points to another individual who could have easily caused harm to the woman in question. This is not the only case of discrimination in the novel but is by far the most extreme.

Through the eyes of Scout Finch we learn that a family name and the history tied to it was enough to give you a bad reputation in the town. Children are shunned based on their family's morals and habits as you will learn through the course of the novel. The area of town you reside in and your occupation can also be a key factor for discrimination, as is displayed by the Ewell family who do not attend school and only learn writing skills to sign relief checks as a main source of income. Even though the novel was set in the Deep South in the 1930s, I think this is reflective of our society as we can still find an innocent person guilty, purely based on the colour of the individual's skin. People have a tendency to compare themselves to one another often deeming themselves as better than others. Key variables society often discriminate against are gender, race, country of birth etc.



Discrimination is the unjustifiable negative actions performed against someone as a result of prejudice. Prejudice is something that can be taught directly or develops due to social influence. This is achieved as learning is often done through conditioning in early childhood or by association. If a child is encouraged to dislike people for no reason other than the colour of their skin or the country they are from, they will continue to do so because

they have been reinforced in a way that raises their self esteem or that of someone modelling the behaviour. We can see this through the action of encouraging the children to avoid Boo Radley who is deemed a social recluse, through the stories that the children hear of the family and the seemingly threatening atmosphere surrounding the house. This behaviour is primarily due to terror management performed by people hundreds of years ago to increase the feeling of superiority. When we feel threatened we will revert to a state that can lead to hostility towards those causing the insecurity. The insecurity could often be caused by confusion, a lack of understanding or compassion. The issue is that the racism that was born hundreds of years ago is still present today as a result of continual teaching of these prejudices, as we see through the treatment of Mr Robinson, among other characters, in the novel.

In psychology there is something known as Social Identity Theory. The theory suggests that our self esteem causes us to become a part of a group we deem ourselves to identify with and will cause comparison with other groups to raise the superiority associated with our own along with our own self esteem. This prejudice against other preconceived groups often leads to prejudice becoming discriminatory acts. This is seen widely across society, whether it be the stereotypical jocks against nerds or the large scale one race against another that we see within To Kill A Mockingbird. As a society and species we should be working towards equality for we cannot change the past we can only learn from it.

How the environment has bounced back due to the Covid-19 pandemic



Earth is dying (to put it bluntly). Whether you believe it is due to the natural cycle of our planet, or due to manmade pollution, the answer to the equation is the same. Climate change is killing the Earth and it puts 20-30% of species at risk of extinction, for example Tigers. This is due to the rising levels of Greenhouse gasses (carbon dioxide, methane and nitrous oxides). Although it is natural for them to be present in our atmosphere, their levels are rising due to us burning an extensive amount of fossil fuels that give off additional carbon dioxide into our air.

Although climate change and global warming does need to be taken seriously, let's not focus on the negatives, instead let's focus on the silver lining of this situation. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the world was forced into a lockdown

protocol to stop the spread of the virus, but in doing so, this has had major impacts to the environment. For one, we now have cleaner air and increased visibility, cities across the world have seen pollution levels plummet as people have spent less time in vehicles and factories. Furthermore, a massive reduction in plane flights has decreased daily CO2 emissions from -17% to -25%.

There are some who scoff and say 'it's only numbers.'

So let me give you an example of how a change like that affects our day to day lives; people in northern India have seen the stunning view of the Himalayan mountain range for the first time in living memory.

Another amazing improvement to our environment is cleaner water. Around the world, waterways are benefiting from the reduced amount of boat traffic produced from tourists and ships. Venice is famously known for its winding canals, and due to the improved water quality, old inhabitants have returned to them after many years, such as fish, crabs and even reports of swans and dolphins have surfaced.

So although these are only little steps in the right direction, at least they are a start.

It proves that we are the ones killing our planet, and inevitably we are, but it also shows us that we can save it. I don't want my kids to grow up not knowing what a tiger is because they are extinct. We must work together, as every small thing you do, added on to another small thing that another has done adds up.

Gandhi once said "you must be the change you wish to see in the world", so I'm asking you, will you be that change?

By Shazia Dongola

'Do The Right Thing': Dealing With Repetitive History & Blissful Ignorance

By Kian Henderson-Cowley

Director Spike Lee's seminal 1989 film '*Do The Right Thing*', as unfortunate chance should have it, has again become more relevant than ever. It is heartbreaking that, over thirty years later, this film is a recurring prediction of events that are occurring on a grander, ongoing scale and that POC are still suffering on political and communal levels, as portrayed here. In honour of the BlackLivesMatter movement and all victims fighting for basic human rights, this is the ideal film to cover; although I'm sure I won't be the last to wax poetic about it given its acclaim in the film world.

Set in a predominantly black neighbourhood in Brooklyn on the hottest day of the year, '*Do The Right Thing*' follows the everyday lives of a truly unique ensemble whilst they deal with seething bigotry and racism that's been building to a long overdue climax. Spike Lee takes the lead as Mookie, trying to make ends meet as a delivery guy for Sal's Pizzeria (the main avenue of conflict). Numerous interactions and relationships are shown through a supporting cast of iconic performances by Samuel L. Jackson as radio host Mister Señor Love Daddy (slick as always), Italian-American pizzeria owner Sal (played by the late great Danny Aiello) and the two catalysts Radio Raheem (played by the late Bill Nunn) and Buggin' Out (Giancarlo

Esposito). To reveal much more would spoil the impact however, for a film that relies entirely on its characters to work, the cast is rife with a burdened chemistry that propels its purpose.

The best films captivate but also don't treat the audience as stupid. Despite the necessity that lies in exposition, too much emphasis can mean the death of believability within the story. Spike Lee avoids this so his script eliminates any preachy subtext. His dialogue is naturalistically witty and even though his characters possess a searing edge by the end you grow fond of them.

Today's movies and shows could learn a thing or two from 'Do The Right Thing'. Stock characters and shallow, token representation for diversity's sake so studios and networks can gain woke points isn't just un compelling, it's insulting to minorities whether they be in relation to race or LGBTQ+ groups. That's not to say that these kinds of entertainment haven't always existed, it's just noticeable that Hollywood has reached peak idiocy nowadays in their attempt to not suffer any fallout. The 2006 Best Picture Winner 'Crash' (one of the worst movies I've seen) is one of the first mainstream films guilty of this.

The movie's strength is it's timing. All the hatred and entrapment simmers beneath the surface right up to the last act until the kettle of racism not only reaches its boiling point, but implodes. The lack of melodrama helps, mind you.

The cinematography and aesthetic places us in a similar mindset (a hell of a difficult task to pull off) regardless of our race. The intimidation and outrage lurking in the low and high angle shots is palpable. The blazing orange glow of the scenery conveys the intense, fiery indignance the characters are wrapped up in and rightfully so.

The bottle effect of the one street set proves the sum is absolutely representative of the whole. Sal's Pizzeria bookending the set illustrates the struggle for opportunity that POC find themselves facing everyday. It's an effective way of shedding light on the existence of this inequality that so many of us have become indifferent to.

To deny systemic racism and to deny historical atrocities without accountability creates a vicious cycle that we *will* find ourselves returning to for the foreseeable future. The final scene represents the doom lying in repetitive complacency silently but poignantly.

Overall, 'Do The Right Thing' is fantastic. I love what it stands for and who it represents. The approach towards addressing society's blissful ignorance is deeply moving as it highlights how our negligent response to racism affects the lives of many. The climax is one of the greats. Perfectly controlled payoff. For my money I'd say it's the best of its kind.

★★★★★★★★

Easy Enchiladas

Serves up to 8.

Ingredients:

1 large can chickpeas
1 large can black beans
1 large can of sweet corn
1 red pepper sliced and diced
1 red onion chopped small
4 cloves of garlic
1 bag of tortillas
2 tsp chilli flakes
On the vine cherry tomatoes sliced
As much cheese as you want.

Equipment:

Frying pan
Deep dish

Preheat the oven to gas mark 7 (218 degrees)

Add the chilli to a large shallow pan with the garlic, red onion and pepper.

Fry gently until soft.

Add all the other ingredients and heat through.

Remove the pan from the heat.

Grab your bag of tortillas and using a large serving spoon add two spoonfuls of the mixture to the edge of each tortilla. Then start rolling it up and carefully tuck the



corners in as you go to keep any mixture from running away!

If there is any mixture leftover you can always make more.

Sprinkle the enchiladas with the mild cheese and put in the oven.

Take out when the cheese is golden brown and serve immediately. Why not try some tzatziki on the side and/or some salad?

Enjoy!

By Tabitha John

Tab's Trivia

Now, if you are anything like me you probably have a whole treasure trove of random trivia stored within your brain. Little gems of information that seem to serve no purpose other than to take up space and look pretty. For instance, I cannot claim that knowing cows have best friends will help you pass your exams but it is really cute, isn't it? Nonetheless, I don't think the power of a fun fact should be underestimated as this section may give you a conversation starter, the answer to a quiz or in the very least may help to brighten your day.

This issue's piece of trivia will take us back to the time of the Industrial Revolution where the dreaded chiming of your alarm clock was not yet a common place sound. They were either too expensive or unreliable and when people had important matters to attend to they wanted to feel secure in the fact that they wouldn't oversleep. Thus a profession was born: the Knocker Uppers.

Although this resembles the American English phrase of being 'knocked up' the two terms bear no relation to each other.

For a few pence, men and women would use make-shift sticks and batons, often out of bamboo, to knock at people's windows to ensure they woke up on time. This seems logical enough, however, some people preferred to use a more versatile, innovative tool - the pea shooter. Can you imagine being woken up to the sound of dried peas tapping against your window? It is somehow odd and romantic at the same time.

Furthermore, unlike today, there was no way to hit the snooze button on your personal alarm as they would not be able to leave your window until they were sure you were awake. This was probably a decision which many people regretted at early hours in the morning.

The last person, apparently, to keep the pea shooting days alive was Mrs Molly Moore, a lady who got up as early as 3am in order to wake people up on time. It was said that the pea shooter she used was made of tubing that was over 60 years old!

If you really think about it, these professional early birds were incredibly important because they prompted people to face the day and go to work and in turn keep the country ticking over.

Never have I ever had so much appreciation for the origins of an alarm clock. I still don't particularly like them though.

Chloe's Crafts

Tailored Tie-Dye T-Shirts

Have you ever looked at a tie-dye t-shirt and thought “Darn, I wanna live out my 90s fantasy?” Me too. Well, it is possible! Just grab an old top to upcycle and follow these 9 simple steps.

1. Take any t-shirt, plain or pre-dyed like mine.
2. Use a ruler or another item with a straightedge to draw a line across the bottom however short you would like your top to be (get creative with this, I used a keyboard!)
3. Carefully cut along this line to crop your shirt.
4. Next, cut the seams at the sides of the top going from the bottom to the underarm.
5. Measure how much you would like to take it in in order to tailor it to your size and shape. To do this put the top on and pin it in place to your desired fit.
6. Carefully remove the top and draw a line on both pieces of the top from the top pin to the bottom to mark where you would like to take the top in.
7. Cut along these lines.
8. Turn the top inside out and use your preferred stitch (I personally used blanket stitch) to sew a new seam.)
9. If your top is not already tie-dyed, get creative by tying some rubber bands on the top and dying the top with fabric dye.



Guest Writer

"They don't write songs like they used to"

"They don't write songs like they used to" must have been uttered countless times by countless music fans from every successive generation since the dawn of time. Often this is then followed, with an air of conviction seeping into their voice, that "all music nowadays just sounds the same." I feel there's a hint of Schrodinger's Cat here in that: are these statements really true or not? Well we can't really be sure unless we take a "look inside the box" and find out for ourselves first hand.

To each new generation of music lovers the songs and the bands that they will come to love so much will form the soundtrack of their lives, all the highs and lows, good times and bad, each song instantly transporting you to a different time or place in your life journey. Some may be gladly remembered or possibly best forgotten and if you are really lucky they could help inspire you to follow a path not yet known or travelled.

One of the greatest things about music ,of course, is that it is out there for everyone to hear and to discover for themselves be it through our parents or friends, TV, internet or radio or simply through our own curiosity and even a little luck. Music and bands of all styles and from all generations that we haven't heard yet are out there waiting to be discovered.

Here are just a few, from an impossibly long list, that I think are well worth checking out if they aren't on your playlist already.

#The Beatles # Marvin Gaye # The Rolling Stones # Simon & Garfunkel # Black Sabbath # Led Zeppelin # X-Ray Specs # Linton Kweisi Johnson # The Clash # The Doors # Siouxsie and the Banshees # Pink Floyd # Depeche Mode # David Bowie # The Smiths # The Specials # The Pogues # The Cure # The Arctic Monkeys # Franz Ferdinand.

Enjoy!

From a Guest writer.

Editor's note

Hello everyone! On behalf of all the people who collaborated on this project I would like to thank you for taking the time to read the first edition of our student newspaper 'With Eyes Wide Open'. We are facing extremely troubling times and we felt that now, more than ever, it was important that we created a safe space in which the voices of Portsmouth College's students could be heard. Therefore if you enjoyed reading this edition and would like to get involved please do not hesitate to contact us whether it be to be a guest writer, to send in a piece of art, poetry, an article etc. Everyone is welcome and we look forward to hearing from you.

'Distance doesn't separate people, silence does' - Jeff Hood

Editor in Chief Tabitha John

Contact Us:

Editors:

Tabitha John

stu056155@portsmouth-college.ac.uk

Chloe White

stu055424@portsmouth-college.ac.uk

