



# UNCOMFORTABLE OXFORD

December 2019 Newsletter



## AND THATS A WRAP FOR 2019!

As the year draws to a close, we have many things to reflect on from the whirlwind of the past twelve months! The enthusiasm of our Uncomfortable community (*that's you!*) has been amazing - thank you all for the incredible support as we grew from a small project into a sustainable social enterprise!

We've finished drafting the statistics for the year - head to the last pages for a full update on [Our Impact in 2019](#).

We've also grown our team from its original 2 to a golden 24! Wow! Our team has been key to ensuring that *Uncomfortable Oxford* can keep growing and working with more and more institutions and organisations. They have been a essential part of our success.

We also were very lucky this year to find an office space in the heart of Oxford, on the third floor of the *Turl Street Kitchen* - pop by sometime if you want to say hi!

We can't wait for an even more exciting year in 2020, but for now - happy holidays and a joyful New Year.

- Paula & Olivia, Co-Directors

## MONTHLY UPDATES



- **Our first publication:** *"The Maps We Inhabit: Storytelling, Memory and Uncomfortable Oxford"*.
- **New blog posts** - read our latest blog posts on our webpage!
- **Recent Interviews** - We were invited on the 'Naked Humanities' & 'For Art's Sake' Podcasts - give them a listen!

### Coming up in 2020:

- **The Whip** - Royal Shakespeare Company.
- **PUBLIC Lecture Series** - Continues on February 6 with our second module: 'A New Imperialism.'
- **The Uncomfortable Oxford Podcast**

# HIGHLIGHTS

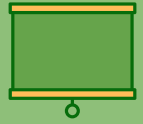
## Living Maps Publication



Looking to sink your teeth in an academic piece of writing? Co-directors Olivia and Paula were invited to contribute an article to the peer-reviewed, online journal *Living Maps Review*. The journal is open access, read their piece here:

"**The Maps We Inhabit: Storytelling, Memory and Uncomfortable Oxford**" *Living Maps Review*, no. 7, 2017.

## PUBLIC Lecture Series Two & Three



Following the successful launch of our 'Very Short Introduction to the British Empire' lecture series, the module the 'Age of Explorations' continued with two more talks. In November, Olivia Durand spoke on the Indian Ocean and Sean Phillips spoke on the Pacific Ocean in December!

In total, we've hosted almost **150 people across the module** - come join us in February for the start of a new module titled 'A New Imperialism.'

## Naked Humanity



We grow up hearing about glorious tales of courage and triumph. **But what other stories aren't being told?** *Naked Humanity* podcast host Stefani Rupert invited us to chat about the less celebrated parts of our past, why these stories regularly go untold. We discussed the challenge of creating an accurate picture of the past, and how to facilitate respectful and productive conversations about uncomfortable history.

Listen to the podcast, *Our Untold and Uncomfortable Histories* here.



## For Art's Sake

*For Art's Sake* is a London-based podcast initiative that aims to show the difference museums can make to people's lives.

We were invited on for Season 2 to share our work in the heritage sector, especially the Ashmolean Museum. We discussed **how the city itself is a curated space**, with labels, misinterpretations, and hidden information which needs to be uncovered.

Listen to the *For Art's Sake's* podcast here.

## Death At Tea Time



During the nation-wide **Being Human festival**, we collaborated with the Wellcome Centre for Ethics and Humanities to co-host a 'Death Café' style-event, titled *Death at Teatime*.

Tables invited participants to compose imaginary epitaphs, to think through the implications of end-of-life ethics, and think about **how stories of historical deaths are used socially and politically**.

With over 80 participants - it was a great day with some deep conversations!



## Activism Cafe

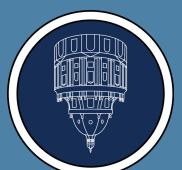
Our last open event of the year took place at the **East Oxford Community Center**. It showcased many Oxford-based activism groups, in particular the *Afrikan Caribbean Kultural Heritage Initiative*, *Common Ground*, and the *Oxford Climate Justice Campaign*. The aim was to offer **a space to discuss what sorts of activism exist in Oxford, past and present**.

The event was drop-in, allowing anyone to come for a chat about activism over a cup of tea or coffee, and biscuits.

Want to get involved or submit a blog post to us?  
Send an email to [info@uncomfortableoxford.com](mailto:info@uncomfortableoxford.com)



or follow us @UnOxProject





## UPCOMING in 2020



### The Uncomfortable Oxford Podcast Series

Thanks to the support of TORCH (*The Oxford Research Centre for the Humanities*), we will record a new Podcast Series' **starting in February 2020!**

The separation of the podcast episodes from the main walking tour will also allow us to **cover a wider range of material and spaces**, and reach beyond our current audience to include a wider public. Stay tuned!

## The Whip



### Upcoming Theatre Production

*As the 19th Century dawns, politicians gather in London to abolish the slave trade. But what will the price of freedom truly be?*

We are thrilled to be collaborating with **this electrifying new play** by the Royal Shakespeare Company!

The Whip runs from **1 February – 21 March, 2020** in Stratford-upon-Avon.

Tickets available at [www.rsc.org.uk/the-whip](http://www.rsc.org.uk/the-whip)

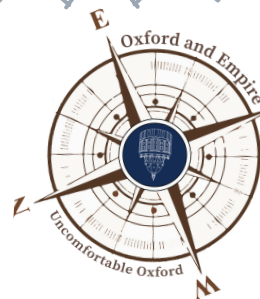
### Museum Collaborations



In addition to our monthly tours at the Ashmolean Museum, we've also had the opportunity to work with the museum on a '**Gallery Challenge**' workshop.

With a group of twenty archaeologists, anthropologists and art historians, we proposed **new labels and approaches to apply to the Ancient Near East Gallery** - to be judged by the public visiting the museum! We should have more collaborations of this kind in 2020 - Keep an eye out on our webpage!

## QUIZ



At **its** peak,  
**what** portion of  
the world's **landmass**  
**did** the **British Empire** cover?

### PUBLIC Lecture Series

Our monthly lecture on:  
**"A Very Short Introduction to the British Empire"**

Each month, we will learn about different key themes, ideas and continents which were controlled by the British Empire.

All the lectures will be delivered by doctoral students in History from the University of Oxford, and followed by a short critical discussion and Q&A.

**Click here for more information.**

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## RECENT BLOG POSTS



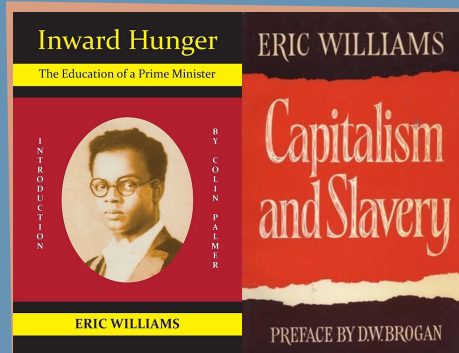
The White Lie: Questioning the Legacy of 'Whitewashing' Ancient Sculpture  
Lara Drew



A Tale of Two Cities:  
Oxford's Relief Road Controversy  
Elena Porter



Beyond the Body: a portrait of autopsy  
Amy Holguin



Capitalism and Slavery:  
The View to and from Oxford  
Emma Gattey



A Window into Oxford's  
Connections with Proslavery Politics  
Ben Graham



MPs for MAs? The fall of Oxford  
University's parliamentary constituency  
Louis Morris

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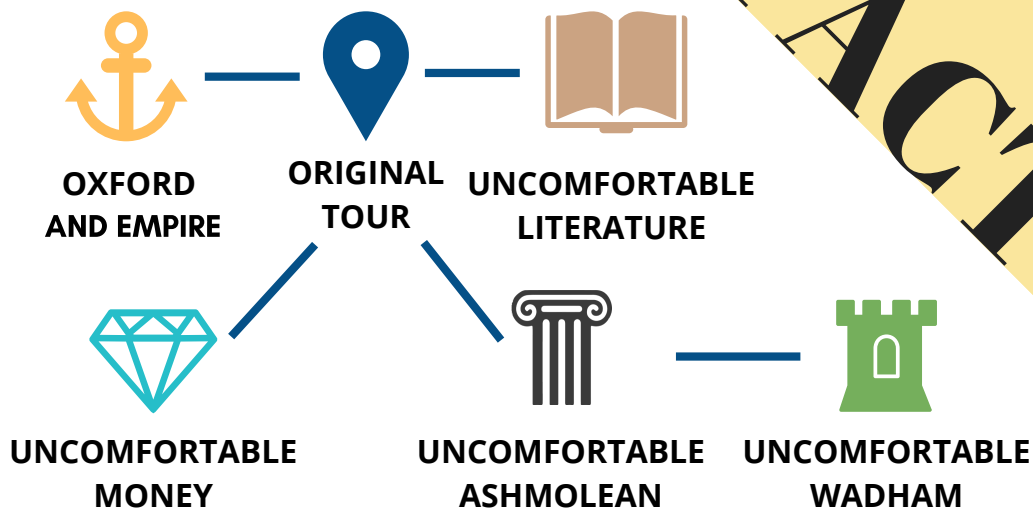


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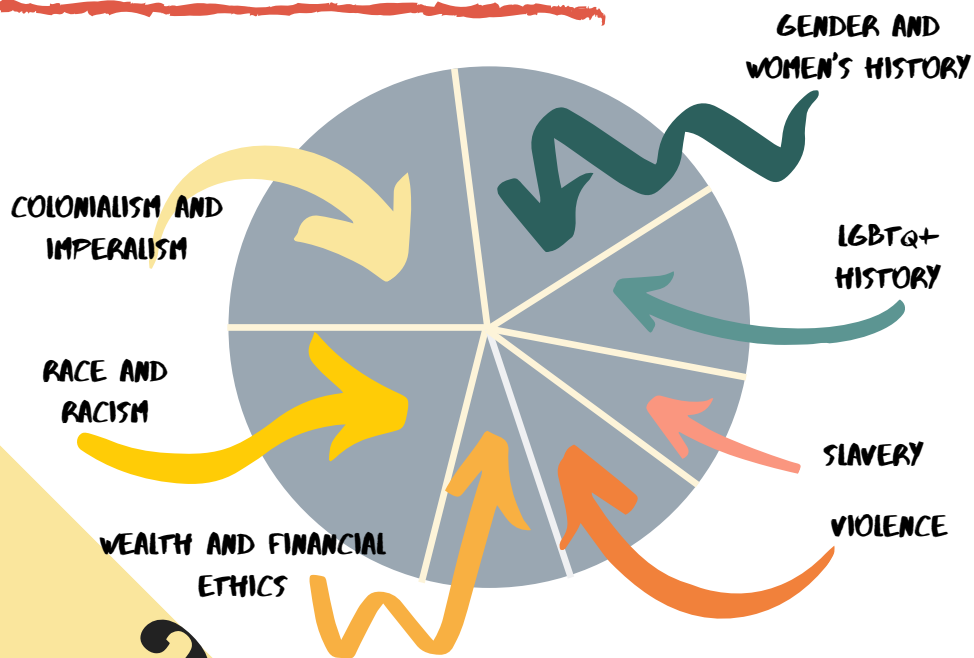




## OUR TOURS THIS YEAR



Themes that caught your attention...



IT'S BEEN A BUSY YEAR!  
HERE'S A REVIEW

NEW BLOG POSTS:

15

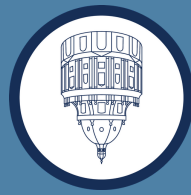


NEW COLLABORATIONS:

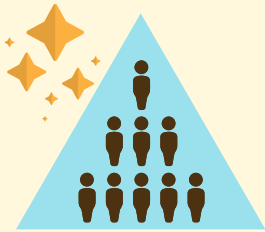
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2019

TOTAL IMPACT:  
2,967 PEOPLE



# UNCOMFORTABLE OXFORD IN 365 DAYS



A TOTAL OF **2,967** PEOPLE  
ATTENDED OUR EVENTS

ACROSS ALL TOURS, LECTURES, EVENTS, AND WORKSHOPS

THE **ORIGINAL UNCOMFORTABLE TOUR**  
WAS THE MOST POPULAR

FOLLOWED CLOSELY BY THE **ASHMOLEAN** AND **THE OXFORD**  
**AND EMPIRE** TOURS



WE'VE RUN OVER **159** TOURS,  
WITH PEOPLE FROM OVER **31** DIFFERENT COUNTRIES



**88**

Original  
tours



**30**

Oxford &  
Empire



**14**

Ashmolean  
tours



**14**

Money  
Tour



**13**

Literature  
tours



**19**

Free  
Events



1.4K likes



**615** TOTAL ATTENDEES AT OUR FREE EVENTS



900 followers

*See you in the New Year!*

