



REWRITTEN

Not your mother's magazine.



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THRIFT REVOLUTION

Identity, Sustainability, and the Stories We Wear



Photo by: Derin Alton

The moment you enter any thrift store you will experience the gentle sensation of finding hidden treasures. The sound of denim fabric and hanger noises fills the air while someone giggles while showing off a sparkly 2000s style skirt. The Gen Z female population use thrifting to create new fashion standards which combine environmental protection with personal style and compassionate behavior.

Finding Ourselves Between the Racks

Mia, 21, flips through her old Hard Rock Café t-shirts which are fading away while she says *“These t-shirts represent different moments from my life.”* *“Everything in this room has a past life; you can sense it.”* Chloe looks at fashion with a smile when she says that *“Fashion used to follow trends but now it carries personal significance.”* We dress in what is authentic to us.

The light in these shops falls softly on denim and leather, revealing small acts of activism. Each piece, once discarded, finds new purpose. *“Buying secondhand slows things down,”* says Lila, who volunteers at a local store. *“You start to see beauty in imperfection — in things and in yourself.”*

According to ThredUp’s 2024 Report, 65% of Gen Z women buy secondhand at least once a month. What began as a sustainability trend has become a cultural movement, powered by care and creativity. Fashion theorist Kate Fletcher calls this slow fashion: the idea that sustainability lives not only in environmental choices, but in emotional ones — how we form relationships with the things we own and the people who make them.

The combination of denim with ironic elements and nostalgic elements with rebellious spirit creates a new language through the worn-out areas of these spaces. *“I’m not even on drugs, I’m just this weird”* is written on a lime-green tank top. Generation Z views authenticity as the core element of irony which replaces its previous role as a deceptive mask.

Women Who Keep It Going

A few streets away at Vintage Clobber, soft laughter rises above the rustle of hangers. Behind the counter, shopkeeper folds a silk blouse with care. *“Most of our volunteers are women,”* he explains. *“They keep everything running — the donations, the repairs, the community.”*

This unseen labour sustains what could be called a feminist economy of care. Every mended seam and priced skirt becomes a gesture of compassion, a quiet refusal to let value disappear.

Nostalgia aesthetic - The comfort of the past

The road’s neon lights are painted by rain. Mannequins in 1970s blouses appear frozen through the window. The space’s fixed pieces provide a nostalgic, peaceful vibe.

Svetlana Boym explained that reflective nostalgia creates a peaceful state which people reach through their memories of past emotional events. The gentle fabrics of old clothing create peacefulness for Gen Z women because they offer personal connections in their digital world.

“The process of buying used items creates delays which help you discover attractiveness in objects and personal growth and the appeal of imperfect things.”

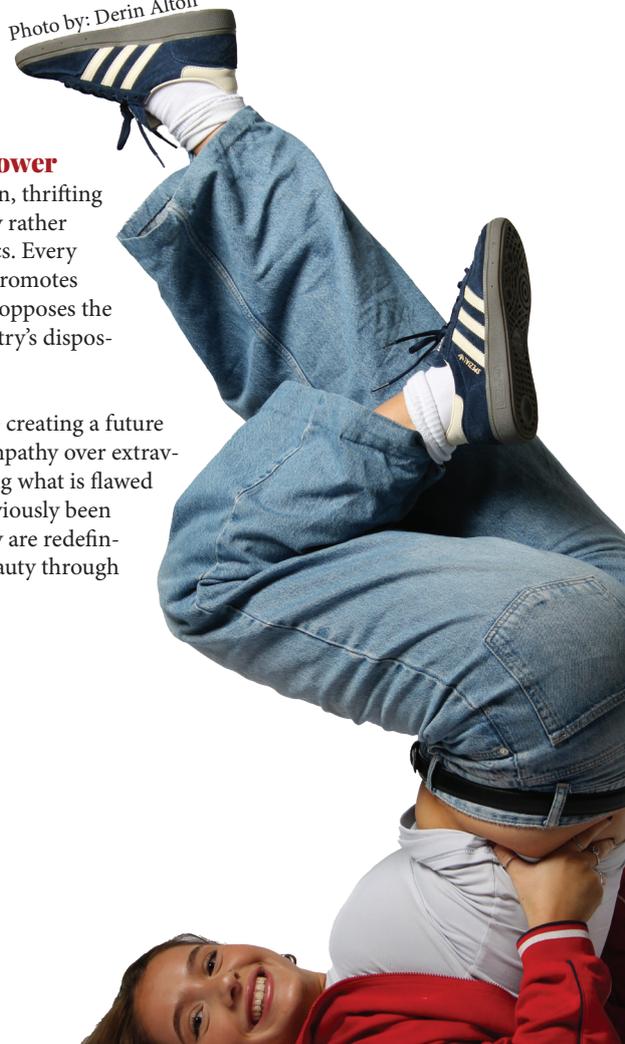
— Lila, volunteer at a thrift store

Photo by: Derin Alton

Rewriting Fashion, Reclaiming Power

For this generation, thrifting is an act of agency rather than just aesthetics. Every pre-owned item promotes individuality and opposes the fast fashion industry’s disposable mentality.

Gen Z women are creating a future that prioritizes empathy over extravagance by selecting what is flawed and what has previously been experienced. They are redefining power and beauty through thrift.



SUSTAINABILITY

We need to make sure we look after the planet

Let's be honest, the planet needs our love and care more than ever, and we are the ones who can make that change last. From sustainable fashion to ecofriendly beauty products and lifestyle swaps, *Rewritten* is the place to get all the advice on how to live sustainably day to day without even noticing a difference. Research on Statista shows that sustainability is the driving factor behind purchasing decisions for 66% of Gen Z so we know that you care and want to give you the space to discover and share with each other.

Low waste living tips

If you're after some low waste living tips then look no further, here are some of our favourites:

- * Swapping from cotton pads to reusable pads / cloths
- * Going to thrift stores + charity shops rather than shopping fast fashion
- * Making the change from bottled + packaged products, to ones without packaging (Lush is great for this!)
- * Getting an emotional support water bottle and reusing it rather than buying single use plastic ones
- * Travelling by public transport where possible, or carpooling with friends to lower your emissions
- * Donating old toys, clothes and appliances rather than throwing them away (charity shops are always in need of new items)

Celebrities that are subtly saving the planet

Billie Eilish donated 11.5 million dollars from her most recent tour to climate justice and food equity organisations, as well as encouraging fans to make eco-friendly choices surrounding transportation, food, and merch. She addressed the harsh climate impacts from touring and made all the efforts to reduce her and her teams carbon footprint. Just a few of the outcomes from this are:

- * **8.8 million** gallons of water was saved from serving plant-based meals
- * **117,000** single use plastic bottles were eliminated at shows
- * Raising **1 million** dollars for non-profit environmental and climate projects

Greta Thunberg has a foundation in her name that's mission is to 'support sustainability from a holistic perspective, promoting ecological, climatic and social sustainability.' She has been a key figure in bringing global attention to climate crisis highlighting the urgency needed

Emma Watson is also a sustainable fashion champion, and influencer who debuts thrifted and eco-friendly clothing at film premiers and brought attention to humanitarian and environmental issues.

We love these celebrities who are being proactive and setting the example, it shows us that whether big or small we can all make a difference when we work together.

Lush

One of our favourite sustainable brands, **Lush** is great in many different ways, ranging from their 'bring back' scheme, to their 'naked' products and their ecofriendly packing.

The '**bring back**' scheme at Lush is great, once you finish a packaged product, just simply clean the container and take it back to any Lush store to receive 50p off (or if you wait for their double reward days then you can get £1 off)!! After this, the pots are then taken to the Green Hub in Poole and are recycled to create more pots. Since 2023, with their new Green Hub, they have been able to process 20 tonnes of plastic per week by using their PET and PPE plastic granulators.



Photo by: Lush

66% of products sold each year at Lush are 'naked' products (products without packaging) which range from shampoo bars, soaps and conditioner to makeup products, facial cleansers and toners! With their products being naked, Lush are able to spend more on higher quality Fair Trade, natural and organic ingredients to make better products as they don't have to spend money on expensive packaging.

Even when they do have to use packaging, Lush makes sure that they're as eco-friendly as possible. The packing peanuts inside of a lush parcel, rather than being made of plastic polystyrene, are created with cornstarch which means that they not only use less energy to produce but are also biodegradable and compostable!

SELF-CARE & MINDFULNESS

How to look after and prioritise yourself

How wellness is portrayed by the media

In today's world the idea of wellness is often misrepresented and over glamorised by social media trends. At Rewritten we want to strip back the idea of 'wellness' and explore what it really means. Aiming to offer healthier and more realistic examples that everyone can get involved in. Our idea of wellness does not need to be wrapped up in unrealistic beauty standards or filtered to seem 'aesthetic', it doesn't need to include 'glow ups', strict routines or expensive products or activities. Instead, we understand the reality that taking care of your mind and body isn't always easy or pretty.

Self-care

Self-care can look different for all of us, as we all have different temperaments and emotional and sensory needs, this section focuses on accessible self-care rituals that can be incorporated into everyday life and will make a difference.

Simple and affordable self-care ideas

- * Go on a nature walk - pick a colour before leaving and spot as many things you can.
- * List things you're grateful for and things you want to get better at.
- * Have a 'reset Sunday' and readjust your environment (look at Lou mays tiktok for inspo)
- * Set timers to help complete mentally tedious tasks (this can be particularly helpful for neurodivergent people)



Photo by: Madeline Taylor

How to use social media to your advantage!

Pinterest is a good low stimulation app that inspires creativity especially amongst women, in fact **Ofcom reports that 79% of Pinterest users are female**, making it a good alternative social media for Rewritten readers.

- * Unlike other social media Pinterest isn't about likes and comments, it isn't competitive so is unlikely to make us form unhealthy comparisons between ourselves and others.
- * It inspires creative ideas rather than draining us with unhealthy doomscrolling content.
- * It's a good tool to help curate mood and vision boards, this can help us acknowledge our current state of mind and motivate us to achieve, create or change something whether that is big or small.

Let's admit, in today's society it can be hard to avoid social media so here's some healthier ways incorporate it into our lives:

- * Unfollow accounts that portray any unattainable standards, whether that be beauty, fitness or body image. Instead follow creators that make you feel seen. **You are allowed to curate your feed EXACTLY how you want to!**
- * Be strict with yourself, try to have digital detoxes even if it's just for the morning or couple of hours, you can even restrict your social media usage with screen time limits
- * When you come across positive content that makes you feel joy, interact with it so your algorithm stays consistently uplifting

Mental Health

For young people, it has always been extremely challenging figuring out your identity and place of belonging, add in the worries and pressures that come from the uncertainty of today's society and it can feel unbearably overwhelming at times. The transition from girlhood to womanhood is probably the most challenging and unsettling phase of our lives so far, and it is no secret that Gen Z have had it particularly rough.

We want you to know that you are not alone! **6 in 10 Gen Z report feeling overwhelmed by news and events**. From career stress, social media pressures, and climate anxiety, all of us women here at Rewritten have experienced these daunting feelings, it's important to remember that most people will relate to you and we are all just trying to figure 'it' out.

Accounts that we love, that make us feel good.

@loumays - An honest and authentic portrayal of grief, self-care/ reset Sundays, wholesome and comforting vibes

@Sophie_Jones111 - Known for stepping out of her comfort zone, joyful confidence building, not taking herself too seriously

How to meditate for beginners

- * Find a quiet, comfortable space to sit or lay
- * Play our relaxing mindfulness playlist
- * Close your eyes and focus on your breathing in and out
- * When you become distracted, bring your attention back to your breath
- * You don't have to be perfect; it can be challenging to begin with
- * Even just a couple of minutes of calm can be extremely beneficial

Our personal worries

The pressure to get a good job

The political climate of the world

Feeling alone in my 20s

Spotify Playlist

Scan this on spotify to listen to our mindfulness playlist



PRACTICING BUDDHISM

An interview with Madeline Taylor



When did you discover mindfulness and Buddhism?

"In 2019 when I was 37, I was recommended an eight-week mindfulness course that was loosely related to Buddhism. The last day was completely silent, and I really liked that aspect of it and found it beneficial. After that I found a Buddhist group near where I live and started going to that."

How did it evolve?

"I've always had this feeling inside of me and was drawn to the idea of Buddhism even though I didn't know much about it. I had this opportunity, and it was the right time for me to explore it more, so I stuck with it. I learnt more through talking to people who gave book recommendations etc so that enabled me to explore it in more depth. My knowledge and interest expanded over time which allowed me to pick out the parts I was particularly drawn to."

How would you describe what you do?

"I have a dedicated meditation every day that is specific to cultivating mindfulness where I'm trying to create stillness and calm. When I'm not meditating, I'm always trying to remember to be present in the moment, as the Buddhist teacher **Thich Nhat Hanh** says, '*washing dishes to wash dishes*'. I am conscious to not let my mind wander, it's very difficult sometimes to remember, but the more I practice the easier it becomes. It's something I hope to always incorporate into my life as I have done a lot of work and feel deeply connected to it."

What are the differences in your life?

"I'm much more able to recognise my feelings, I know that they are impermanent, so I'm comfortable to sit with them whilst they arise and pass. I'm more skillful in how I respond to others and have developed more empathy and am much less reactive. My social anxiety has reduced and I feel more confident knowing what makes me happy and am less likely to do things to please others. Overall, I have a lot more awareness of my own mind and feelings and what I choose to do with that. Because of our culture we are conditioned to constantly be setting and meeting measured goals - mindfulness is the opposite of that - the point is to be still and let go of everything"

How does meditation fit into your day?

"Ideally, I meditate in the morning! Now I meditate for an hour, but I haven't always. Most people just do 10 minutes of guided meditation when first starting until they have learnt the techniques."

How does it affect your relationships?

"Because I'm kind towards myself, I can be kind and compassionate to others. I also have a better understanding of human emotions and I can understand others feelings more effectively and have the vocabulary to talk to them about it in a non-judgemental way. I know that other people can be reactive, but it is often not personal so I'm able to stop negative feelings escalating and let things go easier."

Do you find you have to be extremely committed or can it be a more casual thing?

"I am probably a bit more on the extreme side, as it's definitely something you can do more casually and see amazing benefits from that way. You don't have to incorporate Buddhism into mindfulness, but I find it gives it more depth. Mindfulness is accessible for people from all walks of life, you can be from any background or religion and easily tailor it to suit you."

What small things do you think young people could do to improve their wellbeing?

"A mindfulness app, or a relaxing playlist can be really beneficial just for even 10 minutes of calm, also reading practical advice/self-help books or even doing yoga or walking in nature is just a nice self-care act."

What advice would you give your younger self?

"I wish I had access to more mindfulness resources that are out there now, I think they are a very useful tool in navigating difficult feelings or situations young women may find themselves in. Often people come to this later in life, but it's important to know that it's available to anyone at any time. I know that the transition into adulthood can be a stressful time, but you should know that your feelings aren't permanent and sometimes accepting and sitting with the feeling can be powerful in being aware and in control!"

MIND IN MOTION

The power of movement



Photo by: Amy Swinson

Let's be honest - once you leave school, exercise suddenly becomes, well... optional. We leave behind more than just bad uniforms and stale cafeteria chips - we leave pushy teachers, team sports and with that often our motivation to move. Somewhere between uni assignments, finding a job, and figuring who we are as young women, being active slips off the to-do list.

According to Sport England's "This Girl Can" campaign, women's activity levels drop dramatically after school. Life gets noisy, some self-doubt might creep in and suddenly we have lost all motivation to keep active. It's not that we don't want to move - it's that the world often makes it harder for us. Whether it's the dreaded gym mirrors, crowded weight rooms, or that one guy who thinks your deadlift is an invitation for advice, the pressure feels more than it's worth. But we're missing out on one of the most powerful stress busters out there - one that's good for your body and your brain! But movement doesn't have to mean chasing PBs and posting sweaty gym selfies. It's about finding a way to move that makes you

feel more... you. Because when you do, the benefits go far beyond how your body looks.

The stress fix you didn't know you needed

Have you ever gone to the gym, even if it's for 20 minutes and left feeling oddly lighter? That's your brain thanking you. Physical activity releases endorphins which help regulate stress hormones, boost focus and improve mood. In simpler terms, it helps you handle life when it feels like a bit much.

Research into High Intensity Interval Training (HIIT) shows it sharpens the brain's ability to focus and adapt. Which,

let's face it, we could all use during exam season or while navigating young adult life. So next time you're staring at your laptop, just remember that a little movement is the best type of reset button.

It's no secret that being a young woman right now can feel like a lot. We are expected to look effortless while juggling headlines, relationships, and that general career anxiety we all know and love (not). But here is the key: it doesn't have to look like what you see on Instagram. Believe it or not, you don't need a matching gymshark set or an 'IT girl' morning routine. Movement is personal. So, do some yoga in your bedroom and follow that 10-minute YouTube video. Moving your body can literally help you handle that heavy load - not by completely fixing your problems, but by grounding you through them.

"Women are not small men" - and that's our superpower

Dr Stacy Sims, a leading exercise psychologist, is changing how we talk about women in fitness. Her research challenges the idea that women should train in a similar way to men, showing that our hormones can work with us, not against us.

The menstrual cycle... ahhh right. Skip the gym, stay in bed, and eat loads of chocolate. Sure, that seems like a period essential, but that urge actually isn't all down to our cycle. The physical and mental



Photo by: Amy Swinson



Photo by: Emily Milton

it's basically code for 'I started my period' but don't want it to be seen as an excuse due to the nature of male dominated sport who don't always understand the impact a period can have.

During your menstrual cycle, strength, endurance and even pain tolerance can all fluctuate - but get this; studies suggest that women can be better at sport during their period.

To make your workouts easier and more enjoyable on your period, you can adapt them - try lighter workouts when energy dips, join a class to encourage motivation, and leave the higher intensity workouts for when you're feeling a little more energetic. This isn't about "pushing through" but understanding your body so you can move with it, not against it.

benefits of exercise don't just stop because you have a period. In fact, researchers have found that some women experience fewer painful cramps during menstruation if they exercise - a completely natural medicine to aid those nasty tummy pains.

British runner **Dina Asher Smith** mentioned in an interview how athletes will often say:

"I didn't wake up on the right side of the bed this morning"

Barriers, boundaries and finding your own space

Gym fits are exactly what you want them to be: lets erase this idea that a gym fit is tight booty shorts and crop tops. Wear joggers and a baggy tee, who cares... if you feel comfortable and confident, that's the first step to a fire outfit.

The fear of judgment and body conscious gym wear can make the fitness world feel like a crippling mind field. **A study from the gym tidation report found that young women will usually avoid exercise because**

they feel self-conscious.

That's one of the reasons why there has been a large increase in women only gyms in recent years - spaces where you can lift, sweat, and learn without feeling 'watched' or judged. These spaces are about empowerment and strength, rejecting any feeling of exclusion.

But we can't deny that wearing something that makes you feel good matters too. **Websites like all things beauty have highlighted that wearing supportive, comfortable gym wear can boost confidence and motivation, making you more likely to stick to your routine.** When you feel good in your body, you move differently - less fear, more freedom.

Rewriting what 'strong' looks like

Although we may think otherwise, sport and fitness don't have to be about competition or perfection. They're about showing up for yourself above anyone. Whether it's a 10-minute stroll between lectures, or lifting weights because it makes you feel powerful, movement is personal. Social media has drilled into us what the idea of a "fit girl" should look like, usually along the lines of lean and flawless. Let's stop seeing fitness as something we 'should do' but something we want to do.

Being active isn't about looking like 'her,' it's about feeling like you.



Photo by: Charlie Welton

QUEER WOMEN IN MEDIA

Where have they all gone?

If you've noticed fewer queer women in your favourite TV shows recently then you're definitely not imagining things! GLAAD's latest **Where We Are on TV** report shows that women now make up **47% of LGBTQ characters in broadcast, cable and streaming**, compared to **48% men** and **5% nonbinary** characters. Off the bat this might sound like an improvement, but the frustrating part is the amount of shows with LGBTQ characters that are being cancelled.

In fact, recently there have been **36 series** with LGBTQ characters that have ended, shows like *Station 19* and *Run the Burbs*, which was pulled before its season even finished airing. And frustratingly, over half of the queer characters on these cancelled shows were women, sending a message that LGBTQ women's stories are less important or easily dispensable.

On top of this, it seems that the most underrepresented groups – **female characters, transgender characters, nonbinary characters and characters of colour** are the ones who seem to be disappearing from our screens the most. This doesn't just create bad and inauthentic representation, but it becomes a form of symbolic annihilation, making those feel undervalued and like their stories and lives don't matter.

Despite all this, there are still great queer representations being shown on our television screens, and more progressively, in children's shows. Disney's *The Owl House* is a great example, with Disney's first bisexual lead character, Luz with her lesbian girlfriend, Amity, alongside the inclusion of a non-binary character called Raine. And what's great about this representation is that Disney doesn't make their identities a big deal or use them as a plot twist, they just exist subtly and authentically.

Although *The Owl House* is a great example of authentic representation, others remain being tokenistic or stereotypical, with LGBTQ women often being side characters rather than leads, stopping their stories from being explored further.

It just sucks that some shows aren't good at creating real representation, especially when children's shows can tell queer stories without turning them into stereotypes or shock value moments.

An exposure study ran by GLAAD and Procter & Gamble showed truly how much representation matters, finding that **almost half of viewers who had seen LGBTQ characters were more accepting of those in the community**. Not only that, but they also found out that **80% of people who had seen LGBTQ people in the media were more supportive of equal rights**. This shows how powerful representation is and its level of importance right now, especially with anti LGBTQ laws being enforced in schools and government policies pushing back against gender identity and expression. In these times, positive and authentic representation on TV isn't just desirable, it's vital!

The good news is that it's clear that representation works, it starts conversations, opens minds and forms new mindsets. But it only works if these representations are permanently here to stay on our screens! Pulling LGBTQ women from our screens isn't just disappointing for those who feel underrepresented, but it's also dangerous too. What we see in the media is often strongly reflected in the real world and young women need to grow up in a world that sees them for who they are, in every way.

Unfortunately, the current world we live in is littered with negative and harmful representation from those who have the most power. With government voices loudly declaring to nations that there are *"only two genders"* and advocating *"to end the federal funding of gender ideology"*, these laws and declarations fabricate false stories and fearmonger those who don't know any better, putting LGBTQ people at risk.

This is why authentic representation is so vital. We need to push for more! More queer women in leading roles, more trans and non-binary characters that don't end up written off, more people using the versatility of television and media to share their honest stories to everyone.



photo by: Emily Milton

WOMEN IN FILM

13 going on 30

13 Going on 30 appears to be a light-hearted, classic girly rom-com, but in reality, it portrays a surprisingly honest take on growing up as a woman. When, at 13, Jenna dreams to be “thirty, flirty and thriving”, she has hopes and visions of being glamorous and popular, but she realises what we all, as women, eventually discover - that being grown up isn't really what it seems to be.

The film is so loved by many women for the way that it explores the pressures of adulthood, the overwhelming desire to fit in with others, and the importance of staying authentic to who you are at heart!

It stands as proof that your own self worth doesn't come from how successful you are in life, or how you look, but more so comes from your kindness and genuine connections with others. Jenna and Matt's genuine connection, in comparison to the inauthentic ones that she has with her co-workers, highlights how important meaningful relationships actually are and proves to us that social status isn't as important as it seems.

But I'm a cheerleader

Megan starts the film out as a classic representation of femininity, being a cheerleader with the right looks and the right boyfriend. However, when we see her sent off to a conversion therapy camp, she realises that everything she knew about being a 'real' woman was all performative and not true to herself.

The film is beloved by many for the way in which we see Megan begin to discover her sexuality and fall in love, not only with her girlfriend Graham, but also herself - discovering what it's like to finally be authentically and unapologetically her true self.

We see how, through a lighthearted and funny narrative, *But I'm a cheerleader* highlights how society polices women's bodies, desires, and identities and forces them to think that they belong in narrow, heterosexual molds. But rather than giving in to these societal expectations of women, *But I'm a Cheerleader* takes a stand and shows that womanhood isn't about fitting into expectations, but is rather about writing your own future and living your own life how you wish to.



Photos by: Emily Milton

Little women

Despite *Little Women* being set in the 1800s, the way in which it portrays womanhood doesn't feel outdated, but more so comes across as relatable through the way it captures the joys, struggles, and beauty of growing up as a woman in a world that loves to tell us who we should be and how we should act.

The four sisters in the film *Jo, Meg, Beth, and Amy* all take on different paths in life, showing women how there's not one particular or right path to take, it's up to you to write your own future. Their traits each feel representative of different parts of ourselves at certain stages in life and together, they serve as a reminder that womanhood is not simple or straightforward.

What makes *Little Women* such an accurate reflection of real life is how it embraces both independence and belonging. It creates a clear celebration of women's ambitions and also represents the love and support that comes from sisterhood and how those complicated, loyal, and joyful relationships help to shape the women that we become.

Lady Bird

Lady Bird is another one of those accurate and honest portrayals of what it's like to grow up as a young woman, it strays away from being a romanticised coming of age story, and rather focuses on how messy, emotional and funny real life truly is.

The film manages to nail the emotional intensity of being a teenage girl, from arguments with your mum, to being insecure about money or social class, alongside the desperation of wanting to be deemed 'enough'. It explores these themes with sensitivity and a level of compassion, showing realistic portrayals of being a young woman and rather than something tokenistic or judgmental.

It shows us that it's okay to have big life ambitions to break free from your hometown but also that it's okay to feel confused, overwhelmed and unsure about life at the same time. Basically, growing up isn't all about getting everything right, you're allowed to make mistakes and face big choices, but as long as you stay true to loving yourself in the process, that's all that matters.

BIKINI GIRL VS CANCER

Love our bodies unashamedly: Challenging the narrative around stoma bags

Surrounded by the comforting smell of pumpkin-spiced lattes and the sound of laughs and keyboard clicks, I meet with 33-year-old **Destiny Wade** – better known to her followers on Instagram as **Bikini Girl vs Cancer**. From the onset, Destiny is the epitome of good health: bright, blonde hair flows down her shoulders, and she wears a neon pink gym set, ready for the gym later. I am even more inspired, considering everything she has been through: surviving cervical cancer twice, and recently undergoing major, life-changing surgery, which resulted in her needing a stoma bag.

Living with a stoma bag

Destiny openly describes to me the time she was fitted with her bag. Back in April this year, she was rushed to hospital after suffering from intestinal ischemia, which was poisoning her bowels. Over 2 metres of bowel had to be removed, and two days later, Destiny was fitted with a stoma bag – a bag that collects waste after a surgical procedure creates an opening (a stoma) through the abdominal wall.

Three years prior, Destiny underwent major abdominal surgery to remove a tumour due to the cancer re-emerging. The doctors said she would be left with both a stoma bag and a urostomy. In the end, this did not happen. Destiny explains, *“Having that time mentally to process having a stoma bag before it happened gave me the time to accept it.”* She researched, connected with other women with stoma bags online, and got comfortable with the idea of having one.

Social media and stoma awareness

Social media has played an invaluable role in Destiny’s stoma journey. *“The only people that I felt I could reach out to about these problems were the people on social media who were open about having a bag,”* she explains. Through reaching out to other women with stomas on Instagram,

Destiny was able to feel less alone and speak to people who understood exactly what she was going through.

It was also important for her to see people openly talking about their bags online; something that has only started happening recently. *“Twenty years ago nobody would talk about it. No one would even admit to having one, even privately with their families.”* But now, things are changing. Social media is being used by the stoma community – which makes up **one in 335 people in the UK according to Colostomy UK** - to de-stigmatise



Did you know?

According to Colostomy UK, one in 335 people in the UK have a stoma bag!

bags and encourage honest and open discussion around them. And Destiny has started doing just that.

On her Instagram page **Bikini Girl vs Cancer**, initially set up in 2021 to document her cervical cancer diagnosis and treatment, she posts all about her bag.

Destiny’s goal is simple: *“I want people to see that it’s ok to have a bag and that you can speak to others about it. You shouldn’t be embarrassed.”* Her page includes everything from the surgery she had to get her stoma fitted, bikini selfies with her stoma on show, and how she’s managing her fitness journey alongside living with a bag. Slowly, she is creating her own online community, and challenging the idea that stomas are taboo and should be kept hidden away.

Destiny is also determined to use her platform to highlight how not all disabilities are visible. Rolling her eyes, she tells me about the time she was tutted at by an older man for using a disabled toilet, as he thought she looked ‘well’.

“I want to try and challenge the narrative that you must look a certain way to be viewed as disabled. I may look fit and healthy, but people have no idea what’s underneath my clothes and what’s going on inside my body.”

“I want people to see that it’s ok to have a bag and that you can speak to others about it. You shouldn’t be embarrassed.”



Loving your body

It has taken a lot of inner work, and sheer strength, for Destiny to fully embrace the changes her body has gone through over the years. She vulnerably tells me, *“When I had my first surgery and had a big scar down my tummy, I wouldn’t even have dreamed of ever wanting to be seen with it because I was so self-conscious.”*

Then, she began connecting with other women online who had also gone through surgeries. *“I started finding other people on social media who were so confident about having scars or ‘imperfections,’ and I thought, why can’t I be like that? They positively impacted how I viewed myself.”*

I was really keen to ask Destiny what advice she’d give to young women struggling with their body image after surgery. *“I’d say stay off social media if that affects you and remember that it’s simply a screenshot of someone’s life. But if you do want to be on social media, find amazing people who promote positive body image.”* Destiny also recommends doing things that put you out of your comfort zone, as *“You end up tricking your mind and body into thinking you are confident.”*

Coffee and cake finished, we step back into the crisp, Autumnal air, and part ways. Later in the day I receive a text message. Destiny had her stoma on show in the gym for the first time and posted it on her page. Although this was very nerve-racking, especially as no one in the gym knows she has a stoma, she feels extremely liberated.

She finishes the message saying:

“At the end of the day, as long as you’re happy with yourself, whether that be post surgery, post an illness, post treatment side effects, then nothing else actually matters!”



SISTERHOOD, STYLE AND SECOND CHANCES



Photo by: Lolita Harvey

Girlhood was about playing dress-up. Womanhood is about owning the wardrobe.

Love Island illustrates a broader social phenomenon: how society defines love, friendship, style and self-respect. And 2025's biggest revelation? Romance isn't just about who you couple up with. It's about who's got your back, what values you stand for, and how you express yourself. This transformation comes in the form of **Toni Laites, Shakira Khan and Yasmin Pettet**. The "Big Three" didn't just win over the villa, they completely flipped the script. While most Islanders hustle for brand deals or settle into predictable roles, Toni, Shakira and Yasmin made their own lane. They weren't afraid to be messy, real, or demanding of respect. More importantly, they lifted each other up. *Love Island* was once filled with contestants strutting around in neon co-ords you could buy instantly online. But that partnership came crashing down when *Missguided* collapsed in 2022, and fast fashion itself started to feel outdated.

From fast fashion to pre-loved.

Cue the glow-up: the show announced eBay as its first ever pre-loved fashion partner. Contestants began re-wearing outfits, sharing wardrobes, and styling second-hand gems like vintage denim, retro tees, and designer bags with a story. The audience noticed. Searches for "pre-loved clothes" on eBay spiked. Gen Z viewers said they were more likely to shop second-hand after watching. Suddenly, *Love Island* wasn't just about who kissed who, it was shaping how we shop. Inside the villa, Toni, Shakira and Yasmin showed that friendship can be as powerful as style. They supported each other, argued honestly, and refused to let producers or audiences box them into stereotypes. Fans started calling them the Powerpuff Girls.

Remember, rewearing isn't repeating - it's rewriting.

And outside the villa? Forget generic fast fashion collabs, the trio managed to score an avant-garde *i-D Magazine* shoot. Think about messy hair, dramatic makeup and experimental styling. Together, they're carving out a brand rooted in sisterhood, style and second chances.

Romance in 2025 is messy, hopeful, and real. *Love Island* still gives us fairytales and heart-breaks, but the deeper story is this: finding yourself and your people. And rewriting this outdated fairytale is the ultimate win. Toni, Shakira and Yasmin show us how to be boldly stylish in our own way. *Love Island's* partnership with eBay shows us too: second chances- whether in clothes, friendships, or love, are worth celebrating.



Photos by: Lolita Harvey

THE LOVE ISLAND EFFECT

Photo by: Love Island



Love Island has celebrated traditional beauty standards for a decade. Do women feel pressured to replicate the aesthetic?

Bronzed skin, perfect lips, tiny waist- the 'Love Island look' has ruled our screens for nearly a decade. But have these beauty ideals started to rule us too? The show has turned the natural beauty of women into 'PLT Baddies' and 'Glam Girls' that are ready to find a man in the Love Island villa. Oh yes because that sounds incredible- nothing screams self-confidence and empowerment quite like that. But at what cost? Trying to 'fit in' and achieve the perfect look feels more like a societal expectation than a form of expressing yourself. Sure, Love Island might call itself an entertainment show... but lets be real. It's also a masterclass in selling us one version of beauty: tanned, slim, and perfectly polished. And here at Rewritten, we know better than to put ourselves in categories.

Young women who consume this kind of reality TV try to replicate these standards, instead of exploring their own self-expression

Shakira Khan's Journey - 'Not Your Typical Love Islander'

Reality TV icon **Shakira Khan** recently opened up on the podcast *We Need to Talk*, where she discussed her Love Island journey and experience. She revealed how she struggled to overcome the beauty standards of the show due to being a mixed-race woman. The beauty ideals for a stereotypical female Love Islander are "blonde hair with blue eyes", which is an aesthetic she challenged. Shakira uncovered that "no South Asian female has been on that show and not been booted off". **Shannon Singh** was eliminated after one day on the series. "I was buzzing to see someone who looks remotely like me".

and identity. The result of these behaviours? Risks of cosmetic procedures, unhealthy fitness habits, aesthetic treatments, and conforming to Love Island standards. According to the **British Association of Aesthetic Plastic Surgeons, cosmetic surgeries rose by 5% between 2023-2024**, mostly for women. That's not a coincidence.

Love Island's glossy cast made tweaks feel almost like a rite of passage.

Sociologist **Lucy Storey** said that this can create risks that are uncontrollable and unnatural for your bodies, such as eating disorders, body dysmorphia, anxiety, and low self-worth. We shouldn't have to feel pressure to conform to the ideals Love Island has set. It's time to redefine beauty on our own terms and create a safe space.

Love Island has consistently portrayed a specific type of woman. This is through

casting individuals with a similar aesthetic: hourglass figures, toned bodies and a filtered look. Beauty expert **Maddie Malone** says how shows - like Love Island - "create societal pressures due to the influence of inspirational people online". This can contribute to us feeling like we need cosmetic surgery to look our best!

What if someone was cast that broke these stereotypes? That would be a game-changer, especially for women who feel they are different. Whether it's their natural curly hair, unique style, or their signature features that people love and admire. It's time we stand out from the crowd.

This was the moment when she resonated with a cast member from the show who reflected her identity. Shakira embraced her ethnicity and her identity. She showed that being different is a beautiful thing. She tells her fans, "don't pretend to be someone you're not" and is an advocate for young women embracing their own beauty. Is Shakira Khan slowly becoming a role model to us women who struggle with the pressures of beauty standards represented in the media?



Scan here to listen to the 'We Need To Talk' podcast where Shakira discusses her Love Island journey!



Photo by: Lolita Harvey

TOXIC RELATIONSHIPS

Stop using social media to normalise toxic relationships

From wholesome date night videos to relationship breakups and attachment-style rants, this form of content can take over our social media. On **TikTok** and **Instagram**, couples have begun to go to different extents just to get some clicks and views. Millions of people begin to get consumed with these seemingly regular couples - but can some be toxic? And can this have an impact on us as consumers?

#toxic has 3.1 million posts on Instagram

Couples content

Couples content has become increasingly huge on social media where influencers create storylines and drama, making these toxic relationships more desirable. This can be from as little as couples pranks to public scandals and breakups, resulting in these patterns of behaviour becoming normal for viewers. This blurs the lines between entertainment and unhealthy relationships.

Some of these videos show behaviour like tracking locations, going through each other's phones and having arguments on live streams. Although this can be entertaining to watch on your phone, it's far too normalised for people to find comfort in watching relationship dramas. This can be used as a way of validating their own feelings.

Toxic TikTok trends

Trends on **TikTok** are being created everyday, and these come and go very quickly. Relationship trends are very popular - especially ones speaking about 'red flags'. This is a term coined by many Gen Z people, which explains a characteristic from a partner that is negative.

One trend that has spiked on social media is people listing their personal **red flags** for a potential partner. Whilst this could be seen as informative and helpful advice for people that may have not had a relationship, it can be harmful. These lists usually include types of emotional manipulation but can also be smaller things - like having a messy room. The damage of placing things like a messy room into the same category as emotional manipulation, can take away the seriousness of some of these **red flags**.

If you have ever cringed and been put off by someone for doing something very normal, you have experienced the 'ick'. This is now being used as another trend to create content. On one side of **TikTok**, you have cute couple's content, creating this perfect image of what a relationship should be like. However, you then have trends like listing the icks they have. These can emphasise the tiniest of imperfections a person could have, picking people apart.

Remember, just because one person says something is an **ick**, it does not mean you need to believe the same. Try not to let social media dictate how you view your partner or future partner. Every relationship is different - and doesn't have to be perfect. But these couple trends do the exact opposite to this. As some of these trends are presented casually, and for entertainment purposes, this continues to normalise an unhealthy view on relationships.

Terms made popular by Gen Z

'Gaslighting'
'Love bombing'
'Red flags'
'Princess treatment'
'Bare minimum'

Social media and your relationship standards

It is so easy to consume this negative type of social media, as it is everywhere. Social media will always show you unrealistic versions of people, and will purposely feed you content in order to change your thoughts. This is seen in the toxic trends that circulate **TikTok**.

Healthy relationships do not need to be proven to other people. You do not need to conform to what **TikTok** trends tells you is a **red flag**. You also shouldn't let the internet make you feel as though you need to be in a relationship.



BRAT SUMMER OR CRUEL SUMMER?

Stop pitting women against each other

Like anyone else who has been living chronically online (R.I.P. my scarily high screen time stats), my feed has recently been flooded with content about **Taylor Swift** and **Charli XCX's** alleged beef. The internet is speculating that Swift's song *Actually Romantic* from her latest album *The Life of a Showgirl* is a diss track aimed at Charli in response to the iconic 2024 electro-pop album, *brat*.

Critiquing, comparing, and pitting successful women against each other for our entertainment is a tale as old as time - and it has to stop.

Breaking down the rumours

After *brat's* release in June 2024, fans immediately made assumptions about *Sympathy is a knife*, a vulnerable track about self-comparison and anxiety. Lyrics like "I don't wanna share this space / I don't wanna force a smile / This one girl taps my insecurities" - plus speculation about references to Taylor's boyfriend at the time, **Matty Healy** - sent the internet into a frenzy. A few months before the album's launch, she told **TikTok** followers in a since deleted video:

"They're [the songs] really just about how it's so complicated being an artist, especially a female artist, where you are pitted against your peers, but also expected to be best friends with every single person constantly."

Fans literally used a song all about the complexities around being a female artist and the competitiveness that they experience... to create a rivalry between the two singers.

Even after Taylor praised Charli when she was profiled for *New York Magazine* in 2024, and Charli shut down anti-Taylor Swift chants at a Brazil show, fans refused to let go of the idea of a feud. They are now saying that the new song *Actually Romantic* is a play on *brat* track *Everything is romantic*, and that the mystery admirer in the song is Charli XCX, with the lyric "I heard you call me 'Boring Barbie' when the coke's got you brave" hinting at her substance use.

Taylor, meanwhile, has described her track as "a song about realising that someone else has kind of had a one-sided, adversarial relationship with you that you didn't know about."

And all of a sudden they start doing too much and they start letting you know that actually, you've been living in their head rent-free and you had no idea."

She has not confirmed whether it was written about Charli.

What this says about how we view female success

Whether either song is a dig is irrelevant. What's concerning is how quickly we spread rumours and find entertainment in comparing successful women to each other. TikToks saying *Sympathy is a knife* is better than Taylor's whole album, and that Taylor would write better music if she took drugs, seem to be everywhere. What began as fan theories and memes has turned into something a lot more personal and quite simply, misogynistic.

Charli XCX and Taylor Swift are both incredibly talented in their own right. *brat* was so culturally significant that it became the **2024 Collins Dictionary** word of the year, and Taylor has **14 number one albums**. Why is there no space for the two artists to coexist? Why do we have to drag one woman down to lift another up?

If the world needs anything right now, it's female solidarity. Let's use this as an opportunity to remember to celebrate, support and be kind to one another.

As the old saying goes, comparison is the thief of joy.



LESS IS MORE



Social media is constantly shaping trends for women to follow. What if the next big trend isn't a new product... It's simply being yourself?

Behind the glitz and glam of media representations online, some social platforms can be a positive and safe environment, influencing young women to embrace their natural, authentic selves. Trends such as *'dissolving Botox and lip filler'* have significantly influenced taking that step of embracing your true, authentic selves without having to 'fix' your face or body with cosmetic surgeries. This could be an empowering shift towards embracing your natural look, challenging the repeated beauty rules we've been fed for years.

In many ways, social media can be a toxic environment for people to critique others on their appearances; doom-scrolling on social media, comparing yourself to filtered women online. Taking in messages that encourage you to 'fix' the perceived flaws you don't have! Posts online captioning *'woke up like this'*, and *'flawless'* instead of telling their audience they were injected with a needle in their "beauty sleep!"

Research shows **"23% of young women aged 18-34 are interested in having Botox in the UK,"** and it has become more popular over the years, with the rise of digital media. One of them is my auntie, who believes in *"healthily enhancing your features- doing it for yourself and not others, and never feeling pressured by social media."* She said starting can be a risk if you're *"caught up in a spiral of addiction, taking the originality of your looks away."*

The Guardian says if women are *'willing to buy cures for their flaws and insecurities, the media will be there to sell it to us.'* Studies show that we adopt beauty ideals as personal benchmarks for self-evaluation rather than accepting ourselves for who we truly are. We compare ourselves to others, and by doing that, we believe everything we see online. Listen, we've all been there. However, it's time to make a change and redefine beauty- no filters, no fillers, just us. Spots, freckles, laughter lines, and all. Because less isn't just more- it's real.

Pamela Anderson- From Hollywood glam to the 'no makeup look'

Once known for her glamorous looks, the icon herself has undergone a major beauty transformation.



During **Paris Fashion Week 2023**, **Pamela Anderson** went viral for arriving at the event makeup-free. She said, *"It felt good to look in the mirror and say, I'm OK just like this."* The media were stunned that Anderson chose to make such a dramatic shift- from the Hollywood glam star to a natural, bare-faced icon. She addressed in a recent interview with **Harper's Bazaar U.K.** that AI technology and filters are making people kind of 'boring-looking' and that she *"wants to challenge beauty norms."*

The year 2023 was the year Anderson decided she didn't have to cover up anymore. She reflects on the experience, *"I can just be me, it's very freeing to be comfortable in your own skin"*. This inspiring shift has proved to people that even celebrities embrace their natural flaws, and it's okay to do so. Even if others judge, focus on how comfortable you feel in your own skin. Anderson said herself that makeup feels like a mask.

"I want to challenge this idea of beauty and this mask we put on."

She felt more open and free as soon as she unveiled her natural self. Seeing someone who's been in the limelight for over 30 years, choosing to accept her glow from within is truly inspiring.

So, as it turns out, being unapologetically yourself is the best version you can be!

VOGUE TO TODAY

Antonia Swinson at 23 years old



Photo by: David Swinson

Antonia Swinson now



Photo by: Amy Swinson

Rewriting beauty : Interview with Antonia Swinson

IF VOGUE CALLS, YOU ANSWER

In 1992, at just 23 years old, **Antonia Swinson** began her career working at one of the most influential beauty and fashion magazines in Britain - as a senior sub editor.

"Vogue was the most important fashion magazine" she recalls. "It was a bit like working for the BBC - there was this sense of prestige and influence."

The 1990s was a core time for some of the most famous supermodels - **Cindy Crawford, Naomi Campbell, and Kate Moss**, who were all over the front pages of magazines and catwalks. It was an iconic moment in the history of British fashion. When Kate Moss emerged, she brought the new and edgy style of grunge to the Britpop culture, *"she kind of represented that shift into something new - the grunge look"*, Antonia explained.

Women have been subjected to ever-changing beauty ideals throughout the ages. But, in the 90s the beauty ideal was quite linear, which can equally and justifiably be said of today's standards. *"It sometimes felt like there was really only one way to look, there wasn't diversity in body types, and there weren't clothes made for women who didn't fit that size"* Antonia explains.

The representations of fashion in the 90s were not questioned as much as they are now. *"The funny thing is, when I look back - I just accepted it. I didn't look like the girls in the magazine, but that didn't bother me. It felt like a separate world"*.

The concept of a *"separate world"* is hugely significant and powerful and continues to dictate how women and young girls view themselves just as much today as it did in the 90s. *"We knew how much influence Vogue had, everyone wanted to talk to you if you worked there"*.

"I THINK WE'VE MADE PROGRESS"

I mean, whilst our world is beginning to become inclusive for women a lot of people still have that feeling of needing to fit into a certain type.

Social media does not help this; influencers and models consume our phones and algorithms every day - *"it has created a new kind of pressure, young women still feel they have to look like celebrities, and many spend huge amounts of money trying to"*, says Antonia. Our views on our appearance are manipulated whether we like it or not.

Beauty ideals change but there will always be women who do put their best foot forward confidently on social media. These

posts are just not always necessarily authentic - they can be edited and unrelatable. Antonia explained, though, that she does watch a lot of realistic posts from women.

I asked Antonia, what advice would she give to women in their 20s?

"EVERYONE IS DIFFERENT, AND DIFFERENT IS GOOD."

"Don't waste your time trying to look like other people. The most important thing about body image is health. As I've got older, I care less about how I look and more about being well - about having healthy years ahead."

If Antonia could rewrite the beauty image of the 1990s, she said that she would *"make it more inclusive; I'd show that there isn't one way to be beautiful"*.

At the end of the day, beauty is subjective. These beauty 'trends' are forever changing, making it harder to keep up with the new expectations.

But it is always important to remember that everybody is different, and that's okay! Uniqueness is beautiful. Everybody, no matter what you look like, needs to feel loved and included. And not alone.