



THE METER

MANCHESTER'S INDEPENDENT MEDIA

AT THE

LUSH

SUMMIT

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The Meteor is a not-for-profit, independent media organisation – an alternative, radical, community-based publication for the people of Manchester. By telling stories that are neglected in the mainstream, investigating and challenging local power structures and exploring important issues, from the everyday to the earth-shattering, we aim to promote social justice in our city and beyond. We recently received funding from the Lush Charity to conduct a project reporting on homelessness in Manchester and were then invited to report on this year’s Lush Summit.



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We hope you enjoy this one off special edition on the Lush Summit 2018. Get in touch to find out more about us and our work:
Website: www.themeteor.org
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Twitter: [@mcrmeteor](https://twitter.com/mcmeteor)



Lush Cosmetics self identifies as a 'campaigning company, proud to swim against the tide'...



...and their annual summit, which took place on 14 and 15 February 2018, exemplified this sentiment perfectly.

Spanning three floors of Old Billingsgate on the River Thames, the event showcased Lush's work across Earth, Sea and Sky, with their product supply

chains (pg. 12), ethical testing (back page), and the campaigns and organisations Lush have supported through their Charity Pot - including us, *The Meteor*. In this publication we give you a flavour of the breadth of global issues that were debated and discussed over the two days, and the inspirational work of those that are tackling these issues, from grassroots groups to global campaigns.



In the Human Rights room, a range of



interconnected issues were highlighted, from the #StopAndScrap Universal Credit campaign led by Disabled People Against Cuts (pg. 11) to Reprieve's campaign against the US's extra-judicial drone strikes (pg. 4) that are being made possible by 'meta-data' provided by the UK. The drone strikes, like other forms of bombing contribute significantly to the global refugee crisis - which was a big theme at the summit.

The dangers of technology in the wrong hands were also highlighted by free software activist Richard Stallman (pg. 16), as well as its potential good use when in the right hands, with Techfugees, the non-profit organisation using digital technology to

help displaced people across the world (pg. 4). More good news includes nonviolent activism across the globe (pg. 18) and the use of permaculture principles in reviving local Kenyan economies (pg. 10).

We hope these stories illustrate, as did the summit itself, the value of bringing people together to inspire and ignite each other's passion for social and environmental justice. Until next year!

The Meteor Team



Techfugees: connecting the displaced



Techfugees is a non-profit tech company digitising a grassroots response to a global refugee crisis. Helping them survive the significant challenges & barriers they face

“They’re not even poor. Look, they’ve got smartphones!”

When Syria’s refugee crisis gained mass attention in 2015, some right-wing commentators showed a dim understanding of the lives of those from less affluent countries. Once food, clothing and travel are sorted out, a smartphone is the first thing on the shopping list for most of the developing world. You can Snapchat your friends, find work, start a revolution, and if there’s a war it just might save your life.

For a refugee, having access to the right information at the right time, be it a travel visa, the location of a food drop-off in a camp, or the time of a planned police raid, can mean the difference between life and death. Adrift in a strange and sometimes hostile country without a network, being able to find people who speak the same language as you, or have been through what you have been through, is vital to a feeling of inclusion, community and hope.

Techfugees is a social enterprise which exists to “facilitate creation of sustainable solutions and empower the displaced people with technology.” In her talk at the Lush Summit, Techfugees spokesperson Alice Piterova presented an engineer’s view of the refugee journey, methodically mapped out to ensure all needs are understood at every stage. From escaping the bombs, then crossing the border, and crossing the sea, staying in the refugee camp, and ultimately trying to integrate into daily life in a more stable country, Techfugees and its network of 18,000 volunteers are there to support

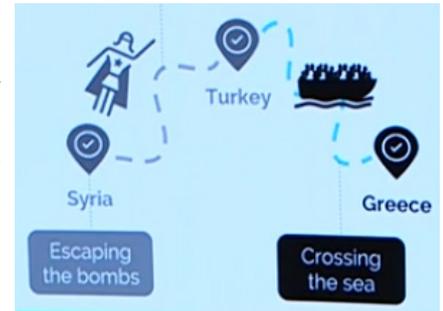


Alice Piterova

the displaced every step of the way.

In a chaotic world in which upwards of 65 million people are currently displaced, it is reassuring to know that there are high-tech, community-run systems in place to help guide people to safety. And not just immediate physical safety: Techfugees seeks to ensure refugees’ safety, healthcare, connectivity to others, access to identification documents, education, employment, and access to information.

The company manages this mission by inviting information sharing, collaboration and mentoring amongst its volunteers and the refugee community, both online and at hackathons – large gatherings of tech-savvy ‘solutionaries’, with a focus on turning ideas into reality. Techfugees promotes a suite of online services both resulting from its hackathons (such as KomInn) an app which educates people in Norway about their rights to healthcare, and those developed by outside organisations (such as AID:tech) that created a blockchain



backed voucher system. In a pilot programme in Lebanon, they provided 500 digital ‘credit cards’ to Syrian refugees, each with \$20 for use in a camp store.

Techfugees promises a lot and has its fingers in a lot of pies, so it is reassuring that its spokesperson Alice Piterova emphasises rigour and reflection. “We keep good track of projects because a lot of them are just spitting out activities. We keep in touch and make sure we follow what [different projects] are doing to see what works and what doesn’t... usually at hackathons we have a person with experience of going through all the hardships... and this person would usually say if there’s something wrong... so we see what works and what doesn’t, take it as a learning process and bring it to our communities by producing content or sometimes by simply talking to people, educating them through hackathons [and] through mentoring.”

In keeping with their focus on the value of information exchange, Techfugees have built Basefugees, a web-based platform which supports refugee technology projects across the world, Piterova hopes Basefugees will “connect even more stakeholders on every single issue, so the learning and knowledge exchange process will be managed in a more efficient way”. When information is key to the survival of millions of refugees worldwide, any increase in the efficiency of its exchange is vital.

Georges Almond

Techfugees website: www.techfugees.com

Twitter: [@Techfugees](https://twitter.com/Techfugees)

'Murder anyone, anytime, broadly anywhere' - the US & UK drone strike assassination programme



The Kill List allows the US military, with UK help, to assassinate people in foreign countries that we are not even at war with. Judicial procedure is abandoned as the military acts as judge, jury and executioner.

If you live in the wrong part of countries like Yemen and Pakistan, you could find yourself on a US terrorist 'Kill List', whether you are a terrorist or not. Innocent civilians, politicians, journalists and even United Nations peace negotiators have been wrongly placed on these lists. Once on the list you are a 'legitimate' target for US aerial drones to assassinate. And god help anyone nearby you if they do. Hellfire missiles fired by Predator drones do not distinguish between terrorists and non-terrorists; anyone within 15 metres of the explosion is likely to be killed, or wounded if within 20 metres. 'Collateral damage' will be the white-washing military euphemism used to describe the killing of innocent civilians, while a sense of injustice and a desire for revenge grows in those communities wrongly targeted.

The drone strikes assassination programme, started in 2013 by the Nobel Peace Prize winning US President Barack Obama, is being ramped up by current President Donald Trump, who persistently blames pretty much all terrorism on Muslims, and uses fake statistics to back up his arguments, stoking up religious and racial tensions in the US and across the globe. On Trump's watch there has been a 400% increase in the number of drone strikes made in Yemen, a country neither the US nor the UK is at war with.

This was the chilling narrative of state sanctioned extrajudicial lethal force used to assassinate suspected terrorists described on the Human Rights Stage at the Lush Summit by Tayyiba Bajwa, a lawyer working in the Assassinations Team of human rights campaigning organisation Reprieve. Her work involves challenging the use of lethal force by the state in the fight against terrorism. She is particularly critical of Obama who introduced the Kill List and made the ultimate decision as to who was on

the list when it was presented to him at regular 'Terror Tuesday' sessions. Bajwa says he introduced a policy of "murder anyone, at any time, broadly anywhere" In war zones such as Syria and Iraq drone strikes can be claimed as legitimate under the rules of war. What concerns Bajwa most is their use in countries not at war with the US, such as Yemen, Pakistan, Niger and Somalia, where the US military and its ultimate commander, the President, is acting as judge, jury and executioner, and using a fundamentally flawed Kill List to do so.

"We kill people on meta-data."

Most people would think a Kill List should be based on traditional intelligence, such as someone being reported as a terrorist or some evidence that links them to terrorist activity. But General Michael Hayden of the National Security Association and CIA admitted that "we kill people on meta-data". Meta-data can include who people email, call or text on electronic devices but not the actual content of the message. Movements can also be collected by tracking applications such as Google maps. As well as collecting data on a person's network of contacts, geographical data can be collected from GPS tracking applications, mobile phone masts and social media accounts. Combining all this data, the intelligence services build up a 'signature' for a person. If you tick enough boxes, for example you have been contacted by someone already on their list or driven down a road that is 'tagged' by US military as suspicious, you may be added to the Kill List. Bajwa says that in certain areas it is US policy to identify targets as legitimate if they are male and between the ages of 15-49, "so if you are born in a particular post code you are a legitimate target, which is absolute insanity".



Tayyiba Bajwa

Although it is US drones that carry out the killings, the UK is complicit in these actions due to collecting meta-data and passing it on to the US. Bajwa says "the UK has a hell of a lot of blood on its hands... we work with the US hand in glove." Intelligence released by Wikileaks showed MI6 was key in providing geolocational information to the drone program, operating programs with James Bond-like testosterone fuelled code names such as

“Ghosthunter” and “Ghostwolf” to track down targets for the Kill List. Using bases in the UK originally built to monitor Soviet communications through the Cold War.

Life for some, and liberty for all under threat

Meta-data is an extremely fallible way of identifying terrorists and mistakes are common. Bajwa raises the case of Ahmed Zaidan, placed on the Kill List due to meta-data gathered by a program called “Skynet”. What the meta-data didn’t show was that Zaidan is a journalist who formerly worked for Al-Jazeera in Islamabad. He produced a ground breaking documentary in the 1990s on Al-Qaeda, and was the first journalist to interview Osama Bin Laden. Bajwa says:

“Beyond the broader right to life question of whether it is acceptable to kill someone without a trial. There is also an important freedom of expression angle there. Are we just going to be taking out brown journalists who talk about terrorism, does that mean we have to reserve that right to journalists from the New York Times?”

Reprieve is pursuing Zaidan’s case through the US courts, and is asking the US government to issue a declaration that they are not going to kill Zaidan. The government’s response, Bajwa says, was basically to assert the right to kill anyone at anytime anywhere, and that they will not give the requested declaration.

You only die once?

Between 2006-2013 there were 41 US high-value targets, people who Obama considered the really bad guys in Pakistan and Yemen. Analysis carried out by Reprieve showed that in trying to kill those 41 people they killed 1147 innocent civilians. Their only crime was either living next door to someone or being in a car behind the target. And many of these innocents died when drones were targeting the wrong people. Each of the 41 men were announced dead after drone strikes, on average, three times before they were actually killed. “They listed them three times... they don’t even know for sure who they are killing... it’s not a precise way of warfare as they claim. One guy died three times before he [actually] died of hepatitis.” said Bajwa who went on to describe another Yemeni man being mistakenly declared dead, when a child was killed with the same name, “he is a peace negotiator being funded by the US government to go to peace talks, and the other arm of the US government is trying to kill him.” She went on to criticise the lack of checking of who is killed, and the lack of feedback resulting in them being unable to reduce civilian casualties.

The trauma for civilians living under this threat is immense, with some families experiencing repeated attacks, leaving children in abject terror

every time they hear a drone going overhead. Bajwa is one of many that believe killing a large part of the male population and destroying the fabric of society actually provides fertile ground for groups like Al-Qaeda to establish themselves, where they had little



popular support before conflict arose.

The national security trump card

When Reprieve tried to challenge the UK’s involvement in the US drone programme as unlawful, they pursued it up to the Court of Appeal but lost. Their attempts to pursue litigation against the legality of the Kill List through the American courts has also failed and in both countries national security is used as the reason why the courts will not rule against the government’s actions. Bajwa says:

“National security is an amazing trump card that basically allows the government carte blanche to do whatever it wants wherever it wants.” She went on to describe the unique status terrorism is given, “like no other crime terrorism is treated as a zero sum game. Governments think they can achieve a world where there are no longer terrorists. We would never say of murderers, we think that we can eradicate or stop all murders from happening ever, or we can stop any property crime from happening ever... but somehow in the counter terrorism sphere it is broadly accepted that that is lawful”.

The use of meta-data to construct Kill Lists for drone strikes is perhaps the most sinister and deadly use of IT and big data yet known. It is being used to pursue, and many fear to propagate, the “war on terror”. A meta-war, above and beyond the reach of all the old conventions of warfare, sovereign states and international justice, which appear powerless to curb or to end it. As Bajwa points out, it is a war that threatens the pillars of western democracy, human rights and the rule of law – and sees democratic nations spreading terror to millions of civilians living in mainly Muslim countries - igniting global religious tensions that may burn for decades to come. Rather than protecting our liberal democracies, governments’ pursuit of the “war on terror” may be the biggest threat to them.

Conrad Bower

Doink display data artfully and sustainably for Lush

Lush encourages collaborating organisations, like Doink, to improve their sustainability, reduce waste, and consider their social impact, while supporting innovation, playfulness and positivity

The partnership between Doink and Lush is a great example of how Lush share their ethical approach to business, helping companies to focus on reducing waste and improving sustainability, while creating unique and engaging art.

Doink is an organisation that seeks to humanise data, helping people to understand and share data better, and facilitate better decisions. Part of the Birmingham based Beetfreaks Collective, Doink's previous projects have been as diverse as 'Ministry of Data', billed as 'the world's first data rave,' and 'Societea,' where the UK's obsession with tea and biscuits has been used to explore issues surrounding diversity.

Lush are a company that goes to great lengths to acknowledge the impact their activities have on communities and the environment. They innovate to improve their operations in all areas of the business, from ethical sourcing of raw materials, to improving the efficiency of the supply chain, reducing waste and increasing recycling. Lush takes the attitude that there is always room for improvement, bearing similarities to the Japanese 'Kaizen' concept.

Through the Charity Pot Funding, Lush supports everything from animal right's activists, to LGBTQ organisations, from anti shark hunting groups, to disabled rights activists, and from refugee support networks, to co-operative cocoa growers, and everything in between. So its not hard to see why Lush would partner with visual data innovators Doink.

Tony from Doink described how they had worked with Lush on the summit in 2017 and had been invited to return in 2018. Lush employed Doink to capture feedback from summit attendees, and they went about it in a suitably innovative manner.

The interactive process involved a member of the Doink team asking summit attendees a series of questions about how they felt, the answers of each question determining the colour of ink that would be dropped into a bowl of water. Once all the questions had been asked, a 'mushroom' head on a stick was dipped into the floating ink, creating a marbled effect. The dipped mushroom was then placed on display in an installation, resembling a colourful fungal garden.

Talking me through the changes from the previous year that Doink had implemented, Tony pointed out this was partly inspired by advice from Lush but also from their own growing concerns around sustainability and waste reduction.

"A lot of what we, Doink, do is by nature a one-



off installation, so questions arise such as our plans of what to do with the things we've made once they're finished with?

"This year we've stepped up our game a little bit: everything is made of wood. Where boards and signage had previously been made of plastic, this year everything is made out of wooden panels, and it will all be reused, the woodchip, the logs, the boards, everything."

Tony explained how Lush had encouraged Doink to look more into their own buying processes:

"We got a specific phone call to ask 'Where are your logs sourced from? Where have they come from?' We had to ring our suppliers, who in turn had to ring their suppliers, and so on. Five people later, and five chains of command and companies later, I found out they were from a sustainably sourced farm in France."

Knowing that the logs came from a sustainable source, the focus then shifted to another aspect of the installation; the 'mushroom' heads. Where the mushroom caps had originally been polystyrene, this year the caps were actually provided by Lush: a large supply of used bath bomb moulds had been sent to Doink, with any unused caps from the summit destined to be sent back to Lush to be fed into the chipper and recycled into packaging.

Before I got a chance to answer the summit feedback questions myself, I watched Tony take a Lush employee through the process and was struck by how the conversation embodied Lush's ethos of positivity and inclusion. Ayaz, originally from Italy, is a supervisor for Lush in Leicester, and said he'd been impressed by the summit. Asked what had inspired him, and what conversations he'd had, Ayaz said that he'd particularly enjoyed the queer café, and the summit as a whole had felt like a safe space, with a lot of sharing of information and education happening.

Ayaz answered the questions and then planted his completed mushroom in the garden. The finished installation itself was given to Lush as a permanent installation.

James KA Baker

“The struggles we have unite us” - Women’s rights are human rights

A coalition of women’s groups in the Human Rights room ran workshops, presentations and an interactive performance to raise awareness around issues affecting women in the UK and beyond.



“Don’t talk about the rape. They won’t believe you”

A quote from ‘We are here because you are still there’, a participatory theatre production by the Black Women’s Rape Action Project, Women Against Rape and the All African Women’s Group. Performed on the Lush Summit’s Human Rights platform, the play took audience members on the journey of a female victim of sexual abuse going through the difficult and demeaning asylum process in the UK. This journey is one that too many have to suffer, with 70% of women seeking asylum in the United Kingdom having suffered rape or other forms of sexual violence.

‘We are here because you are still there’ follows “Maria”, a character whose story is informed by the lived experience of members of the All African Women’s Group, including sexual abuse, disbelief in the court, detention and eventually much needed support from a local grassroots women’s support group who help Maria to share her story and eventually win her asylum case.

The All African Women’s Group was founded in 2002, and is made up of women from different countries and backgrounds. As the group states:

“We may sometimes come from different sides of a political conflict but we have managed to stay together because we cease to think of ourselves

as rivals, but as people going through the same experience. The problems we have unite us.”

Women Against Rape (WAR) was set up in 1976 and operates on the same self-help basis of mutual care and support as the All African Women’s Group. Both organisations provide support, legal information and advocacy, and also campaign for justice and protection for all women and girls, including asylum seekers, who have suffered sexual, domestic and/or racist violence. Since 1976, WAR has had significant victories, including the criminalisation of marital rape in the UK in 1991.

The Black Women’s Rape Action Project (BWRAP) was founded in 1991. They focus on achieving justice for women of colour, and have also prevented the deportation of many rape survivors.

As well as sharing the untold stories of women’s experiences in the immigration courts and fighting for an end to the destitution and detention of women, the AAWG provide an invaluable support network. Erioth Mwesigwa, a Ugandan rape survivor who is currently fighting for asylum in the UK, explained how when she joined the All African Women’s Group she “was nobody”. Speaking to the audience of the Human Rights room, Erioth said: “These are wonderful ladies. When you come [to the group] they will give you comfort that you will never ever get anywhere else.”

Support not separation

WAR and the AAWG also work to reunite mothers who have been granted leave to remain in the UK with their children, but the separation of children and their mothers is not confined to women who are seeking asylum or who are refugees. As we heard later in the afternoon, Legal Action for Women (LAW) and Women Against Rape led a discussion around their campaign 'Support Not Separation', on the forced adoption and unjust removal of children from their mothers, in the UK, following domestic violence or marital rape. Last year LAW released a dossier called 'Suffer the Little Children', which showed that nearly three quarters of mothers fighting against the removal of their children had been subject to domestic violence.

The number of children in the UK care system has been steadily increasing for the past nine years, despite the fact that the number of children flagged by councils as being at risk of physical or sexual abuse has been falling. The main reason for the forced removal of children is now neglect. Austerity driven cuts of local support services for families has, Support Not Separation argue, meant that mothers who would previously have been helped by local services to care for their children are now being



Erioth Mwesigwa, from All African Women's Group

branded unfit mothers and having their children removed.

The lively discussion also highlighted claims of 'social engineering' being carried out through the family courts, where children are being removed from low income families and given to the care of white middle class families through an increasingly

privatised system of adoption and foster care.

The aim of the discussion was to shine a light on what is happening in the secrecy of the family courts. Nicola Mann from WAR explained the isolation experienced by mothers who are unable to share their stories:

"You're not allowed to tell anybody about what's going on in the family courts. You're not allowed to show your court papers to anyone else. You're not even really supposed to discuss your case with your sister or your best friend, so you really struggle to get legal support".

Breaking down isolation

Erioth Mwesigwa explained that coming together at the Lush Summit meant breaking down this isolation through sharing information, so that women can support each other:

"When you come together to talk about [these issues], then people are going to learn about them. Like the secrets in the children's court - some people don't know. So as we come together, we learn from one another and also collectively, our voices, they are heard, and I think people are going to respond."

For each of the sessions run by each of these groups, the Human Rights Platform audience was full to bursting, with audience members commenting that, for next year, these events could easily be held on a much bigger stage.

The coming together of these groups and campaigns in one room at the Lush Summit, and the interest these sessions attracted, showed how one woman's struggle is linked to all women, their children and wider society, meaning it is all of our concern. The collaboration of these groups towards their shared goals is indicative of the cooperative nature of grassroots movements such as these. Through their unity, these women are supporting each other in making their voices heard and creating real change.

The stories heard from these groups of women reach out to the wider issues of global inequality, austerity-induced poverty and a lack of fairness and transparency in our legal system. As one audience member pointed out, policies of destitution, dispersal, even detention that are 'piloted' on asylum seekers are the same policies which eventually get rolled out to other poor people, and it is often found to be women who are hit harder by these problems than men.

But just as oppression begins at the bottom rung of the ladder and works its way up, so too does the fight against it.

Alice Toomer - McAlpine

Permaculture in Kenya

Ecological community-building keeps Laikipia looking lush



“With climate change, the rain is reducing, becoming more erratic. So the more people keep animals, the more degradation happens. Animals eat all the grass from the landscape, and the land is left bare. So many animals walk on the land, loosen the soil, all of the topsoil is gone, leaving only rock. That means not much food for cows. So the people... can no longer keep as many animals as before, they cannot farm. People started suffering poverty, people migrated from rural areas to urban areas to look for jobs... Men tend to leave the land and go to other places, leaving women and children behind.”

Joseph Lentunyoi paints a picture of the desertification and ensuing social decline of his homeland Laikipia, in Kenya, with remarkable composure. But maybe you would share his equanimity if you had spent the last six years battling entrenched sexism and ecological ignorance to empower communities with the tools to successfully adapt, flourish and replenish the landscape.

After studying Permaculture with Geoff Lawton in Australia, and going on to teach it all around the world, Joseph returned to Laikipia seeking to “walk the talk” of the nature and community centred design philosophy amongst his own people, the Masai. With funding from Lush, Joseph founded the Laikipia Permaculture Centre (LPC) and cast his eyes about for willing collaborators.

Permaculture Principle #4: The Problem Is The Solution. The problem was a lack of manpower, therefore women were the solution. In Masai culture, women are generally more collaborative and more likely to stay home whilst the men work, so it was natural for the LPC to start by setting up five women’s groups to help build community and reduce poverty.

With the traditional pastoralist lifestyle becoming less and less viable, the next problem was hunger. Decades of hunger relief efforts on the part of NGOs and foreign governments mean that “the local people there believe that when they have a problem, the solution to the problem is always government or foreign aid”, explained Joseph. He has little time for such dependence on external powers: “If the government or foreign aid has no food, what are you

gonna do? Gonna die.”

So the community diversified its wealth creation. *Aloe secundiflora*, a dry-loving relative of the *Aloe vera* plant which grows wild in Laikipia, represented a significant source of income if propagated. Traditionally the plant had mainly been used to soothe wounds, but working with Lush, the Masai began to grow it for use in cosmetics.

This works for Lush, who receive fresh leaves for use in their Charity Pot face cream, and it works for the Masai women, who receive an income not only from Lush, but from the domestic market. In fact, it is the domestic market which takes precedence. In a classy move towards respecting producer sustainability, Lush only takes leaves that the women cannot sell in Kenya.

Permaculture knowledge nourishes every stage of production, from encouraging the aloe to regrow by harvesting only a few lower leaves, where previously the whole plant would have been uprooted, to growing nitrogen-fixing plants and other crops in between the *Aloe* in order to prevent a monoculture causing a reduction in the soil’s fertility.

Even *Opuntia*, considered an invasive species and thorny bane of Kenya’s livestock, has been incorporated into Laikipia’s new living system, with women making jams and juices from the prickly pears which grow on it, and taking honey from the bees which pollinate its flowers. By shifting the tribe’s focus away from cattle and towards already available plant-based resources, Joseph hopes to encourage a transition away from an unfortunately outmoded pastoralism, to a more rooted, diversified, resilient agricultural community.

In a male-dominated culture where it has long been the perception that ‘cows make you wealthy,’ such a shift can cause upheaval. Joseph caused some confusion amongst the men in his community when he insisted that he wanted his wife to be as empowered as he was, being told “our culture does not allow us to do that.” As always, money talks.

“I defeat them because some of them are not able to bring home food for the family. The women are able to bring food due to the projects that they run. So what can we do? We need to empower them.” Thankfully, the Masai of Laikipia are starting to put pragmatism and fairness before tradition. “It was easy to start with the women because it was easy to bring them together. The good news is that the men now are also coming together to solve this problem.” It’s not just the land that’s regenerating.

Georges Almond

Disabled People Against Cuts are calling for an end to the 'conscious cruelty' of Universal Credit

DPAC are calling for Universal Credit to be stopped and scrapped, and old benefits to be reinstated, due to its multiple flaws that are adversely affecting those who have to claim it.

Disabled People Against Cuts (DPAC) is a grassroots campaign group set up in 2010 to oppose the austerity driven cuts that were going to negatively affect disabled people's lives. Their battle has been made all the harder by the demonising terms, such as "scroungers" and "workshy", used to refer to social security claimants by the right wing mainstream media and certain politicians. Their current campaign against Universal Credit (UC) doesn't just concern the disabled; once rolled out fully it will affect millions of part-time low paid workers, who will have to prove they are looking for extra hours or be subject to sanctions if they don't.

Paula Peters from the national steering group for DPAC was joined on the Human Rights stage by her colleague Keith Walker from Bromley DPAC. Peters talked of the major problems facing the new method of social security payment which rolls six existing benefits into one monthly UC payment. The official five week waiting time to receive UC after making a claim has received criticism from many individuals and organisations concerned about increased debt, poverty and homelessness, but many people have to wait much longer, says Peters. "We have had disabled people come to us, who have not had their claims processed for 10 months, left with no money".

Over £15.8 billion has been spent so far on implementing Universal Credit, "on a train wreck of a computer system and administration that are showing Universal Credit simply isn't working" according to Peters, who went on to describe the losses some disabled people would see:

"Disabled people are going to be placed further into poverty by cuts to the Severe Disability Allowance. Single disabled people will lose £2,000 pounds a year, over £40 a week, couples £4,000 a year."

But it is not just the disabled or the unemployed that will be affected by UC. Millions of low paid part-time workers claiming tax credits, one of the benefits being rolled in to UC, will be affected. People working under 32 hours a week will now have fill in a Claimant Commitment form which will detail what they will do to increase their hours of work. If they fail to comply with this commitment they can have their UC sanctioned (meaning they will receive



no money) for a minimum of one week and up to a maximum of three years. Sanctions are often issued in error and many are successfully overturned when appealed, but that can take a long time while the claimant has to live on reduced or no money. A Work and Pensions Select Committee report described sanctions as "purely punitive" and not aimed at helping people secure work. Peters says the rate of people being sanctioned has tripled since UC came in and told the story of a mother of two working part-time in Sainsbury's, who also claimed housing benefit, who was sanctioned:

"She was told you have to increase your hours at Sainsbury's. She strived for three years to get more hours. Her job fits round her children, picking them up and taking them to school, she can't get another job that fits around the kids' school day. The DWP sanctioned her right off the bat for six months with no money. She lost her home and because she had nowhere, social services then got involved and took her children into care."

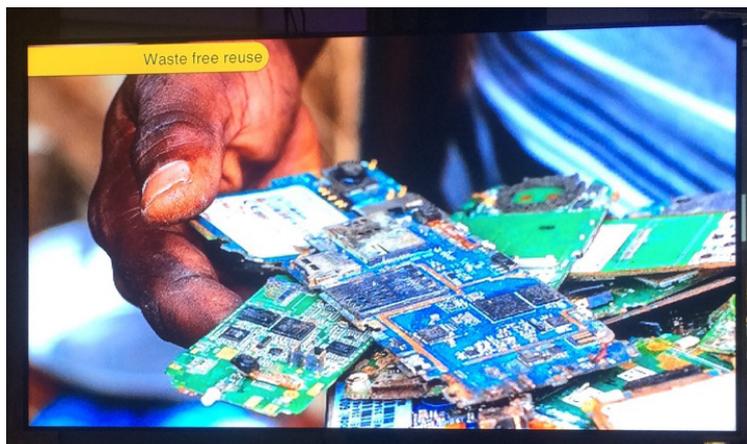
DPAC's campaign calls for UC to be stopped and scrapped (#StopandScrap), with legacy benefits being brought back. This differs from the Labour Party, and some unions, who call for UC to be stopped and fixed.

Walker urged the audience to check out DPAC's website (www.dpac.uk.net) which contains lots of information regarding austerity's effects on the disabled and contains a comprehensive statement on DPAC's stance towards UC.

"Universal Credit is about denying you the support you need, causing maximum distress and harm and making sure your payments drop...[It] is conscious cruelty with punitive sanctions... at the heart of it", said Peters, who went on to ask everyone to oppose the demonising rhetoric spouted by politicians and the right wing media, and asked them to "take this away, get angry and get active."

Conrad Bower

Creative buying at Lush looks beyond the bottom line to reduce e-waste



Lush looks to implement its ethical approach to buying raw materials for its cosmetics range into technology projects, to avoid producing toxic electronic waste. Where Lush leads others may follow.

The Meteor spoke to Gabbi Loedolff, Head of Raw Materials and Safe Synthetic Sourcing at Lush, in the relatively quiet Campaigns Room amid the hustle and bustle of the Lush Summit. She was busy preparing to chair another panel talk at the summit but managed to answer our questions about some of the projects she is currently working on.

Over her 15 year career at Lush, Loedolff has gone from being a retail manager to delivering the launch of the Lush Charity Pot. She now oversees the buying of raw materials and safe synthetics for Lush UK and Europe. The supply chain approach at Lush is described as 'creative buying', which looks beyond the bottom line, and integrates ethical considerations into the decision to buy. As a creative buyer, Loedolff explained how Lush's approach to buying is looking to move beyond 'sustainable' buying towards 'regenerative' buying, which creates systems that give back more than they take.

Although primarily known for their cosmetics, Lush is also investigating the ethical production of electronic hardware through creative buying.

Could you tell us about Lush's ethical sourcing of resources, particularly in regard to technology?

We're exploring whether we can incorporate all of the ethics that are so core to our business, so that's the traceability, the environmental impact, the social impact, through to anything that we buy. We're making sure that we're trying to have a regenerative effect environmentally and socially,

and asking can we transfer that to something as complex as hardware? Is it possible for us to create an electronic tablet [akin to an iPad] that can have the traceability in the components, incorporating from the sourcing of it to the way that it's manufactured and assembled? Working with companies that have social practices that we believe in, that have the same environmental care and consideration, to create something that is more modular, something that is easy to repair. It's very much at the planning and discussion stage at the moment, but what we'd love to do is end up in a situation where we've actually managed to manufacture a bespoke tablet that we can use in our stores as a starting point with our till systems.

Do you see it as a responsibility for all big companies to incubate interesting ethical technologies like this, which may be at an unattractive price point to the consumer?

I don't necessarily think that ethical considerations or designing something that is more robust or repairable or has a longer life span needs to be necessarily more expensive, I think it is about the care and consideration that goes into it. If you look at the price over the lifespan of a gadget, and look at the price per year, having something that might cost a little bit more in the beginning, but lasts you a lot longer before you have to replace it, then economically it makes sense. I think all corporations or companies should think about it,



Gabbi Loedolff (centre) 'Chomping at the Bitcoin' panel

absolutely; I don't think we're there yet, I think it's very much something we're moving towards, with consciousness and awareness and questions from consumers as well. This links very well to e-waste as well because I think that's the next big focus. People are becoming very much more aware of electronic waste, and where do things actually go at the end of their life? What is the embedded value in any of the hardware that you're disposing of?

There are some manufacturers of hardware that are certainly already doing a lot more on their own supply chains in creating a bit more transparency,

that are also looking more at their labour practice. A lot of these things are driven by consumer demand, driven by companies being held accountable as well and being asked those questions.

Do you feel that there's a need for the education of the consumer as well?

I think businesses like Lush or any other business really has an amazing opportunity to provide a platform to share information with people. Not to tell people what is right or wrong necessarily, but to provide a platform effectively to share some of the challenges surrounding any of the materials, whether it's ingredients, whether it's hardware, whatever it might be, and to communicate with our consumers to help with the education, but yeah, education is crucial.

I think part of education is focusing on the positive solutions that are out there as well, because inevitably, there are already people out there doing really important work on the ground that are finding ways to deal with any of these challenges and that it's escalating those.

What part do you think that social media has to play in sharing such information?

I think that social media has sped up the learning curve drastically. It's a much easier way to get messages out and for people to interact with and to relate to in their own preferred setting as well. It's much easier via social media and the internet in general to find a whole host of different perspectives on things so that you can formulate your own views.

Would it be helpful to work with Google and other software companies in order to slow down the process of obsolescence in apps and hardware?

There certainly is a strong argument for a wider scale collaboration to try and just take a step back for review and see how software links into the hardware approach as well. We're very much focused on using open source technology, and anything that we're developing as well, looking to make sure that we're sharing that out as well. So not holding everything close to our chests. There'll be some intellectual property of course that might be crucial to us, like the secret recipe for something, but by and large we're huge supporters of open source.

Have you been on any interesting visits to factories or recycling plants recently?

I went to Ghana in January, to Agbogbloshie, an informal settlement, often referred to as 'Africa's biggest E-waste dump.' There's a lot of sensationalist articles and reporting that has been done about it,

images of kids burning wires, etc. I actually went to see the reality of it, and to see in countries where they don't have more formalised electronic recycling systems, how are people dealing with it? What are the challenges? Are there any people doing any really interesting work on the ground, to address the health and safety issues, the environmental impact? There's an economic reality to it as well, people are making a living out of dealing with electronic waste. So that was hugely educational, and it's helping to inform our thinking on how we address e-waste as well, not just through the design of any hardware that we're creating, but across the business.



Agbogbloshie e-waste workers

What other projects are you working on that you're excited about?

The other thing that we're working on right now is also exploring blockchain and what that could mean for us as an organisation, and for our supply chains as well. How do you utilise blockchain to create that complete transparency for the story telling? Also, we're really focused on regenerative agriculture, could we do the environmental social economic regeneration? Then how do you verify that beyond just the green washing that a lot of companies do? People are so used to hearing 'oh we're doing great stuff,' but how do you provide that transparency and the trust in people that you are doing what you're saying? Blockchain is hugely exciting for that as well.

There's a group that is going to be launching publicly later this year called Regen-Network, and what they're doing is actually looking to generate a currency to incentivise farmers and stakeholders around the world to adopt regenerative agriculture. So, generating more currency through carbon sink technology. They're finding ways using satellite imagery and other data, for instance soil analysis, to prove that carbon is being drawn from the atmosphere and that is then what drives the generation of the currency.

James KA Baker

'The Truth About Fake News' - the portrayal of refugees and asylum seekers in the media

Where do the views reported in the press actually come from? Are the press influencing us, or simply reflecting public opinion? Is the rhetoric surrounding the movement of human beings across borders being purposely controlled by vested interests, or are we just being told what we want to hear? These questions and more were discussed at 'The Truth About Fake News' panel discussion, featuring journalists, educators and campaigners.



“Hordes”. “Swarms”. “Invasion.”

The language that has been used by the mainstream, often right wing media, to describe human beings in crisis is enough to make many of us shudder. When compared with other European countries in a study by Cardiff University, the British media was found to be the “most aggressive” in its coverage of migration.

But our media’s explicitly hostile treatment of migrants, including refugees and asylum seekers, is just the sharp end of a much wider problem of ill informed, incomplete and politically skewed coverage of the movement of people, with left leaning media outlets often pushing a more sympathetic but ultimately unhelpful narrative of a nebulous global crisis, leaving audiences feeling helpless and overwhelmed.

On the Migration Stage at the 2018 Lush Summit, a panel discussion explored this problem, drawing on the experiences of journalists, educators and campaigners in the portrayal of refugees and asylum seekers and its effect on public opinion.

Panel member Rachel Elgy works for a not-for-profit organisation called Equaliteach, which provides interactive training on issues of equality, diversity and inclusion for education settings. Through her work with young people she has seen

“a real and genuine correlation” between what is in the press and the opinions of young people, as well as “black spots” of knowledge, around what different terms concerning migration actually mean. Rachel says:

“A young person who is very careful not to be offensive about Muslims will openly say things that are hugely offensive about immigrants because there isn’t that humanisation in the media - it’s all about ‘migrants’, and just one word is used to describe all these different kinds of groups.”

Broadcaster and journalist Bidisha works to humanise and individualise stories of refuge and asylum, explaining how our current coverage of these issues lacks a sense of nuance:

“I date the sociopolitical world we live in now to 9/11....Since then all kinds of different things have become conflated together into one thing. You had the war on terror... You had a series of failed or attempted peoples’ revolutions in the Middle East and North Africa region, which had varying degrees of success and varying results. You have massive refugee flow for all different kinds of reasons, not just Syria, not just Iran, not just places like that. Also internal migration due to climate change, due to failed states of countries that had wars three or four years ago. Somehow all of that has got bundled up

together.”

Aching for real information

Tom Godwin, who works for the anti-racism organisation Hope Not Hate, has been listening to communities across the UK as part of The National Conversation on Immigration, aiming to uncover what the British public thinks about immigration. Their research found that while people were “aching for real information”, trust in the tabloid press is low, and there aren’t many other places to go for information, which leaves communities perpetuating the narrative of sources they themselves mistrust. Tom went on to say:

“People would regularly say ‘we don’t trust the media, we don’t trust what we read’. But they would then replicate the same stereotypes that come out of the media - they would say things like ‘scrounging asylum seekers’, they would talk about the ‘floods[of people]’. They would repeat the same language.”

So what are the alternatives?

One suggestion for tackling the damaging or incomplete narratives of the mainstream press was put forward by Sam Hudson and Elizabeth (not her real name) from Women For Refugee Women. This grassroots organisation works with the arts & media and holds public events helping female refugees tell their own stories:

“The media is not the only way for us to listen to people’s stories.” said Sam. “We can be engaging more directly, we can be going to these spaces where women are performing and sharing their own stories in a way that they want to. That’s a lot more powerful - you’re going to get a lot more nuance, you’re going to see the human face behind these numbers that make it sound like an overwhelming problem.”

Then there are journalists who, despite being turned away by mainstream media, have decided to go it alone to tell individuals’ stories locally. Like panel member Sue Clayton, director of ‘Hamedullah: The Road Home’, which documents a child refugee’s journey of being deported from his home in Kent, back to Afghanistan, where he had fled from as a child. Sue explained that this individual story had mobilised the local community of Kent, who were predominantly UKIP supporters, to rally around Hamedullah, and eventually challenge their assumptions about refugees and the immigration system.

Tom from Hope Not Hate cited this as a positive story that came through in their work on the National Conversation on Immigration, and



suggested that it was indicative of the different relationship communities have with local stories rather than national ones.

“One thing that came out that was interesting was the difference between local media and national media. Local media had a very positive effect....A lot of people mentioned local stories, so it’s quite heartening to know that those local stories can cut through the national stuff, which can be quite overwhelming.”

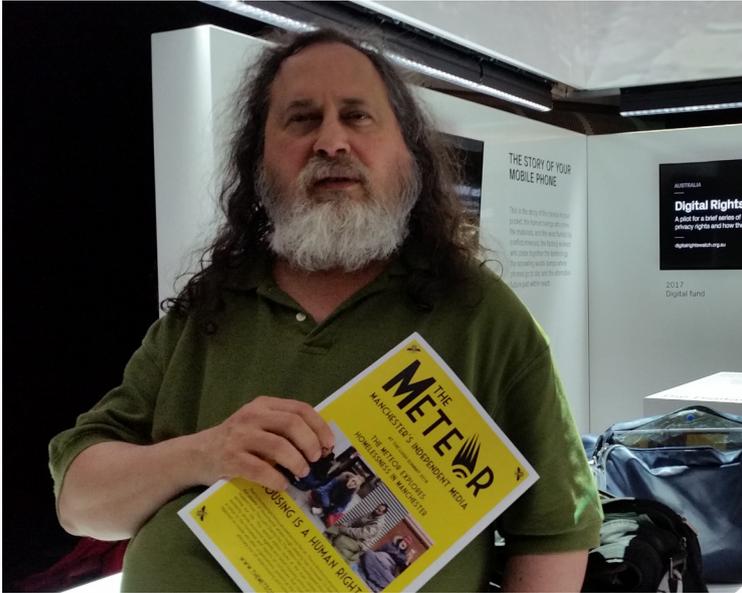
The commissioning editor at ITV refused to buy Sue’s latest film, ‘Calais Children: A Case To Answer’, because it is too critical of the government, so it was crowdfunded online instead. She takes hope in the power of the internet and social media, saying “who under 30 even watches TV now anyway?”

Though the term ‘fake news’ is most commonly associated with the rise of social media and digital technology, misinformation and bias in the media is anything but new, particularly when it comes to the stories we hear about the most vulnerable groups in society. The changing nature of the media landscape is opening up more and more opportunities for people to challenge dominant narratives put forward by traditional media and connect with each other at global and local levels over issues of migration, though vested interests will always seek to influence the debate.

The discussion on the Lush Summit’s Migration Stage suggested that aspirations around the representation of refugees and asylum seekers appear to be shifting away from the media’s ever elusive target of “neutrality” and instead towards “humanisation”. After all, behind the paralysing statistics and loaded language, lie the stories of children, families, friends and neighbours. It is these stories, when reported accurately and compassionately, that will reveal ‘The Truth About Fake News’.

Alice Toomer - McAlpine

Shake off your digital chains: choose software that liberates you



The Facebook/Cambridge Analytica scandal has shown the danger of putting our data and trust in platforms running proprietary software. Richard Stallman thinks the solution is free software. Software that liberates people.

Our lives are becoming increasingly enmeshed with and dependant on digital software, from Google's search engine while we work, to Facebook's social site while we play (often when we should be working). Software is ubiquitous in modern life, and despite often coming with no perceivable upfront expense, it may be costing us dear in freedom and independence by the way it steers and shapes our lives. Is this software giving an impression of expanding our horizons while it is actually shrinking them?

Richard Stallman is an American free software movement activist and programmer who sees the copyrighted software owned by IT giants, such as Microsoft's Windows, as a pernicious controlling force in society. The inability to see what is encoded in copyrighted proprietary software, and its ability to undertake actions and to collect and disseminate data from you without your knowledge, Stallman sees as the wielding of unjust power over the software user by the software supplier, reducing the software users' liberty.

So in the 80s, Stallman decided to do something about this by creating his own free software for operating computers, he explained to *The Meteor*:

"I started the GNU project in September 1983. I published the statement that I was going to develop a free software operating system so that users of computers could be free."

The GNU (GNU's Not Unix) project based its system design on Unix, a popular proprietary operating system. By 1991 the majority of the GNU operating system was written, and with the addition of the Linux kernel, developed independently by free software developer Linus Torvalds, the first free software operating system was created - GNU/Linux (AKA Linux).

While working on the GNU operating system Stallman set up the Free Software Movement (FSM), of which he is president, to codify what Free Software actually is. 'Free' doesn't refer to software you don't have to pay for, it refers to the freedom it offers to its users. In order to be considered free software the program must exhibit the four essential freedoms:

0: Run It – the freedom to run it as you wish for whatever purpose.

1: Change It – the freedom to study the source code of the program and change it so it does the computing you want it to do. Source code is often unintelligible in proprietary software due to it being translated into executable code (strings of binary digits) which is extremely difficult to understand or change.

2: Redistribute It – the freedom to make and redistribute exact copies, to give away or sell as you wish.

3: Redistribute With Changes – the freedom to modify the program, make copies and then distribute them as you wish.

The first two freedoms allow individual control, but that is not enough if say the user is not a programmer and can't understand the source code to change it. So Freedoms two and three allow collective control, where groups of users (programmers and non-programmers) can work together to adapt the program to their needs. Stallman contends that:

"If you do have these freedoms then it's free software and users control the program. But if any of those freedoms are missing, the users don't control the program; instead the program controls the user and the developer controls the program. So, that means this program is an instrument of unjust power."

This unjust power can involve the software spying on the user, tracking the user (both physically and virtually on the web), restricting a user's actions, for example search engines in China blocking certain terms such as 'Tiananmen Square' or 'Tank Man'.

During his talk at the Lush Summit Stallman recalls an abuse of power by Amazon and its

software that would have put a smile on Big Brother's face. In July 2009 Amazon, without warning, remotely deleted digital copies of Orwell's dystopian masterpiece 1984 from the Kindles of readers who had legitimately purchased them. An act that surely would have made a ghostly George Orwell shake his head and say "I told you so".

Microsoft comes under particular criticism from Stallman for its use of the universal backdoor to update its Windows operating system, and for bugs within its operating system that the National Security Agency of the USA used to "attack people's computers".

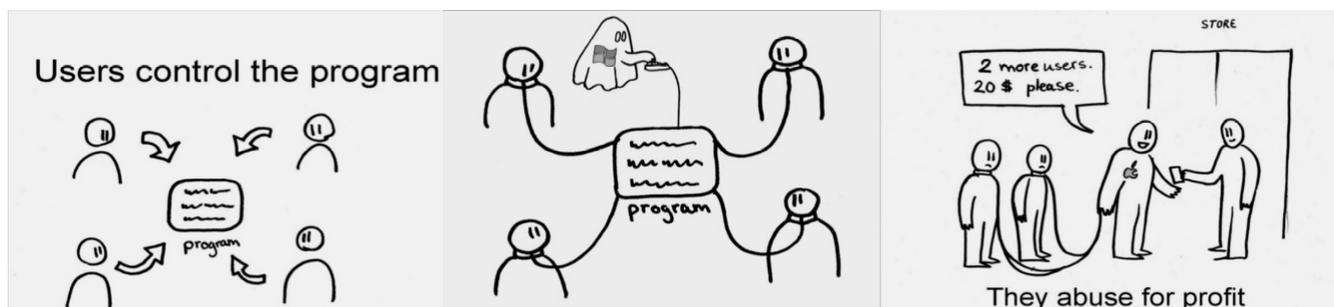
Due to the power the vast majority of proprietary software exerts over its users, Stallman refers to it as "proprietary malware" and "software for suckers", and says greed is the primary motivation for certain IT companies: they abuse their users for

Facebook and Google, he replied:

"Well we have done pretty well so far, in fact those companies use GNU/Linux a lot in their servers".

This highlights the problems facing free software's growth and establishment. Although the use of GNU/Linux is widespread, many programmes using it do not exhibit the four essential freedoms, due to being modified with additional proprietary components which are non-free and written in executable code. To identify which of these free distributions (AKA distros) of the GNU/Linux comply with the four essential freedoms, the FSM website (www.gnu.org) lists all complying free distros and also those that don't hold to the spirit of free software.

To prevent software developers/companies taking free software code and altering it to become



Slides from Richard Stallman's presentation at the Lush Summit.

profit.

The latest scandal over the Facebook data breach shows that this unjust power not only abuses individuals' data, but may also be undermining democratic society as a whole. Data from over 50 million Facebook users in the US was supplied to a company called Cambridge Analytica, which used the information in targeted political advertising prior to the last US presidential election – which saw Donald Trump become president. Stallman said, in *The Guardian*, of the controversy:

"There is a limit on the level of surveillance that democracy can co-exist with, and we're far above that... We suffer more surveillance than the inhabitants of the Soviet Union, and we need to push it way down.

"Any database of personal data will be misused, if a misuse can be imagined by humans. It can be misused by the organisation that collects the data. In many cases, the purpose of collecting it is to misuse it, as in the case of Facebook, but also in the case of Amazon, Google to some extent... it can be taken by the state and misused."

During the Lush Summit 2018 when Stallman was asked how the Free Software Movement could compete with IT giants such as Microsoft, Apple,

proprietary software, Stallman developed the concept of Copyleft. Copyleft subverts the copyright legal instrument which generally takes away users' freedoms and gives power to the proprietor. To Copyleft a program it is put under copyright and then distribution terms are added ensuring the four essential freedoms are kept in any distributions of that code or any program derived from it. Stallman says:

"The principle ethical question for a collection of software is: does it all respect your freedom, is there any non-freedom respecting piece in there? Because if there is then for your freedom's sake you should not use it, it is not wise."

To support the Free Software Movement, based in the USA, Stallman asks people to sign up wherever they live because "free software helps people all around the world." He wants people to start using free software programs such as the browser GNU IceCat, developed by the GNU project, based on the Mozilla Firefox web browser. Also recommended is LibreOffice (libre means 'liberty' in Spanish), which is the free software version of Microsoft Office, and the program used to write this article.

Conrad Bower

Free Software Foundation website: www.fsf.org

A show of nonviolence



Peace protesters point to permaculture as a way to heal the wounds of violence. Satish Kumar talks about his latest book 'Soil, Soul, Society.'

“War is a crime against humanity. I am therefore determined not to support any kind of war, and to strive for the removal of all causes of war.”

The founding statement of War Resisters International (WRI) is bold in its simplicity, which is important for a message which needs to cut through centuries of entrenched assumptions surrounding the role of violence in society. (‘Cut through’ - even our language is blood-spattered.) WRI’s Semih Sapmaz is at the Lush Summit to give a presentation on conscientious objection and the varying degrees of military conscription around the world.

In Eritrea, military service is compulsory and indefinite, with decades-long jail sentences for conscientious objectors. In Israel, military service typically lasts about three years for men and two years for women, conscientious objection is not recognised and draft dodgers are jailed. Even in Finland, where one can choose between military national service and a peaceful alternative, it is seen as a “masculine rite of passage” to opt for the former and “there is little education about the latter,” according to Semih.

Moving along the spectrum, from Eritrea’s aggressive militarisation of its population, through

Finland’s firm nudge into national service, towards our own tabloid fear-mongering and glorification of war, you become aware of the water in which you swim. Your cultural encoding becomes evident in the anxiety which kicks in as you begin to entertain the prospect of pacifism. We are conditioned by carefully constructed nightmares to support our government’s military adventures overseas, the ripple effects of which create more nightmares.

“Don’t approach conscientious objection as a human right,” says Semih, “but as a political action.” For Osman Murat Ülke, who suffered “civil death” at the hands of the Turkish government when he refused the call in 1995, conscientious objection was the “first step on the path [he has] to follow to preserve [his] self-esteem.” Regardless of what we citizens are being press-ganged into, WRI provide an inspiring example to follow. Freedom is won, not given, and in striving towards it, and in learning to say “I would prefer not to,” we can reclaim our humanity in a brutal system.

From negation to creation

After war, how can a country be renewed? Voices for Creative Non-Violence UK (VCNV) are a peace group who regularly travel to Afghanistan to “stand in solidarity with Afghan peace activists, as well as being eyewitnesses to the ongoing conflicts.”

“After Iraq, the spotlight shifted away from Afghanistan”, says VCNV’s Maya Anne Evans at the Lush Summit. This was not because the problem was solved. On the contrary, after the NATO invasion in 2001 Afghanistan’s woes deepened. Now, the country produces 87% of the world’s opium and 12% of its population are addicted. 1.8 million people are internally displaced. The chaos has driven three million refugees into neighbouring Pakistan and Iran, but they are likely to get deported. Even the EU says it is safe to return refugees to Kabul, a city where 100,000 civilians have been killed or injured in the last year alone and, Maya explains, “warlords play divide and rule, plotting Pashtun against other [ethnicities].”

VCNV’s response to these dystopian statistics is heartening. They run the Borderfree Centre in Kabul which provides a safe space to 100 ethnically diverse young people every day. The organisation also facilitates a Permaculture Design Course run by Rosemary Morrow to give Afghans a chance at growing their own food and healing the ravages wreaked by war.

“People verging on despair feel encouraged by possibilities of replenishing and repairing their soil.” Maya paints a warm picture of a long and enthusiastic discussion between Rosemary and a

former-Mujahideen local farmer on the possibilities of growing a rare black potato. Barriers can be broken down and seeds planted even in the worst of conditions.

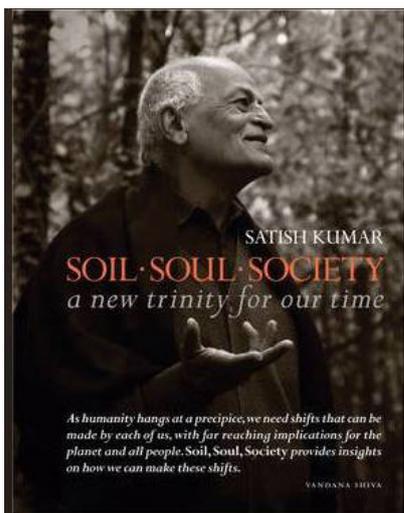
If you would like to help VCNV's cause, they are currently running a craft campaign called Fly Kites Not Drones, encouraging children around the world to fly kites in solidarity with young Afghans who face danger from the skies. Peace groups are also encouraged to get in touch with VCNV to receive advice and guidance on starting their own Afghan-inspired peace garden on local brownfield sites.

Satish Kumar and Nonviolent Activism

On stage, Satish Kumar makes a point of sitting on a stool rather than a couch. Now in his eighties, he remains humble, mindful, and active as ever. Ready to go. Satish is preceded by his legend. As a young Jainist monk, Satish was inspired to commence a peace walk when he heard of Bertrand Russell's 1961 imprisonment for protesting nuclear armament.

Starting from India, he visited all the major nuclear powers at the time in Moscow, Paris, London and Washington DC. Later, advised by a friend to stay in Britain because it "needed a Gandhian philosopher," Satish became editor of the ecological magazine *Resurgence*, which has been informing and reflecting the environmental movement since 1966. He also founded the Small School and Schumacher College in order to realise the vision of a transformative, sustainable form of education grounded in a holistic view of our place in nature.

Forming the basis of his Lush Summit talk is his most recent book 'Soil, Soul, Society' - holistic philosophy helpfully distilled into three elements, to better engage the human mind so primordially pleased by trinities. Soil represents our connection to physical nature, Satish states: "our body is nothing but soil transformed." Soul is the imagination, the spirit, the inner self which must be nurtured by "taking care of yourself, being joyful, cultivating the values of compassion, of kindness, of love, of generosity, of unity, of beauty." In other words, that which cannot be measured by scientific methods but nevertheless requires our belief. Society, Satish explains, is an improved network of



relationships following on from cultivation of the Soul, informed by a reverence for Soil: "You can move mountains, but what is life without love... and how are you going to love somebody else if you don't love yourself?"

I ask Satish if he thinks the role of nonviolent activism has changed. "Yes. The role of nonviolent activism is not only to stop war but also to stop exploitation of the earth because we have to have peace with nature. We have been thinking about peace only in terms of human beings - between nations and peoples, but we have to extend that. So now we are saying: peace within yourself, peace with nature and peace with human beings. These are



Satish Kumar on the Earth Stage at the Lush Summit

three dimensions of peace."

The trinity of Soil, Soul, Society is redolent of the three Permaculture ethics of Earth-care, People-care and Fair-share, reconfigured into inspirational language by a man who is more of a philosopher-poet than a designer of living systems (a false dichotomy if ever there was one). It is no coincidence that both Satish and Maya Anne make reference to permaculture in their talks. "Permaculture is for everyone," says Satish, so it's right that its ethics should be reformulated for a wide variety of intellectual palates.

We can only find peace by grappling with complexity, and a systems-based worldview informed by a philosophy of holistic self-love is the most sensible to adopt. The problem is monstrous and maddening. The solution is practical and kind. As with Satish's peace walk, we should simply get on with the task at hand rather than seek easy, immediate solutions through connivance or violence.

How do we stop war? One step at a time.

Georges Almond

Lush Links

From animal welfare to deforestation, climate change to migration, human rights to tech for good, the 2018 Lush Summit has made clear the fact that no one issue stands in isolation. On the last day, *The Meteor* buzzed around the Summit, cross-pollinating different areas of the event and listening to how exhibitors view their connections with one another.



"We're here to tell you about where our paper and organic cotton originates from. We really connect to downstairs in our ingredients hut because its all about origins."
-Ad, Paper and Cotton



"In our VR installation, you can experience what it's like to be an animal. This connects with the 'Paper Trail' upstairs, because it has a strong sensory stimulation. When we experience things in this way we can see there is a story-line behind everything."
-Mark, Marshmallow Laser Feast



"In buying we see a lot of the global problems, like the use of palm oil, which was discussed on the Earth stage, but also a lot of inspiring work going on. with reforestation and more positive forms of agriculture. This all starts with innovation on the top floor."
Cadi, The Buying Hut



"We show how Lush products go from inspiration, all the way to being in a shop, by testing products without using animals. For me, this connects with the Virtual Reality exhibition where you can experience life as an animal."
-Niamh, Innovation

Sumatra's Palm Oil Industry discussion on The Earth Stage

