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WELCOME

Welcome to the Debating Union!

As President, I oversee competitive debating within the Manchester Debating Union. Debating can give you the opportunity to travel with fantastic friends, learn a wider breadth of knowledge than from any degree course, and get the confidence and skills to get your point of view across.

Come along to our weekly training sessions to learn how to debate, and come with us to socials after training to make friends you’ll keep for life.

I look forward to meeting you at training!

Here at the Manchester Debating Union we’re all looking forward to another year of insightful and informative public debates and public addresses. Building upon the success of our events last year, we will be hosting debates you won’t see anywhere else in the North!

Join us at the start of the year for debates on whether the UK should leave the EU, whether men should be a part of feminism, and whether, during this commemorative year, we should be wearing the poppy.

As well as this, BBC political correspondent Nick Robinson will be joining us to discuss the BBCs role in politics: one not to miss!

I look forward to seeing you at our public events, and hearing the questions you have for our panellists.
PUBLIC DEBATES

Manchester Debating Union’s public debates bring together journalists, academics and politicians to speak on everything from economics to feminism, foreign affairs to religion. They are a great way to learn something new, look at both sides of an issue and ask your own questions to our opinion-forming speakers.

This semester we have a fantastic set of speakers including Nick Robinson, political editor for the BBC, Labour MEP Julie Ward, Guardian journalist Ally Fogg and Lindsey German from Stop the War coalition.

Our public debates are open to all students and staff of universities within Manchester, including the University of Manchester and Manchester Metropolitan University.

Public debates take place every Thursday at 5pm in the main lecture theatre of the Samuel Alexander Building. Check out our Facebook page for the latest updates on our public debates!

The format of our debates is a seven-minute speech given by each of the four speakers. After this the floor is opened to questions from audience members. The debate ends with two-minute summary speeches.
THIS HOUSE WOULD LEAVE THE EU
18th September at 5pm - Samuel Alexander Theatre, Samuel Alexander Building

The UK position within the European Union has been the subject of much public debate. A growing number of Euro-sceptics within the UK and across Europe accuse it of having an overly large bureaucratic structure and argue that the free movement of labour unfairly affects the richer states.

Supporters of the UK membership argue that it forms part of a powerful trading bloc and argue that the UK is best served through having influence within the EU.

With the recent rise in support for UKIP and a high profile defection from The Conservatives, the Manchester Debating Union asks: should the UK leave the EU?

PROPOSITION

Steven Woolf
A UKIP MEP for the North West

OPPOSITION

Peter Wilding
Director of the pro-EU pressure group 'British Influence'

Julie Ward
A Labour Party MEP for the North West
THIS HOUSE SUPPORTS WESTERN INTERVENTION

25th September at 5pm - Samuel Alexander Theatre, Samuel Alexander Building

When civil wars and humanitarian crisis’ occur across the world, there are often calls for western military intervention.

Advocates for intervention suggest that the West has a duty to intervene. Many point to campaigns such as Kosovo and Mali, and warn that failing to act can lead to genocides such as the one seen in Rwanda. Critics of intervention suggest that military campaigns increase violence in these regions and are scuppered by a lack of understanding of the complex situations in these countries.

With conflicts across the globe engulfing regions such as Iraq and Syria, the Manchester Debating Union asks: should we support western intervention?

PROPOSITION

Henry Jackson Society
A pro-intervention think-tank

Counterfire
Left-wing group that campaigns against military intervention and war

OPPOSITION

Jordan Anderson
Has an MA in Intelligence & International Security from King’s College

Kate Brooks
Studying for a DPhil in International Relations at the University of Oxford
THIS HOUSE BELIEVES THAT FEMINISM SHOULD EXCLUDE MEN

2nd October at 5pm - Samuel Alexander Theatre, Samuel Alexander Building

Is it possible to be a male feminist? Should only women define feminism, lead the discussions and fight the battles? Can a man understand what feminism really means if he hasn’t suffered the day to day realities of it such as sexual harassment, the glass ceiling, and objectification in the media? When men are listened to first and foremost in every area of politics – how can women keep their voices heard in a feminist movement which includes men?

But sexism affects men too. Men are hugely under-represented in many professions such as nursing and teaching. Many men want the ability to take more time off to look after their children but are denied it, and many men face harassment and intimidation for behaving outside of socially acceptable masculine traits. Do they not have the same right to define as part of the movement to remove these inequalities?

The Manchester Debating Union asks: should feminism exclude men?

**PROPOSITION**

**Ally Fogg**
Guardian journalist with specialist interest in gender issues

**OPPOSITION**

**Dr. Liberty Barnes**
Research associate at the University of Cambridge and author
As the political editor for the BBC, Nick Robinson is one of the most recognisable faces of BBC news. With a journalistic career that has spanned nearly 30 years he has had experience in almost all forms of modern news media and has been on the front line of reporting on some of the biggest political events in the UK. In that time he has interviewed some of the world's most powerful and influential leaders. He currently appears on all of the major BBC news outlets, such as the Today Programme on Radio 4 and the Ten O’Clock News on BBC One.

Born in Macclesfield and a former student of Cheadle Hulme School, we have invited him back to the North to address us and answer questions on how the news media and the BBC fit in to modern British politics. Come with questions prepared to what will be an excellent and informative public address!

See our Facebook event and website for more details, the event will be followed by a big Manchester Debating Union social in the evening.
STUDENT QUESTION TIME
23rd October at 5pm - Samuel Alexander Theatre, Samuel Alexander Building

With a general election looming it’s a good time to assess the landscape of politics in the country and the platforms of the student political groups in Manchester. Join us for our annual Student Question Time, where we invite representatives from student political organisations to answer your questions on current events and major political issues that affect students.

With representatives from Labour Youth, Conservative Future, Liberal Youth, Young Greens, Anti-Capitalist Students and the The Liberty League we can look forward to a lively debate followed by a Manchester Debating Union social where we can all continue the discussion!

Questions, just as with Question Time, will be asked from our audience - so come prepared!
The Poppy has become one of the most evocative symbols of remembrance in the UK, and is the means by which most of the British public participates in commemoration. However, there is a growing feeling that the way in which we remember and observe past conflicts is overtly nationalistic, making it impossible to critically analyse our role within conflicts past and present.

Advocates for The Poppy argue that it is an important way to ensure that we never forget the horrors of past wars and that those who died are owed a fitting remembrance.

On the centenary of the outbreak of the First World War, the Manchester Debating Union asks: should we wear the poppy?

**SPEAKERS INCLUDING:**

**Maddy Fry**
Freelance writer and pacifist

**Dr. Lynette Nusbacher**
A former Devil's Advocate for the Joint Intelligence Committee and former Senior Lecturer in War Studies at the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst

**Lindsey German**
Convenor of the Stop the War Coalition
Childhood vaccinations are not compulsory in the UK and numbers of vaccinated children are relatively high. However, recent concerns over the safety of vaccinations, including the MMR scare, have led to a fall in vaccinations and an increase in outbreaks of preventable diseases such as measles.

Should parents decide what is best for their children? Will doctors forcing parents to have their children vaccinated undermine relationships with their patients?

But vaccines do not only protect the child themselves. Vaccination programs rely on large uptake to protect those who cannot be vaccinated, such as very young children and the sick. Do parents have a responsibility to the children of others?

The Manchester Debating Union asks: should vaccination be compulsory?
With over 1.6 billion followers, Islam is one of the largest religions in the world. Many Muslims live in the western world, but some think that aspects of Islam are not compatible with western values - such as attitudes towards LGBTQ* rights and attitudes towards women.

However, many critique the media’s depiction of Islam and say that it fails to address the complexity that exists across Islamic cultures. They argue that too much attention is paid to minority extremist views. They claim that many values within the western world and Islam are shared.

In association with Manchester Ahlulbayt Society(Absoc) we ask the question: is Islam incompatible with western values?
Police forces across the UK have been the subject of a growing list of scandals over the past decades. Critics of the police point to events such as Hillsborough and the killing of Mark Duggan amongst others as an example of institutional racism and incompetence.

However, supporters of the force argue that the police is improving and state it and the officers who work hard for it to protect the citizens of the UK everyday. Some argue that the problems within the police simply reflect divisions and prejudices within society and are not particular to the force itself.

The Manchester Debating Union asks: should we have faith in the police?
Over the past few decades the Catholic Church has been the subject of a growing number of controversies and much criticism. The child abuse scandal is still ongoing and The Church has previously been accused of worsening the AIDs crisis.

Since the election of Pope Francis, the Catholic Church has seen an improvement in its public perception. Supporters claim that The Church is committed to social justice and point to the fact it is one of the largest donors of aid in the world.

The Manchester Debating Union asks: is the Catholic Church a force for good?
COMPETITIVE DEBATE TRAINING

The Manchester Debating Union also holds relaxed training sessions on competitive debating – come along to debate a variety of topics and improve your public speaking and argument forming skills. These sessions take place at 5pm in Room 4.4 of the Roscoe Building.

Our introduction to competitive debating session will be held on the 16th September where we’ll play debate games and give you a friendly introduction to competitive debating. We cater to all levels of ability and welcome novices at any point throughout the year – so don’t worry if you can’t make the first session!

We send debating teams to competitions across the country almost every weekend during term time, and you can attend as few or as many as you have time for. We send all members to competitions, from beginners to experienced debaters, so there’s an opportunity for everyone to get involved. Attending competitions helps you to improve your debating whilst also giving you the opportunity to travel the country and the world. In the last year our members have attended international competitions in India, Sweden, and Croatia.

If you have any questions about competitive debating, please email: president@mdu.manchester.ac.uk
HOW TO JOIN

Our public debates are free to all!

If you're thinking about joining our training sessions, you can come along to two for free to try it out before purchasing membership.

If you wish to purchase membership chat to our Treasurer, **Mhairi Hindle**, or anyone on the committee at one of our events.

Benefits of membership include:

- Access to our weekly two-hour training sessions
- Access to additional training sessions with world-class debaters from across the UK
- We will pay the entry fee at debating competitions in which you represent the Manchester Debating Union
SOCIALS

After every training session and public debate we normally head to a nearby pub where the discussion continues over a mug of tea or a pint.

Didn't have your question answered at the public debate? Often our external speakers accompany us to the pub, so ask your question to them there!

We hold several themed socials throughout the year including curries on the famous Curry Mile, a fancy dress Halloween party, and a Christmas Party.

Chat to our socials secretary Martin Browne if you have an idea for the perfect debating social venue or theme!
Hi all and welcome to the Manchester Debating Union, my name is Chloe and I’m the Equity Officer for the Debating Union – my job is to look after the welfare of all our members.

We think it’s really important that everybody feels comfortable and safe taking part in debating and has the opportunity to speak and express themselves freely. Equity issues are incidents where individuals feel offended or harmed, whether intentionally or unintentionally.

These sorts of problems are very rare, but if you do feel uncomfortable please contact me either by email to equity@mdu.manchester.ac.uk or anonymously via our online form on our website and we can look to resolve any issues that arise.

I look forward to meeting you all!

Chloe

For more information about our equity policies please go to our website.
MANCHESTER DEBATING UNION

Becky Montacute
President
3rd year Neuroscience PhD

Declan Leahy
Chair
2nd Year BA History

Helen Feord
Secretary
2nd year Bsc Biology

Conor Ardill
Externals
2nd year BA PPE

Katie McKellar
Competitions
3rd year Neuroscience

Chloe Romanis
Equity Officer
3rd year LLB Law

Laura Smith
IV Convener
2nd year Bsc Civil Engineering

Ria Basu
IV Convener
2nd year BA Economics and Finance
Mhairy Hindle
Treasurer
3rd year Bsc Chemistry

Katie Moreton
Publicity
2nd year BA Politics
and Modern History

Jack Mellish
Training
1st year BA PPE

Joshua Robinson
Communications
MPhys Physics with
Theoretical Physics

Alex Treece
Communications
2nd year Bsc Physics
with Philosophy

Elle Jannes
MMU Rep
3rd year BA Sociology

Martin Browne
Socials
3rd year BA Religion and
Theology

Rose Black
Schools Convener
3rd year Bsc Psychology
FIND US ON SOCIAL MEDIA

FACEBOOK
On our group: 'Manchester Debating Union - MDU'
you'll find a community of over 1900 members, with
tonnes of updates on what's happening within the
society.
If you're interested in our public debates or attending
training, join this group and be invited to all our events,
serious and social!

TWITTER
Follow us on twitter: @mdunion for updates on all our
events, as well as general debating banter!

YOUTUBE
Subscribe to our Youtube channel: Manchester
Debating Union to watch all our public debates and
training videos.

WEBSITE
Check out our website for a copy of this termcard, as
well as lots of other interesting info on what the MDU is
up to. At: mdu.manchester.ac.uk (no www.) or just
search for us on Google!
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