

Editorial

A Social Evolution: Capturing the Essence of Change

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I am pleased to announce *Reinvention*'s first issue of 2024: 'A Social Evolution: Capturing the Essence of Change'. This year, *Reinvention* welcomed two new members into the family – Alice Roberts, our new assistant editor, and Fiona O'Brien, our new student research support officer.

Reinvention has always placed undergraduates at the centre of our focus. This year, we are expanding beyond our laptop screens to collaborate with the British Conference of Undergraduate Research (BCUR) to bring back our writing for publication workshops. The goal of these workshops is to help more undergraduate researchers understand and prepare for the seemingly daunting process of having their work scrutinised by academics in their field. Within the 2023/24 *Reinvention* team, we too, are looking to evolve.

For every issue of *Reinvention* published, we are faced with the bewildering challenge of finding a commonality between our papers. For this issue, the theme of evolution has been presented to us on a silver platter. It might seem odd that we chose evolution as our theme, especially since the theme for our last issue was growth. But there is a difference. Evolution seeks to explore the changes made across different generations rather than within a particular individual. It represents the changes faced by a generation that grew up with a dominant internet culture, modern economic challenges and a new wave of feminism. These varying conditions shape the way we as humans are forced to evolve – not biologically, but socially.

In this edition, we bring to you three original papers.

Katherine McLean's 'A Concept of Death in Genus *Pan*: Implications for Human Evolution' perfectly sets the theme for this issue. McLean explores what death means and what it entails, not through humans, but through our closest relatives, *Pan* (chimpanzees and bonobos). Exploring how animals react and respond to death provides a novel outlook on how the human relationship with death has evolved. The unique link that McLean provides offers insights into how social norms such as social hierarchies have affected the human response to death.

Naomi Carter's 'Period Pain: Student Perceptions of the Ongoing Stigma Surrounding Menstruation at the University of Warwick and Potential Interventions to Counter Such Stigma' presents her research to *Reinvention*. Menstrual cycles have existed as long as humans have. Despite this, it is only in the twenty-first century that we have finally attempted to destigmatise the culture of silence and secrecy behind it. Using the setting of the University of Warwick, Carter explores how higher education systems often have a rudimentary understanding of menstruation and have limited institutional support provided for it.

August Küenberg's 'Towards a European Framework for Fiscal Standards: Data Collection, Description and Institutional Analysis' introduces a more quantitative focus to evolution. Economics is not a discipline that comes to mind when we think of evolution. However, each generation of economists brings novel ideas that would revolutionise the way we interact and trade. Küenberg's work looks at the transition from fiscal rules to fiscal standards after the Greek debt crisis. By comparing Greece's policy to Croatia, Küenberg paints a picture of how countries should emulate Croatia's economic resilience. Through mathematical equations and data analysis, we witness a quantitative approach to determining the 'fittest' in economic survival.

The beauty of this issue is that it shows our ability to understand social evolution through a wide array of lenses. Evolution is constantly occurring; it is a phenomenon engrained into the world we live in. From chimpanzees to university campuses to highly trained economists, it was the undergraduate researchers who uncovered the evolutionary behaviour behind these actors. It is *Reinvention's* greatest honour to publish their works.

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