

Amy Gibbons: No Shits Gibbon



By [Amy Gibbons](#), Deputy Editor (2015/16)

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There are a couple things that have happened this week that I'd like to share with the group.

Firstly, a week ago today I watched *Bridget Jones's Baby* for the first time, streamed and projected onto the TV via an HDMI cable and complete with Japanese subtitles, as it was obviously meant to be seen. Colin Firth was back, and boring. Ed Sheeran was also there, and Tom Rosenthal – for a bit. I don't remember what happened exactly, but you can bet your bottom dollar Bridget had her happy ending: married, with child, smoke-free, smiling and skinny (convenient, I realised, that Renée Zellweger was knocked up throughout to hide the fact that, this time, Hollywood could not allow for a slightly plump protagonist). Anyway, Britain's favourite clusterfuck of a heroine saw her life come together. That bitch. And the six or so of us sat round the telly in my freezing cell of a living room sighed collectively, glancing wistfully at the empty Smarties share bar wrapper discarded by the sofa, and gauging how unacceptable it would be to down the kernels in the deflated popcorn bag.

You'd probably never have guessed that only a few hours previously the 20-year-old mess of a student balancing her tea on her knee as she reached again for the chocolate fingers had been stood on the benches in St Helens Square (prior to purchasing her Maccies hot chocolate), getting her groove on to 'Mooooove Trump, get out the way!' as York city centre teemed with protesters of the so-called Muslim Ban. It seems futile to shout about it alone, but caught up in a rally of hundreds of people, you literally feel the momentum (and I use the word loosely, Jeremy). There's a dual feeling of compassion and fury, excitement and terror. We've seen Trump's ban challenged this week – put on hold even – but we mustn't forget it is only indicative of his hostile rhetoric, and the increasing influence of the far-right across the globe.

I've heard it said that it's counter-productive to encourage people to shout about what they don't necessarily understand; that the hundreds protesting Trump's orders are actually obscuring the real problem, and sensationalising that which is easily accessible, and easy to hate. Some say that anti-Muslim Ban protests only cultivate fear, and have the whiff of anti-democracy.

But some Muslims *were* banned from the US; families were briefly torn apart, sick children who had been promised healthcare were left stranded, and a number of American professionals sent 'home', humiliated and insulted. And, I suppose, it would be a push to say that the American electoral system is entirely representative of democracy.

Why then, challenge the protests? I think, given the results of recent democratic elections and referendums, and the projected outcomes of elections to come, some are scared to give the people a voice. They make claims for democracy and 'respecting the American vote', but they're reluctant to allow for a counter-argument by anybody unable to demonstrate their competency (ironic, given the lies fed to the millions who chose to bring The Donald to power). And yet it seems a great deal of us know deep down what is fair and what is kind. I mean, surely any compassionate rhetoric is good rhetoric... Right?

Maybe that's oversimplified. But I certainly didn't feel threatened by the hundreds surrounding me on

Monday night, punching the air and shouting at the top of their lungs: 'No more hate, no more fear. Refugees are welcome here.'

To end on a completely unrelated note, Tesco deliveries can cost as much as £7 now, if you want your food in the morning. I'm afraid for my community, my family, and myself. What a week.



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