

Interview Questions

Study Title: Positive representations of racialised and transgender identity in *Les Misérables*, its adaptations and in fan works.

All of the questions in this interview are optional. Please answer with as much or as little information as you see fit. Feel free to take breaks between the sections if needed. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact me on the address provided at the end of this sheet.

Section 1: Personal Information

Participant Name:

(This is how I will refer to you in the thesis, and does not have to be your real or legal name. If you would prefer to remain anonymous, please write "Anonymous". If you would like to be referred to by your username or by a pseudonym, please write that.)

Pronouns:

(If you would prefer to remain anonymous, I will use they/them pronouns. These do not have to accurately reflect your used pronouns (if any) if you would prefer to mask your identity.)

Gender Identity*:

Racial identity*:

**I have asked these questions because a) grouped terms like 'person of colour', 'BAME' and 'transgender' are restrictive and do not accurately reflect the lived experiences of different racial or gender identities who navigate the world differently, and b) so that I am not misconstruing the experiences of one as the opinions of all. This is an optional question and can be answered with as much or as little information as you would be comfortable with. If you do not specify your racial identity, I will refer to you as a 'person of colour'. The information you give here may be referred to in my thesis and linked with your answers to the below questions.)*

Section 2: Les Mis

- 1. What *Les Mis* content have you consumed?** *(This may include the novel, film/TV adaptations, fan content, self/-published novelisations and anything else you consider related)*

- 2. What was the first *Les Mis* related content you consumed, and when/why was this?**

3. Have you encouraged any of your friends or family to read / watch / listen to any of the above content? If so, which are your top recommendations, and why?

Section 3: Fandom

1. Have you ever created a fan work for the *Les Mis* fandom? If yes, what medium did you work in (fic/art/cosplay/vid/cast/other). If no, do you create for other fandoms?

2. Why do you think you participate(d) in the *Les Mis* fandom? (Please indicate as many as you feel apply)

Escapism
Love for *Les Mis*
Special Interest
(Autism/ADHD/etc)

To join a community
To fix Hugo's work
To make friends
To make change

To educate
To learn
It just happened
Forced by friends

Other:

3. Do you believe that there is a 'set' headcanon for characters in fan works, in terms of physical descriptions like race, gender, weight, disability etc.? Briefly describe what you believe these to be, and what yours are, if different. (If you do not know a particular character, please feel free to leave this blank)

CHARACTER	FANDOM HEADCANON	YOUR HEADCANON
Jean Valjean		
Fantine		
Javert		
Cosette		
Marius		
Éponine		
Gavroche		
Enjolras		

Grantaire		
Combeferre		
Courfeyrac		
Feuilly		
Bahorel		
Jehan		
Joly		
Bossuet		
Musichetta		
Montparnasse		
Mr & Mrs Thénardier		

Please use this space if you have any notes/comments you wish to make, or if you would like to talk about other characters not named above:

4. If your headcanon differs from the 'standard', why do you think this is?

Section 4: Race & Racism

1. What do you know about the treatment of race in the novel *Les Misérables* by Victor Hugo, and where do you think this knowledge came from?

2. Have you ever published a public opinion piece about race in *Les Mis*, its adaptations or its fandom? (*this can include social media posts, published pieces, video essays or podcasts etc.*)

IF YES - Would you be comfortable with my referencing this piece? (if so, please link it below)

IF YES – What was your goal with writing it?

IF NO – Have you ever thought about writing one? Why / not?

3. Have you ever read/seen a public opinion piece about race in *Les Mis* or its fandom? If yes, can you talk a little about whether you agreed with it? How did it make you feel? Did you reply to it in any form, publicly or privately? (please include links if possible)

4. Have you ever seen or personally experienced racism in the *Les Mis* fandom? If yes, what did this look like? If no, do you have any opinions of how race is seen in the fandom?

5. Have you ever had thoughts of leaving the fandom? If yes, why? (This does not have to be about race or gender)

6. How often do you think you are made to feel uncomfortable in the *Les Mis* fandom, in comparison to other fandoms you participate in?

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all	Briefly	Sometimes	Often	Always

7. Identify some times you have been made to feel uncomfortable and why. (This does not have to be about race or gender)

Section 5: Euphoria

Has an adaptation and/or a fan work ever caused you to feel racial or gender euphoria? (*I define euphoria to mean comfort or joy*)

Has an adaptation and/or a fan work ever caused you to feel racial or gender dysphoria? (*I define dysphoria to mean discomfort or shame*)

If you were given the opportunity to produce an adaptation of *Les Mis* in any form, what would you make? (*Feel free to go into as much or as little detail as you want! e.g. When/where would it be set? Who would you cast? Who would you ask to write it? What would be the main themes?*)

Is there anything that you would like to say that you haven't had the opportunity to raise?

Self-care post-interview

While all care will be extended through the interviews, talking about racial and gender identity and workplace discrimination may lead to discomfort or distress. Please do a nice thing for yourself post-interview, whether that's go for a sunny walk, eat a snack or play a game.

If you experience distress from the interview, we recommend contacting Switchboard (<https://www.switchboard.org.uk>), Samaritans (<https://www.samaritans.org>), or the Black, African and Asian Therapy Network (<https://www.baatn.org.uk/free-services/>) if you are in the UK.

[If you do not reside in the UK, this is a link to a list of crisis lines by country \(cw: suicide mention\).](#)

If you would like any further information you can contact me (Nemo Martin, they/them) through my university email address: nemo.martin.2013@rhul.ac.uk

If you have any concerns about the way in which this study has been conducted, you should contact my primary supervisor (Professor Hannah Thompson, she/her) in the first instance: Hannah.thompson@rhul.ac.uk

Thank you so much for taking the time to participate in this interview.