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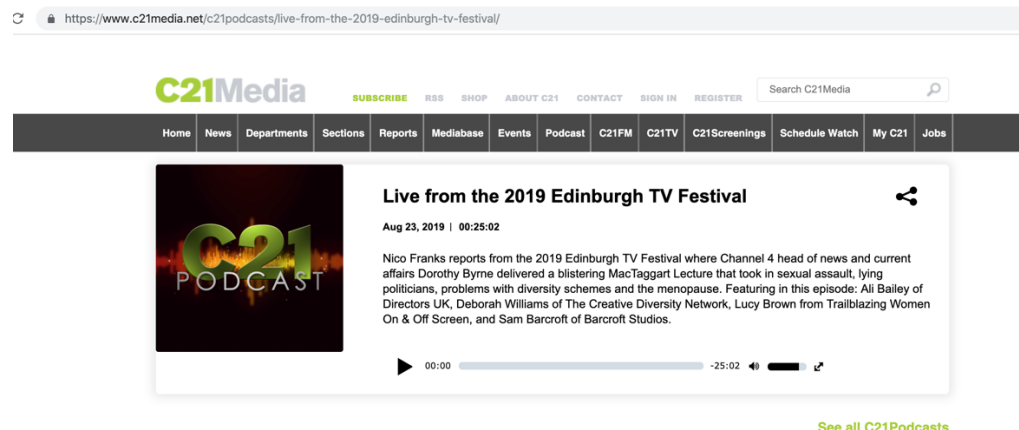
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Live from the 2019 Edinburgh TV Festival, C21 Podcast

**Aug 23, 2019 00:25:02**

Nico Franks reports from the 2019 Edinburgh TV Festival where Channel 4 head of news and current affairs Dorothy Byrne delivered a blistering MacTaggart Lecture that took in sexual assault, lying politicians, problems with diversity schemes and the menopause. Featuring in this episode: Ali Bailey of Directors UK, Deborah Williams of The Creative Diversity Network, Lucy Brown from Trailblazing Women On & Off Screen, and Sam Barcroft of Barcroft Studios.



The screenshot shows the C21Media website interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the C21Media logo and links for SUBSCRIBE, RSS, SHOP, ABOUT C21, CONTACT, SIGN IN, and REGISTER. A search bar is also present. Below the navigation bar is a dark menu with links for Home, News, Departments, Sections, Reports, Mediabase, Events, Podcast, C21FM, C21TV, C21Screenings, Schedule Watch, My C21, and Jobs. The main content area features a podcast player for 'Live from the 2019 Edinburgh TV Festival'. The player includes a thumbnail image with the C21 Podcast logo, the title 'Live from the 2019 Edinburgh TV Festival', the date and time 'Aug 23, 2019 | 00:25:02', and a description: 'Nico Franks reports from the 2019 Edinburgh TV Festival where Channel 4 head of news and current affairs Dorothy Byrne delivered a blistering MacTaggart Lecture that took in sexual assault, lying politicians, problems with diversity schemes and the menopause. Featuring in this episode: Ali Bailey of Directors UK, Deborah Williams of The Creative Diversity Network, Lucy Brown from Trailblazing Women On & Off Screen, and Sam Barcroft of Barcroft Studios.' The player also has a progress bar showing 00:00 and a volume icon.

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Transcript Nico Franks interview with Lucy Brown, Founder and Director of Trailblazing Women On & Off Screen (23/08/2019 - 12-17'06")

For Lucy Brown, academic leader and founder and director of Trailblazing Women On and Off Screen Byrne's discussion of sexist bosses and the lack of older women in the industry and her discussion of the menopause was particularly refreshing.

"One of the things she [Byrne] was talking about was a quarter of women are affected by the menopause. That's huge amounts of women and it's unspoken and really what would help is having flexible working conditions so that we retain these amazing, talented women in the industry. It's unsaid but people are leaving. She [Dorothy Byrne] said she is one of the oldest women in the industry because people just disappear, and she made some fantastic jokes to hit it home. She was talking about Agatha Christie and where are all the women. Has she been getting rid of them herself. So she was entertaining but it resonated that something has to be done. It's fantastic to hear more from the other spectrum, of mother's returning, not just mothers but mothers and fathers returning to the industry and there being flexible working conditions. It's ultimately women that still hold that caring role and when they have to look after their parents at the other end, their career is being affected and it doesn't have to be so. For Dorothy to speak out and blast the industry for the sexism, that's really institutional, was great to hear." (Brown, Lucy 2019)

"If there is any point to the McTaggart it is to introduce tangible change so something like that, an initiative that focuses on women going through the menopause. Can you see something like that coming in?" (Franks, Nico, 2019)

"Yes. Sure. People don't want to speak about it. It really is an unsaid thing unless comedians are joking about it "oh you're having a hot flush" or whatever it might be but, you know, it should be normalised and there are a lot of people who are starting to do that. Kirsty Wark and some other presenters have started to talk about it and it's important that women are starting those conversations because it does affect half the population. So being able to talk to your boss and say – "I'm not ill. It's not a fever. It's actually a perfectly normal part of every woman's life but what would make it easier is, while this is particularly intense, could I have some flexibility, work from home," or whatever it might be. And I think it's not just about the menopause but understanding that women often take on the burden of looking after people, their parents during older age and really it's about saying, OK, what can we do to enable

people to retain people in the work force, that we don't have to lose them. They have so much to offer. We look around and we see so many men of a certain age, but we certainly don't see women and that is a shame." (Brown, 2019)

"Do you think that will have a knock on effect on what gets commissioned and made?"  
(Franco)

"Absolutely because the latest Ofcom research shows that there is a lack of women of a certain age and if you do see women of a certain age they are often in a dressing gown or nagging or shouting. Real stereotypes and women are getting really fed up with that. They don't want to see those images and it's exciting actually the potential and the women coming up who are saying that's not representative of who we are. We're not going to be like that."  
(Brown, Lucy 2019)

"It's interesting in terms of the conversation around women's representation on screen certain programmes get held up, I'm thinking of *Fleabag* and *Killing Eve* as sort of shows that were previously lacking on TV but they kind of get the microscope put on them so much that that blocks out other kinds of programmes, focussing on different kinds of women, to what degree is that a problem in the business do you think?"

"I think this links with diversity generally. I mean it's crazy, isn't it, because women are half the population, but they are still almost talked about as an underrepresented group because weirdly they are, especially if they are older, women over 40, and women over 50, in particular. This is a crazy system. One woman's journey can't represent half a population so we have to change the way that we are thinking about these things and allow for more than one successful story, *Happy Valley*, or whatever it might be. There need to be more examples of that. You don't even question a certain type of male story, detective story, or whatever it might be, and say we've already got that. It's not even brought up so it shouldn't be for women. (Brown, Lucy 2019)