



ELLE'S ACTING EDITOR-IN-CHIEF LOTTE JEFFS TAKES **A SIDWAYS LOOK** AT A WORD **THE FASHION WORLD** CAN'T STOP SAYING AND ASKS: 'WHAT DOES IT REALLY MEAN?'

## LEXICON

# 'LIT'

*Adjective: To be active or alive*

**W**e are all so 'lit' right now, anyone wearing polyester needs to step back, or they're going up in flames. What was once merely a past participle of 'light' took on a whole new meaning (internet speak for 'intoxicated'), then a whole other meaning (general slang synonym of 'fun'), and now it means something entirely different (bear with me). You see, this is the year that a spark turns into a full-on blaze, where people burn with rage as they fight for rights and freedoms because they realise how precarious those things are in the wrong hands. In 2017, being 'lit' can actually make a difference.

How times have changed. Last year, an Instagram search for #lit would reveal pictures of excitable puppies, frat parties and Michelle Obama dancing. These images almost seem quaint now, like relics from a more innocent era, because back then 'lit AF' ('as fuck' – do keep up) meant something vividly brilliant and exciting, and boiling over with energy. Of course, it could also mean we were high on life (or something stronger). To be lit, in all its forms, was about forgetting reality and just YOLOing in the

moment – whether at a fashion show, the White House or a spectacularly decadent party. But now, well, the lights are on, and someone's getting the Hoover out while we try to book an Uber. It's impossible to forget reality any more. In fact, there's a Beyoncé-sized spotlight shining above us and – *shudder* – we see everything.

Since ELLE's Creative Director Suzanne Sykes recommended the team watch the Adam Curtis documentary *HyperNormalisation* late last year, my team has been



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coming into work all wide-eyed and wired. They'll be clutching venti Americanos after staying up late to finish the three-hour programme on iPlayer and you'll hear them whispering in the kitchen about 'perception management' and 'post truth'.

The documentary deconstructs major moments in culture and politics over the past 40 years, and connects Seventies New York to the Assads and Gaddafi via Jane Fonda, alien invasions and echo

chambers. It leaves you feeling the need to lie on the sofa watching *Sex And The City* re-runs until your head stops spinning.

Combine this with the slow paper shuffle towards Brexit, Trump's inauguration and all the other horrific and scary things happening around the world that we've collectively reduced to a cry-face emoji, and it's no wonder 'lit' has got serious. There's a fire under us and the year ahead will bring activism, debate and protest like we've never seen before. But I hope it'll also have some of that old-school 'litness' in the form of hotter-than-hell fun. We need to go 'out out' and let loose at the kind of legendary bashes that are a beacon of light in dark times.

It may feel like we're stuck in *The Upside Down*, but we need to look to people like Marc Jacobs to drag us Barbs out of it. The dress code for his Cruise Collection party is a lesson in finding silver linings, literally. The invitation read: 'Glamorous dress code door policy: chic Eighties with voluminous proportions. Think Gloria von Thurn and Taxis at Le Cirque with Stephanie and Caroline of Monaco. Success, fame and glamour [...] A decorative frenzy in electric paradise; more is more. No posers and definitely no preppies. Be the life of the party and, remember, girls (and boys) just wanna have fun!' We may have been NFI (don't make me explain) but the spirit has us lit AF.

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