

Craccum

EST. 1927

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WHAT'S NOT?

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Internet Edition

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KIERAN PANUI & KALA TAKEBE BURGESS



Has 'internet' contributed positively to your academic experience?

Kala: Yes. Although I feel like for my degree I don't really need internet, it has helped me draw inspirations so easily and it's just a convenient tool especially if I want to use adobe.

Kieran: Undeniably all students from the birth of the internet have had a seriously shifted experience of education. In terms of consumption efficiency, yes - absolutely.

Whats your favourite social media app?

Kala: Instagram

Kieran: JSTOR

What's one thing you wish people would stop posting on their instagram?

Kala: When people post saying 'celebrating ____'s Birthday' but they not in the picture and its with other people at the party.

Kieran: Post anything if it's authentic.

If the internet had a personality, how would you describe it, and what kind of friend would it be?

Kala: Sometimes so helpful and nice but other times a bitch.

Kieran: Schizophrenic uncle

If you could instantly become an influencer in any niche, no matter how bizarre, what would it be?

Kala: A Takeshi Kaneshiro fanpage / lifestyle influencer (realisticly)

Kieran: Renaissance Instrument Unboxing.

The Internet is a technological phenomena ever present in contemporary life, an aid to the world's function. From early morning scrolls to late-night online marathons, the web has become a cornerstone of our daily lives, especially for students. The internet has undeniably reshaped the landscape of student life, offering both opportunities and challenges. While the internet is a powerful tool, it's important to remember that it's our creativity, resilience, and critical thinking that will truly shape our success in this digital age.

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Second Global Outage to Hit



A second global outage on Microsoft's network occurred on Tuesday, July 30th affecting users worldwide. This followed the initial outage on July 19th, when US cyber security company CrowdStrike alerted that its software was causing Microsoft Windows to crash. Although the CEO has claimed it is not a cyber attack, the problem has had an international effect.

In New Zealand, operating systems such as bank payment systems were halted and could not be accessed. Supermarkets witnessed backlogs of queues as checkout machines became unavailable. Our government, alongside those of Australia and various US states, are also experiencing various communication difficulties.

The outage is attributed to the growing dependence of governments and corporations on select and interconnected technology companies. To protect computer networks, data, and personal information from being breached, many entities use a cybersecurity product known as Endpoint Detection and Response, or EDR. EDRs run in the background of systems as an early warning against digital attacks or breaches.



WHAT CAUSED THE GLOBAL CYBER OUTAGE?

Many key figures in the cyberspace have called this outage one of the most significant issues of this year. It is believed the impact of the first outage caused losses in the range of billions of dollars and productivity.

"Focus On Youth Wellbeing More Urgent Than Ever"

A report from the Mental Health and Wellbeing Commission released more evidence of New Zealand youth mental health in late June. Although there are general indications for wellbeing improvement, there is a steady decline compared to older age groups more recently.

Though the latest data indicated that 74% of 15 – 24-year-olds reported good mental health, there are ongoing negative trends.

- One-fifth of all young people have experienced "higher rates of psychological distress than other age groups" in the last year.
- In 2021, 28% of 15 – 24-year-olds expressed they felt lonely and or disconnected over the last four weeks.
- A portion of 15 – 24-year-olds who could easily talk to someone when feeling down decreased from 61% (2018) to 54% (2021).

Average youth mental wellbeing scores have dropped between 2018 and 2021 and continue to follow a long-term decline. Additionally, rangatahi Māori, disabled, and LGBTQIA+ people are subject to higher levels of inequities when compared to older age groups and lowered wellbeing than peers. These demographics responded with significantly lower trust in others and a sense of purpose.

However, options for mental health support are increasing. Digital mental tools such as online platforms and social media are increasingly

being utilised. Young people between 2022 and 2023 made up 42% of all callers to the 1737 Whakarongarau telehealth service. Despite challenges, rangatahi Māori have expressed renewed optimism in whānau wellbeing. In 2018, roughly three-quarters rated their wellbeing highly, and a significant portion believed their lives had improved year over year.

Findings and information are attributed to the Mental Health and Wellbeing Commission. Access to this data and insights can be found in the QR code.



YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING INFOGRAPHIC

Interview with Dr Ella Cullen

Dr Cullen is the Director of Wellbeing System Leadership and Insights at Te Hīringa Mahara, the Mental Health and Wellbeing Commission. Her work focuses on determining and improving individual and whānau mental health and well-being outcomes. Dr Cullen also leads the data and insights team and recently advised the Chief Māori and Equity Officer of ACC.

The COVID period caused many disruptions that remain today. However, another perspective is that it brought out the symptoms of preexisting issues. **Based on your professional opinion, what is the foundational issue underpinning New Zealand youth and young adults?**

"The COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated existing inequities for people in Aotearoa who already experience disadvantages, including rangatahi and young people.

Our research shows that four drivers of wellbeing need to be addressed to improve mental health and wellbeing outcomes for rangatahi and young people. These are:

- **Uncertain futures**, with inherited social, economic, and environmental challenges
- **Social media and safety online**
- **Racism and discrimination**
- **Whānau and intergenerational connections**

We have also published a series of insights on the COVID-19 pandemic, which you might find useful." (Please check the QR code below)

What is one recommendation you have for institutions to implement to improve the well-being of students?

"To understand how wellbeing can improve, we must listen to and act on the voices, perspectives and expertise of young people. What we need is to collectively and urgently ensure that there are real opportunities for young people to be involved in decisions that impact them. This is the heart of our call to action – rangatahi Māori and young people must have a seat at every decision-making table where they can shape their own futures, and their voices and perspectives are heard."



COVID-19 INSIGHTS

Report: Student Council Meeting of July 27

July's council meeting saw discussion surrounding many topics. Key to the student body were new formalised complaints procedures for students. The council was also briefed on the progress of Canvas design practices as it nears the end of their timeline and collaboration with university faculties. The council was also presented with an update on the new library spaces, and news of the ongoing Curriculum Framework Transformation (CFT).

New Student Academic Complaints Statute and Procedures

The existing statute was made in 2012 and covers academic complaints. This will be replaced by two documents: principles and procedures. This is a formalised process, aimed to be escalated from the 'informal' process of each faculty.

There will be a three-month time limit for making a complaint. Additionally, there will be an option to collate complaints from multiple students on the same topic together. Individuals will still receive individual resolutions. This allows for better record keeping and allows reporting on the complaints to key committees within the university.

This complaints policy will be inclusive for students and will be safe and free from bias. The AUSA advocacy team would be informed on how to navigate the processes in order to assist students. Note that the new system is in the process of becoming available. Work with AUSA to make sure Advocacy is up to date with any portal that gets set up for accessibility.

Canvas Baseline Practices

The Learning & Teaching Design Team has had a goal of creating consistency and streamlining Canvas pages regardless of faculty. Templates were created to be downloaded into the courses to provide course coordinators with easy access. This project has been underway in most faculties except for medical and health sciences.

Completed with stage one and two courses. About 600 courses have been updated out of over 3000 courses. By the end of 2024, this number will be roughly 700. At the end of the project, faculties will independently continue to ensure consistency for the rest of their courses.

Quality assurance of accessibility is difficult, which is why student feedback is crucial. Staff have been trained, however student voice and feedback are critical to ensure high standards.

Additionally, announcements have been sent to update students on how to attach pronouns to their canvas profiles. This will be displayed in discussions and chats with other users.

New Library Spaces

The new library spaces have been completed, and the reviews have been positive overall. The new meeting booths can be booked on demand using the QR codes available, and the Reo Space is actively being used for practising Te Reo.

Feedback has been received, and is welcomed. A regular semester review for example, has seen more tables being purchased, so students no longer need to move and relocate them when needed. Currently, the student hubs team is looking at drawing attention to the monitors that indicate booth status.

The team intends to continue this work throughout the rest of the library floors. However, as this building is old, there is the question of whether it is worth the investment if a new building is being considered.

Curriculum Framework Transformation Update

The new Transdisciplinary Futures courses have been confirmed. Each course will have three cycles before being reviewed, and students will be approached for feedback from the beginning. The confirmed course names are below:

Migration futures	Environmental Future
Democracy	Contemporary Sexualities
War and Peace	Lifestyle Behaviours
AI and society	Health and Wellbeing
Our place in space	Future Food
Hazards	Renewable Energy Transition

The CFT has been an ongoing process since 2021 when it was discovered that there were impending challenges, disruptions and uncertainty for university graduates. In reviewing the effectiveness of the current teaching model, decisions were made in university courses towards new definitions of 'student success'.

This encompasses various new focuses of 'relational learning', such as student outcomes, undergraduate and postgraduate opportunities, pedagogy, and course structure.

The transformation aims to align students with the present demands and future-proof their graduate profiles.

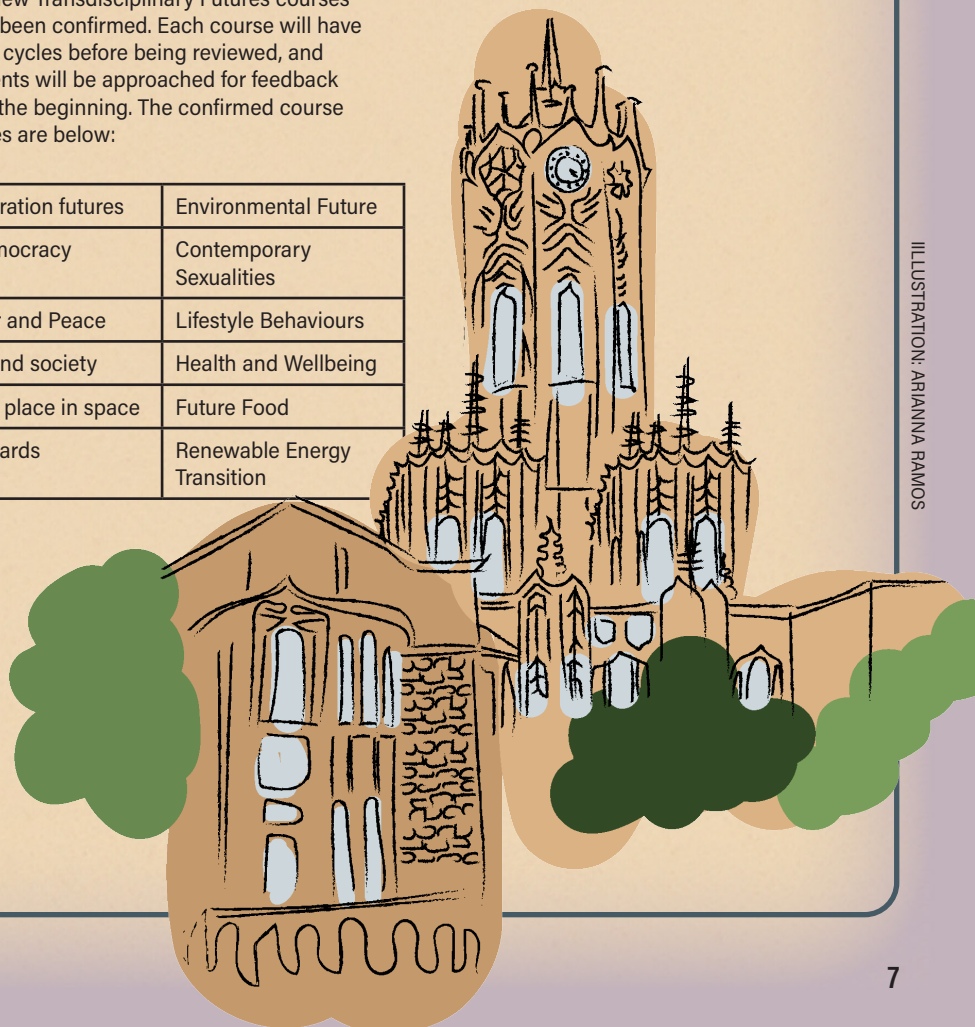
More information can be found on the university page 'Taumata Teitei'. Access to this, the council minutes, and other relevant information are in the QR codes below.



STUDENT COUNCIL
MEETING MINUTES, JUL
27, 2024.



TAUMATA TEITEI; VISION
2030; STRATEGIC PLAN
2025.



UniHack

Part Two: The Experiment



OLIVER COCKER

Over four hours, sixty-eight people scanned a rogue QR code that was floating around the student quad. To them, it would have only pulled up a page that said the code was no longer in use. To the owner, it added one to a count—a count of people who could have given up their information for the promise of a free prize.

It did not do that, as Craccum is not in the cybercrime business, but we spoke to a few who scanned it. A couple expressed disappointment that they would not be in to win a voucher for free lunches, and a large proportion simply scanned it because it was there. No one we spoke to really understood the gravity of the risk that came from just scanning a QR code. Realistically, your phone's inbuilt security is good enough to stop most enterprising technophiles. Still, often, if you use apps instead of the built-in QR scanner, you forgo some of that protection.

This social engineering, as it is known, requires incredibly little effort. That is not to say that people who fall for such scams are less intelligent, or more gullible, or really in any way distinguished from those who have not yet. The greatest weakness in any technological system is always the humans involved. In your moment of boredom, your curiosity, your normal reaction is simply what these people prey on. When you're bombarded as often as you are, it might even feel like an inevitability. Regardless, vigilance is the answer in the modern world.

Some weeks ago, I attended an international conference on Universities and Artificial Intelligence hosted by Western Sydney University. Its many uses and vices were well canvassed by a range of speakers from Singapore and South Africa to Australia and the United States. Even your very own Craccum editor delivered a sermon about marking software and systemic bias.

But the reality is that no one knows how these generative models are being used to target us. Some technologies we use and accept the risks associated with them. We all have the vague idea that some technology is being used around us, as demonstrated when they all crash down around us for five hours on a Friday night. But some things murk in dark places, and for all the good they promise, they have equal power to cause harm.

Models can clone your voice if you speak too much to them on the phone, create the likeness of your family members in photos and video, or even brute force the electronic security of homes and use routers to track movement in the privacy of your own home. With the world's interconnectivity and global tech companies pushing these single-system models, we weaken ourselves.

I cannot claim to be savvy enough to conduct such experiments on my own, but with the advent of AI, I can at least bash

my head into my keyboard for a few hours until I give up and try a free online course. It seems that you need a baseline level of skill that my antediluvian mind simply cannot comprehend. But these days, everything from ethical hacking and self-styled bounty hunting to hackathons, where people compete to find new opportunities for exploitation, exist.

My journey to write this article has led to interactions with many such people, who assure me that SQL injection, in which you enter commands into a database from a sign-in screen, allows you to regularly download entire datasets from IT departments who forgot a few protections. That is why you should not reuse that password that already exists for half of your accounts. Even if your password is secure, the place you keep it might not be. A quick trawl of internet leaks reveals that account data linked to my email have been leaked seven times. Even the head editor's email was breached on two separate occasions in 2019.

So be wary, humble reader. Next time, it might not be the friendly features editor next door who leaves stray codes along the student quad.

WHAT'S REAL AND WHAT'S NOT?



REEMA ARSILAN

The internet has made the world increasingly more connected, and social media in particular has allowed for the kind of communication that just a few decades ago would have seemed impossible. The rate at which information and news can move from many different sources means that a greater proportion of people have access to knowledge and what's happening in the world around them. It also makes it far easier to fabricate and disseminate false information.

Scrolling through a social media feed, there are lies everywhere. Videos are faked for views, influencers deny plastic surgery to sell you their cosmetics, and people who can't grasp the concept of satire are nonetheless giving it a go. Some of these lies are harmless and easy to spot, some less so. The lines have been blurred to the point that there is doubt cast on anything you might come across, and this is only set to get worse. We've already witnessed deepfakes getting better and better, and everyone has at least one relative who wholeheartedly believes in something from an AI generated Facebook post. Unfortunately, your gullible family member is not an outlier.

There are plenty of people who have fallen prey to a particular falsehood or half-truth, such as flat earthers, anti-vaxxers, and ACT voters. The only person in the world who is right in their mind is that fringe youtuber, or that mommy blogger, or that one politician who kept

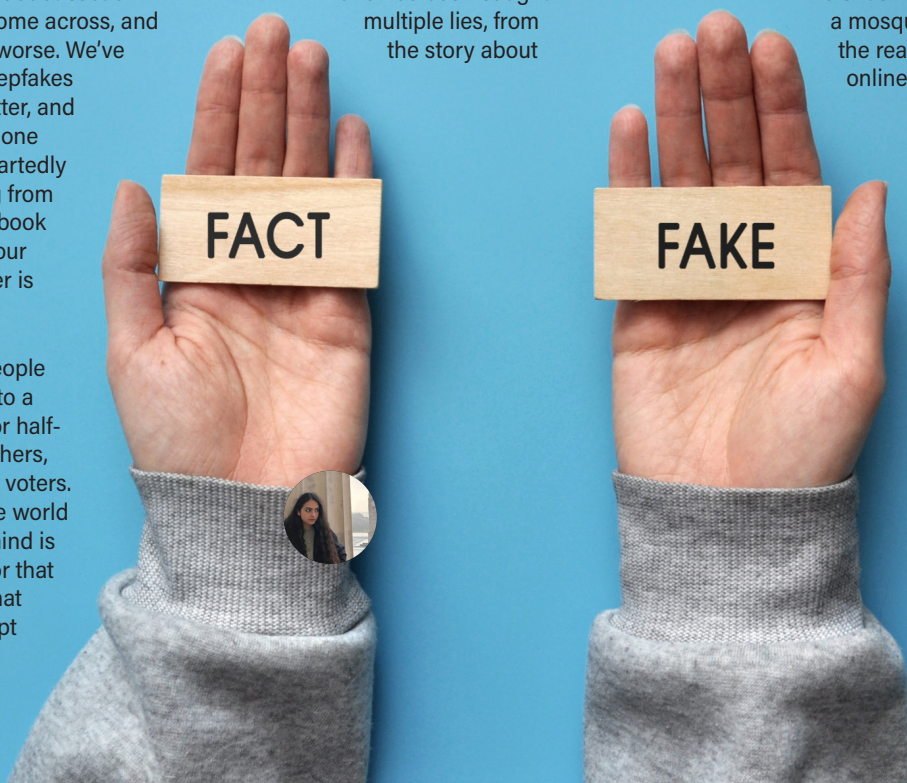
sending them Snapchats when they were 14. Everyone else can see it from outside, but for that person the lies that have been fed to them are their reality. This applies to more than just extreme viewpoints, however.

There is a rising sense of distrust in the mainstream media and what have traditionally been considered reliable news sources, especially in the past few months as people have been critical of the coverage of the genocide in Gaza. It has become increasingly clear that there is bias in the way that certain things are reported; for example coverage, who is interviewed, the wording used. This, combined with the footage that we have been seeing emerge daily from Gaza, has led many people to disregard traditional sources and rely on social media for information. At the same time, Israel targets journalists and has been caught in multiple lies, from the story about

the beheaded babies to denying that they bombed hospitals to claiming that Palestinians are faking their injuries. So what does this achieve? It makes it that much harder to discern the truth, and even when the falsehoods are obvious, proving them to be distracts from the real issues. Public opinion is swayed by misinformation, and this is not an insignificant thing.

Propaganda often utilises emotionally charged subjects to evoke a strong reaction, which can have extreme consequences. A few days ago, a children's dance was the target of a knife attack which left 3 little girls dead in Southport, in the UK. The suspect is a 17 year old, born in the UK after his parents, who are Christian, moved from Rwanda. A campaign of misinformation online, including rumours that the suspect was an illegal immigrant, from Syria, and Muslim, then led to a violent anti-Muslim riot which targeted a mosque. This is clear example of the real world impacts of deliberate online misinformation.

The importance of critical thought cannot be overstated. In an era where misinformation is rampant and the lines between truth and falsehood are increasingly blurred, being able to evaluate the information we encounter critically is essential. The internet is a source of connection and information, yes, but it is important to be conscious of how we navigate it.



Baby Back Benchers

A debate off election year



OLIVER COCKER

Cast your minds, if you will, back to the beginning of last year—election year. Well, the University of Auckland was hosting the first real debate of the season, and I was right there for it. The sundry leaders of the political party hopefuls piled into the fridge of OGGB, and a crowd of hundreds watched them on with hundreds of undecided voters as they discussed everything on the horizon.

Last Tuesday, I instead found myself in the twinkling billiards room of Shadows, surrounded by nothing but the most partisan of politickers, opting to stand rather than risk those wobbly stools.

Alan Shaker moderated the representatives from Young Labour, ACT, National, and NZ First through a wide range of contentious issues. Participants Brad, representing Young Labour; Leo, representing ACT; Printham from National; and Keegan from NZ First shared their views on various topics, from inflation to education and climate change. Each debater brought a different background and motivating influences into the debate.

The debate began by discussing some of the larger drivers of inflation. Corporate greed, high supermarket profits and unemployment were to blame by Brad from Young Labour. Leo from ACT said much of the public spending over the past six years had been a waste, questioning where it had gone. National's representative, Printham, pointed to supply chain disruptions and high demand boosting the prices. Keegan of NZ First joined others in expressing worries over wasteful spending but said that the government hadn't effectively tapped into the Covid fund.

National proposed targeted support of students, cutting bureaucracy, and reducing rents. For ACT, Leo, it was business confidence and balancing work and study. Labour held that studying is a full-time job needing full-time support. For NZ First, it was free education, scholarships and reform of student loans to reduce repayment burdens based on income.

Climate Change saw the most heated debate of all the topics presented in this chapter. ACT's Leo accepted its existence but focused on adaptation and criticized scrapping the EV rebate for being a rich people policy. Labour's Brad countered with a focus on environmental stability and bringing farmers into the ETS. National suggested early warning systems and better infrastructure as practical responses. Keegan from NZ First said one had to be prepared, referring to his party's policy of a \$1.2 billion regional infrastructure fund and more money for the Defence Force.

Regarding how one would help out the nations of the Pacific, Labour's Brad said there would need to be leadership to enable climate refugees. The parties of the government were suspiciously silent on the issue.

There are also various solutions hedged against teacher deficiencies in secondary schools. ACT's Leo suggested moving staff from the Ministry of Education into the front line and relaxing immigration for teachers. Labour's Brad pointed to better pay and reduced workloads as helping reduce the turnover of teachers. National preferred ameliorating working conditions and forgiving student loans for graduates in

high-demand areas. NZ First argued for a dollar-for-dollar debt repayment scheme in shortage areas.

Surprisingly to everyone in the room, National supported culturally responsive teaching to address educational disparities between Māori and Pākehā. ACT pointed to their charter school model and called for education by Māori, for Māori. Labour called for better resourcing to break the cycle of poverty, while NZ First wanted to reduce student-to-teacher ratios and offer first-in-family scholarships.

Labour proposed controls on rents, mechanisms to stop rents rapidly increasing, and the stopping of evictions. ACT's Leo said that what was needed was increasing supply and the eviction of problem tenants; Printham from National said that landlords needed to make a living. NZ First called for expanding new city districts and investment in social housing.

Only National's Printham agreed with Auckland being ranked as the ninth most livable city in the world, with Labour, ACT, and NZ First representatives disagreeing.

There was also some discussion of non-political issues. While flying was thrown around as the ideal superpower, and everyone's favourite food was meat-based, no one disputed that Shadows did not deserve government funding.

ACT strongly defended the three strikes legislation as a deterrent against which there was academic opposition, while Labour responded that it hadn't reduced recidivism rates. For National as a party, the

answer lay in fear of punishment stopping crime, while NZ First supported it for violent and sexual offences.

The healthcare solutions ranged from doubling of Pharmac's funding and retention of doctors to modernising of its technology. At the same time, ACT looked to liberalise immigration settings for medical professionals. Labour criticized the hiring freeze, particularly for doctors and nurses.

NZ First and National wanted to invest heavily in rail for public transport. ACT said that issues with public transport should be left to local governments. Labour called for more cycle lanes and focused funding on buses.

In final pitches, Labour warned of impending public destruction by continuing present policies. ACT said that the current government is about reversing the economic mismanagement of the last decade (including a previous Key government) and called for adult leadership. National asked for patience and suggested more time was needed to see the positives of the changes. NZ First vowed to fight for everyday New Zealanders against the unpopularity of the last government with no clear plans.

The debate under the fairy lights at the back of Shads provided a lively platform for these young political enthusiasts to clash over visions for New Zealand's future, bringing along a passion for their party.



1. LEAO - TAEAO [NZ]
2. Elliot & Vincent - Doberman [NZ]
3. Goat - Ouroboros
4. Revulva - Beep Beep [NZ]
5. Chase Woods - Maiden Speech [NZ]
6. Marlin's Dreaming - Hello My Dear [NZ]
7. We Will Ride Fast - Surfing the Meme Machine [NZ]
8. Soft Bait - No Bad Days [NZ]
9. KOMMI, Infectiouss - Tāiro (feat. Marlon Williams) [NZ]
10. T.G. Shand - Scenes [NZ]

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Poems by Padriac O'Leary

Four Norns of
 Youth
 Weird sisters even
 The brother
 Huddled over
 Cellular fire
 Stealing from
 The gods of the
 Nous sphere
 Gone in a flash

She calls me
 In the electromagnetic
 Nous sphere and
 Alone I am not
 Naked and pigment-adorned
 She captures me
 In her lips she
 Holds me with her
 Tongue cradling me
 And so I come
 To know in love I am loved
 Admiring
 Adoring
 Advancing toward
 Billie.

Jörmandungt in steel and
 Aluminium crawling over
 Plastic Yggdrasil
 Rooted in a septic well, of
 Our black on black on concrete paupers Rothko, of alcoholic Norns.
 And moon absent starless night cap on a hill of garrets and each one a smoke spilling Surtr
 breath - a personal Armageddon of movements falling daily short of Ragnorak.
 No strength of the wolf
 No aesir,
 No walking spitting dead
 Just a washing tide of tired hipster trash
 Happy

But..

ONLINE BACKLASH AROUND THE OLYMPICS OPENING CEREMONY

THE MISINTERPRETATION OF 'THE LAST SUPPER' IS NOW FEEDING INTO THE SCAPEGOATING OF THE RAINBOW COMMUNITY.



IATUA FELAGAI TAITO

On the 27th of July in Aotearoa (NZ) time, the 2024 Olympics or the Summer Olympics had the opening ceremony where there was a scene of drag queens feasting at a table, and people thought immediately it was a mockery reference to the 'The Last Supper'. Which it was about the messiah Jesus and his last meal with his 12 apostles, which signifies the sacrament of Holy Communion. Online on Twitter, Instagram, Facebook and on the news, it was capturing media attention, which in some cases negatively skewed in the form of showing animosity towards the artistic director Thomas Jolly and the performers, but on a more nuanced level, the Rainbow community.

As the Pasifika editor, I did notice a significant response from Pacific Christians online, agreeing that it was disrespectful and blasphemous. Yet I see some Pacific people correct these notions around what was being shown online was indeed not 'The Last Supper'. As Jolly explains that it was "a modern take on the Greek god of wine and festivity of Dionysus meant to show the absurdity of violence between human beings". He continues to reiterate this point that it was not in reference to Christianity. But my question is if the artistic director is saying it was not his intention for it to be perceived in that way where people misinterpreted his work, why is there still a strong response of negativity online?

From me reading articles on both sides of the spectrum (around a religious lens and artistic queer lens) I can understand how the intention might mean something else but the impact of the work can still be received in a negative way and because many Christians started to speak up about it online it shows that the reasoning of Jolly does not arguably become suffice due to the impact. But the issue that arises is; What makes it okay to bully and spew out transphobic, homophobic and sexist comments online under the disguise of Christianity?. I have to say I am seeing it by Pacific Christians in particular

doing it in blatant ways but more often in subtle ways where if you do the simple google search you'd realise that the intent and the work itself was not based around 'The Last Supper' at all.

It was revealing people's biases around this phenomenon, and people misinterpreting Jolly's work intentionally is what creates an unsafe space for queer people, particularly Pacific queer people online. People need to do their research around this work, as Jolly states that it was a celebration of Greek mythology and that the "idea was to depict a big pagan celebration, linked to the gods of Olympus, and thus the Olympics."

I write about this as a Pacific queer Christian person in which when I saw the spew of hatred and judgement being shared online, I knew it would be harmful and is harmful to our intersectional communities in Aotearoa and abroad. Once I realised the intention wasn't to be a mockery of a faith group, yet a lot of people tend to ignore that fact and continue to bash Rainbow communities is what is deeply sad.

It makes me think of how the Pacific Islands are 90% Christian and that the bigger conversations around those that are Pacific and queer and grew up in Christian households are complex. For the minority in that space makes me question how it is safe? How do you navigate upholding the Christian values of faith, hope and love but also applying the agape love to everyone from all walks of life without judging them?

This significant moment in the Paris Olympics globally has made people like Donald Trump Jr. and Elon Musk comment on the matter, being it is satanic and pushing a woke agenda. However, in contrast, Drag queen Nicky Doll, who both performed and carried



the torch during the contentious portion of the opening Olympics ceremony, shared something on her Instagram page early on Monday morning.

"The opening ceremony did ruffle some feathers... and I LOVE it. You know why? Because the Olympics are the biggest stage in the world and us queer people have always been the audience of other people's life and achievement and it is time that we are welcomed in the space."

One of the key things to disseminate is that there was a huge misinterpretation of Jolly's work being 'The Last Supper' which was not correct as it was around the Greek mythology of Dionysus. In addition, Olympics spokesperson Anne Descamps expresses an apology on behalf of the Olympics this year if it offended anyone even though it was not the intention to do so. However, the key emphasis is knowing the intent yet people intentionally ignoring it, starts to continue to feed the notion and the blame of Rainbow communities being the issue is what creates more division rather than unification.

So being vigilant and well researched is vital before you start sharing opinions online as it can really affect people in underserved communities. Especially if you're Pacific and faithful to your religions, it is advisable not to jump on the bandwagon of misunderstanding as it can be harmful for your intersectional Pacific members who want to be safe and accepted despite the binary differences.

SEARCHING FOR A GREENER FUTURE



MIKE CROSS

Our world is increasingly digital, yet the environmental impact of our online activities often goes unnoticed. While the convenience of searching for information online is undeniable, the energy consumption required to process billions of search queries daily has significant consequences for the planet. The vast data centers that power search engines like Google consume enormous amounts of electricity, much of which still comes from non-renewable sources.

Google, the most widely used search engine globally, processes over 8.5 billion searches per day and accounts for nearly 92% of the global search engine market share. Each of these searches has an average carbon footprint of about 0.108 grams of CO₂ equivalent. While this may seem negligible per search, when multiplied by the vast number of queries, the impact becomes substantial. In one day, Google searches emit the equivalent of 6.7 million kilometers driven by a light vehicle, which adds up to about 500 tons of CO₂ emissions daily (Greenspector).

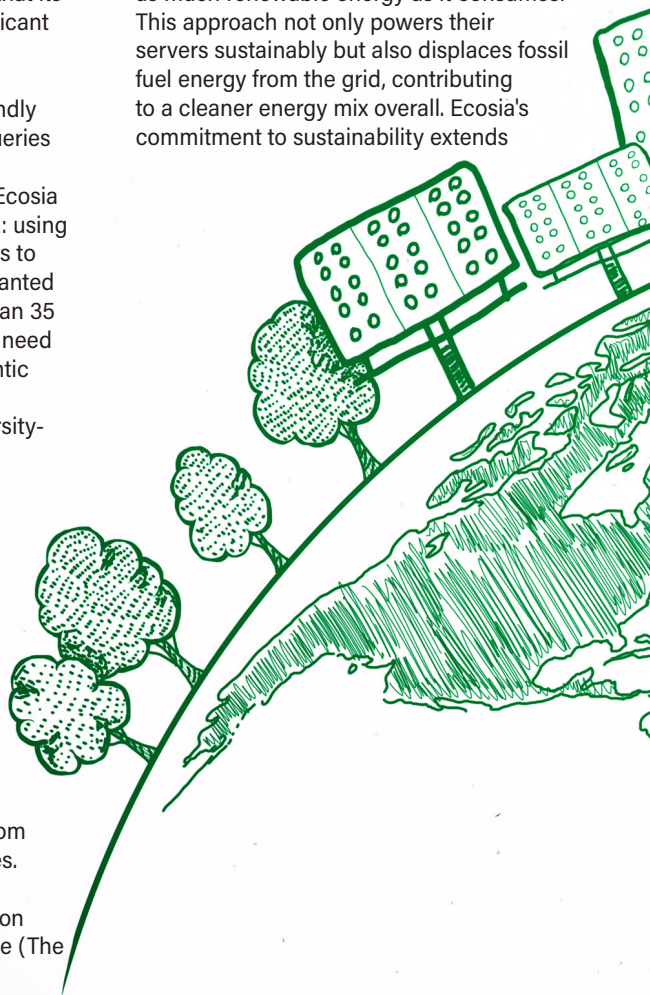
Google's extensive network of data centers is a major contributor to these emissions. These centers require vast amounts of electricity to operate and cool the servers. Google has made significant strides in improving the energy efficiency of its data centers, using technologies like machine learning to optimize cooling and investing in renewable energy to power its operations. Since 2017, Google has matched

100% of its global electricity consumption with renewable energy purchases. However, despite these efforts, the sheer scale of Google's operations means that its environmental impact remains significant (Greenspector) (The Ecosia Blog).

In contrast, Ecosia offers an eco-friendly alternative by turning your search queries into tangible environmental benefits. Founded in 2009 by Christian Kroll, Ecosia is built on a simple yet powerful idea: using the profits generated from search ads to plant trees. As of 2024, Ecosia has planted over 170 million trees across more than 35 countries, focusing on areas most in need of reforestation, such as Brazil's Atlantic Rainforest, Burkina Faso's degraded landscapes, and Indonesia's biodiversity-rich regions (The Ecosia Blog).

Ecosia's impact reaches beyond just planting trees. The reforestation efforts are carefully planned to maximize ecological benefits, such as restoring water cycles, enhancing soil fertility, and creating habitats for endangered species. In addition, the trees planted by Ecosia help sequester significant amounts of CO₂ from the atmosphere. On average, an Ecosia search removes 1 kilogram of CO₂ from the atmosphere for every 45 searches. This is a stark contrast to the carbon emissions associated with searches on traditional search engines like Google (The Ecosia Blog) (Greenspector).

Ecosia operates on 200% renewable energy, meaning that for every search conducted, the company produces twice as much renewable energy as it consumes. This approach not only powers their servers sustainably but also displaces fossil fuel energy from the grid, contributing to a cleaner energy mix overall. Ecosia's commitment to sustainability extends



to its entire business model: 100% of the company's profits are reinvested in environmental initiatives, with 80% directly funding tree-planting projects and the remaining 20% supporting renewable energy projects, regenerative agriculture, and grassroots activism (The Ecosia Blog).

Switching to Ecosia is a simple yet impactful way to reduce your digital carbon footprint. By making Ecosia your default search engine, you can contribute to global reforestation efforts with every query. Ecosia's transparency is also a key feature: the company publishes monthly financial reports detailing how much revenue is generated and how it is used for tree planting and other environmental initiatives. Unlike many other tech companies, Ecosia prioritizes user privacy, not selling data to

advertisers or creating personal profiles, making it one of the more privacy-friendly search engines available (The Ecosia Blog).

Ecosia also partners with local communities to ensure that tree-planting efforts are sustainable and beneficial to those living in the regions where they work. These partnerships help ensure that the trees planted have a high survival rate and continue to provide environmental and economic benefits for years to come.

Switching our search engines to Ecosia is a small, effortless step we can all take toward a greener future. Every search you make can plant a tree, reduce carbon emissions, and contribute to environmental restoration. Our collective journey to a healthier world and greener future might seem like a

monumental task, but as the saying goes, "A journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step."

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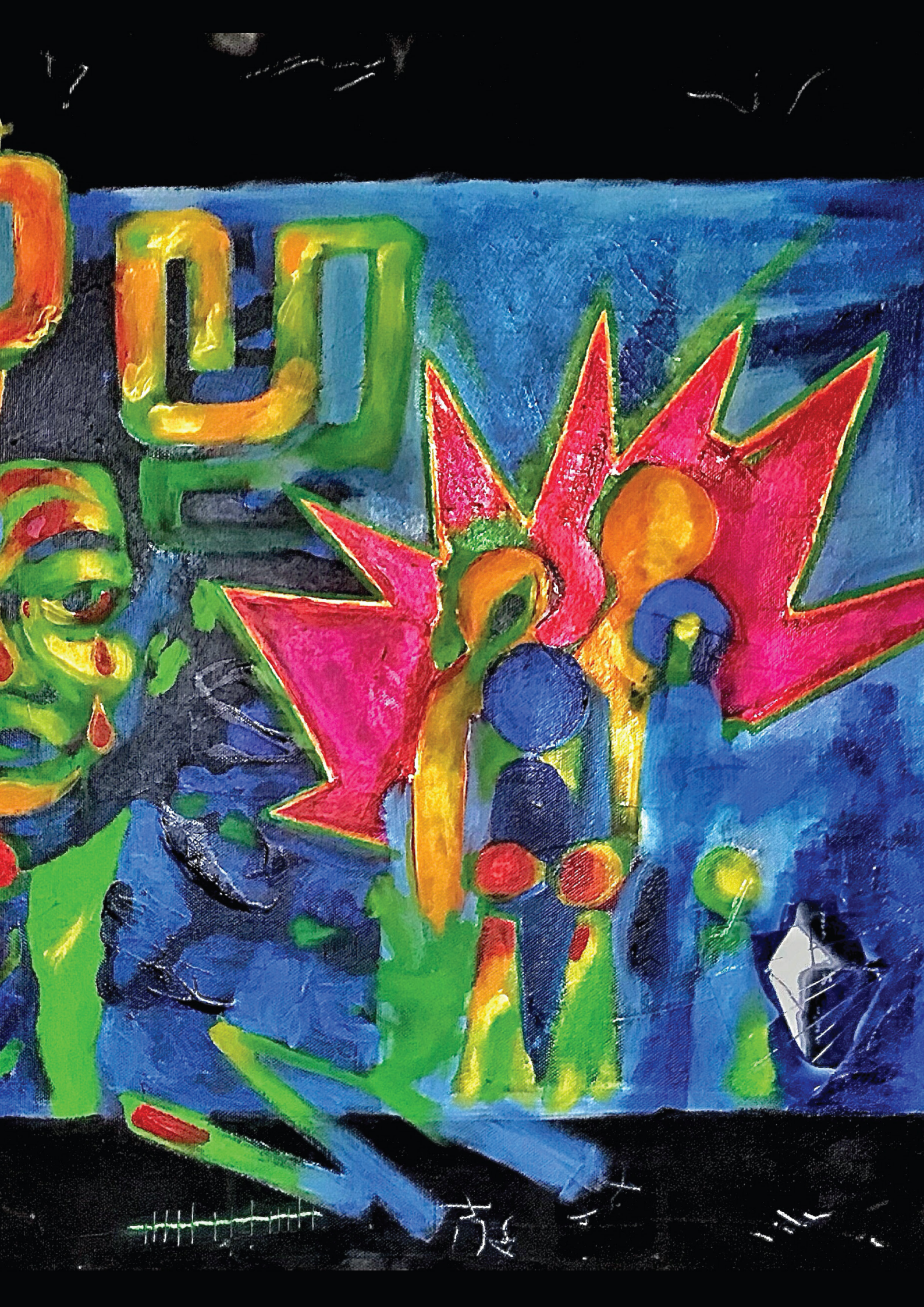


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CIRCA. 2004







MOVE OVER MUMMY WHO'S YOUR DADDY?

The unsolved ancient mystery of Tutankhamun's father



LEWIS MATHESON CREED

What's a Conspiracy Issue without ancient aliens, right? [illegible noises] What do you mean this isn't the Conspiracy Issue? [more illegible noises] Wait, what, this article isn't even about ancient aliens either? [exasperated illegible noises] But bruh, look at this dude, he's gotta be an alien, wait till you see his statue... [breaks into laughter] Oh no, no, no, no... [cackling] Oh, look at the top of his head! [wheezing] Look at his lips! [laughter, which resembles a car engine starting] Bro looks straight out of *Kingdom of the Crystal Skull*.

mk, this article is about the real human-being Tutankhamun, the fresh prince of Amarna and perhaps the most famous

Pharaoh of ancient Egypt. I caught up with him last summer, but seeing everyone taking selfies with his corpse felt pretty offensive. Although, he probably wouldn't mind the attention as the ancient Egyptians were into that kinda thing. I know, you read the title, and you're here for that juicy goss, not my ramblings. So, what's up with Tut's daddy?

TL;DR around 1350 BCE, there was this radical Pharaoh called Akhenaten (the weird-lookin' dude I was bullying in the intro). He did a few things that rubbed his people the wrong way (an understatement). Basically, imagine if King Charles forced everyone to ditch their religions and convert to some crackpot cult led by the royal we? Then

imagine the Pope moving Vatican City to Hamilton because he found a potato chip there resembling Jesus' face. [Everyone Disliked That]. So when Akhenaten went to the great Aten in the sky, he was hated so much that his tomb was looted, his new capital city, Amarna, was abandoned (and razed for good measure), and his name deleted from history. I mean, not even Hitler's name has been deleted from history. There was a huge cover-up job done by his heirs, and they nearly got away with it, too, if it wasn't for those damn meddling Egyptologists and Archaeologists.

Because his legacy was CTRL-Z'ed, there are a lot of historical question marks around Akhenaten's reign; all

we know is that four years later, this nine-year-old called Tutankhaten was K.U.L.E. (King of Upper and Lower Egypt).

You might think, "There's no mystery here. Tut was too young when his dad, Akhenaten, died, so he had a regent for a few years, then he took the throne". Many scholars believe this, and there is some truth in it, as he did have a regent called Ay (lmao). However, the problem is that our golden boy-king is not mentioned in any surviving texts from Akhenaten's reign and is very suspiciously absent from all the lists of royal family members which remain. His only association with Akhenaten is that he was born Tutankhaten, also named after Akhenaten's new god, the Aten, or sun-disc. Yea, Akhenaten low-key invented monotheism.

Luckily we have DNA testing now, and like an episode of Jerry Springer, we can prove who his parents were. And plot twist, we have both of their bodies! The mummy in the defaced coffin from KV55 is the daddy mummy, and the mummy in KV55 is the mummy mummy. KV is shorthand for Valley of Kings, meaning they were found in that specific tomb just outside of modern Luxor, in the south of Egypt.

The problem is we don't know who these bodies were; they're anonymous. Some scholars reckon since the coffin of the daddy mummy in KV55 was (literally) defaced, it means he's Akhenaten since yk, his whole city was defaced too. However, analysis of the body suggests that the father was too young to be Akhenaten, who would have been deep into his midlife crisis at his death. While I was standing in what's left of Akhenaten's tomb, I asked UOA's resident Egyptologist, Dr. Jennifer Hellum, for her personal opinion on this matter, and she also highly doubts that

KV55 contains Akhenaten's remains.

As such, a lot of scholars don't believe Akhenaten was Tutankhamun's dad at all. Some speculate that KV55 is the remains



of this shadowy figure, Smenkhkare, who was maybe Akhenaten's brother, son or nephew. Smenkhkare was married to Meritaten, Akhenaten's daughter, so pick your poison as to which strain of incest your pet theory subscribes to. Those who are sus about Smenkhkare think he took the throne with his sister-aunt-niece-wife, who changed her name to Neferneferuaten. But they both died shortly after, and so the crown fell to their son, Tut.

Some fringe theorists, I mean historians, even think Tut was the child of Meketaten (another daughter of Akhenaten), who died prematurely, supposedly of childbirth, because there is a baby depicted inside her burial chamber. However, Meritaten can't be the mummy

mummy because, in a shocking twist of events, it turns out the mummy mummy is the sister of the mummy daddy (💩)! They're also both the children of Amenhotep III and Queen Tiye, aka Akhenaten's parents! So who's the mummy daddy? Akhenaten's brother??? Perhaps. Who knows? You could write a whole PhD thesis on this if you've got a clue, and so please do if you have any. Btw there are wayyy more theories than I'm relaying here; I'm just including the ones I feel are the most compelling.

My personal theory is that KV55 is Akhenaten, and the mummy mummy is his full sister. You see, Akhenaten had six daughters with his Great Royal Wife, Nefertiti (yes, the famous one). Undoubtedly, he would have been looking for a male heir, and the ancient Egyptian kings were far from monogamous; for example, Akhenaten's granddaddy, Amenhotep II, married three of his daughters (💩💩💩). So, with that context, it's not a stretch of the imagination that Akhenaten fathered Tutankhamun to one of his sisters. With this theory, when Akhenaten peaced out, Tut's regents abandoned Amarna and moved the royal bodies back to Luxor to join their ancestors in the Valley of Kings. However, since Tutankhamun died when he was only 19, Akhenaten's new tomb would have been nowhere near completion, so he was just given a simple re-burial because everyone hated his guts anyway.

So, what remains of Akhenaten? While his son's death mask might be the face of ancient Egypt, his own sarcophagus was used as an ashtray for years outside a museum in Cairo. When I visited it, I spied a lone cigarette butt which remains his legacy. That, and a killer Opera by Philip Glass. Hot take, but historians are just mainstream career conspiracy theorists. What's your take?



Spotify is a Pisslord

Open your mouth, it's time for your favourite stream!



TIM EVANS (THEY/THEM)

Back in *Ye Olden Times* when people paid for television and had a real life satellite dish attached to the sides of their homes, life was simple. You get what you get and you don't get upset, as my mother always used to say. Now, while she was referring to feeding me poorly made curries she had no experience in making, the sentiment stands for the way in which our media landscape operated at the time. You got whatever was on the TV or radio, whenever it was on as determined by the broadcaster, and you dealt with it if you wanted to enjoy digital entertainment. It was a golden age for average fathers everywhere to come to home to the telly and get his regular helping of Coronation Street, or the kids with Sticky TV (which, now that I think of it, seems like it would be a good name for adult entertainment).

But y'all greedy bitches just had to go and ruin it, didn't you? All jokes aside, I'm sure the Broadcasting Standards Authority and Mediaworks head offices were excited by the fact that their inboxes would slowly empty in the coming years. With the rise of Netflix and Spotify over the semi-recent past, reaching now

to a global domination of the media industry, people simply don't listen to the radio or watch TV anymore. Sure, I could watch Shortland Street every night at 7 but maybe I'm too busy banging your mum to get around to it on a Wednesday. Streaming services allow the flexibility to bang as many people as you want, whenever you want, and never miss out on the most recent episode of your fave series. In essence, streaming services are better for the consumer and their hungry little minds that absolutely froth on the spot gratification. Myself included - channel surfing those 12 Olympics channels on Sky Sport Now has my greedy little lizard brain basking in glorious sunlight.

With such a great business model, streaming services have their finger on the collective clitoris of the culture at large. However, the instant access that we as audiences receive thanks to paid streaming services comes at a cost somewhere. Sure, it's actually super great that I can listen *uninterrupted and ad free* to boyfriend whimpering ASMR on Spotify, but that performer is getting so little of the profit of a stream it's embarrassing. In serving

ourselves content on a platter, we rob the (often independent) artists and creatives that rely on streaming platforms to be the platform for their art. But what is there, really, to do about this kind of exploitation? It's actually really tricky to think outside the box when so much of our current zeitgeist is consumed by the instant accessibility of media.

Perhaps it's time we consider how else we can support our artists beyond the realm of streaming services. In music, the money for performers is in the live experience. Musicians "do concerts" partly because it is enjoyable to perform, but also to garner themselves some income from things like ticket sales. If you're into nightlife, why not try out a bar with some local music going on and help get them off the wet and dingy floor of some obscure playlist on Spotify. Honestly, I'm not sure how filmmakers can be supported in a similar vein, but you get the point. Find ways to directly benefit the creators of your favourite media and *use them*. You'll thank yourself in the long run because you can actually enjoy things you like in the long run because you supported the people who made it for you.

CLUBS COLUMN

CHECK OUT THESE THREE COOL CLUBS ON CAMPUS, COME BACK FOR NEW CLUBS EACH ISSUE.



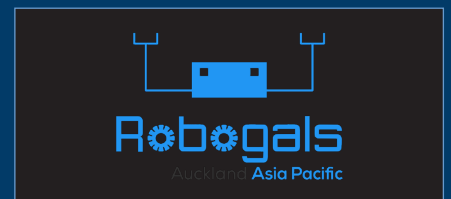
MASTER OF AUDIOLOGY STUDENT ASSOCIATION (MASA)

The Master of Audiology Student Association is a platform for aspiring audiologists to engage in academic, professional, and social activities. Our goal is to foster supportive and enriching environments for our members, empowering them to excel in their studies and careers through events, workshops, and conferences held throughout the year.



MARKETING AND DESIGN COLLECTIVE (MDC)

The Marketing and Design Collective is the only marketing club on campus at the University of Auckland. We are a student-led, non-profit organisation that aims to educate students and help them develop the skills needed for modern-day marketing and design. For 2024, we will #DreamBigDoBigger to bring a mix of professional development events and more unique, intimate social events for anyone with a passion for marketing and/or design, no matter their background!



ROBOGALS AUCKLAND

Robogals is a student-run initiative formed in 2008 to empower young women into STEM based fields. Our mission entails outreach in schools and amongst young people to foster a sense of confidence for the curious. Being a volunteer is not only a great opportunity for uni students to learn valuable leadership skills but also allows them to give back to future generations of leaders and change makers. We run workshops for students in primary and secondary schools and have a myriad of workshops including robots, block coding, and bridge building. Anyone can join our volunteer discord to get involved and find out more! <https://discord.gg/fccaYMGy>.

ON THE LIMIT

THE 2024 KARTING CHAMPIONSHIP

EVER WANTED TO KNOW WHAT IT'S LIKE TO BE
A REAL RACE CAR DRIVER?

VROOM UOA



The Vroom Karting Championship is the premier motorsport competition for university students! The four-round 2024 running of the VKC is getting ready for its third round. Whether you want to try karting out for the first time or if you're prepared to race against UoA's best, casual (beginner) sessions and competitive racing are on offer!

RACE RECAPS

ROUND 1: The Vroom 40 Lapper

ACE Motorsport hosted the season-opening Vroom 40-Lapper in March, with the 12 best drivers from the heats and B Main going to battle for 40 high-speed Laps.

After amazing race-long battles during the heats and B Main, Boldani Chan would lead the field to the green, winning both of his heats. Chan led from the green over Darland Kenyon, but the winning move would come early on Lap 3. Chan overshot turn 1, and Kenyon made the cutback in 2, taking the lead in turn 3. As Kenyon sped off in clean air, Chan and everyone down to 8th battled for the remaining podium positions for the remainder of the race. Darland Kenyon would benefit from the clear track, running 4-tenths quicker on average and putting down the race's fastest lap on lap 19 with a 27.940. At the

end of 40 laps, Kenyon had pulled a 15-second gap, crossing the line a second behind the major battle for 2nd. Jet Zeng took 2nd, and defending winner Julien Ducros would finish 3rd.

Round 2: GAME OVER Time Attack

21 drivers would take on Game Over Auckland over three points-based sessions to determine the event's winner. Harrison Hill won the first round of sessions with a 21.188, and Lachlan Douglas and Boldani Chan took 2nd and 3rd. Lachlan Douglas would step up to the top step in session two with a 20.752, followed by Jaewon Jeon and Harrison Hill. Session three saw Darland Kenyon jump to the top with the night's fastest lap at 20.591. Jaewon Jeon, Sam Campbell, and Jet Zeng also went faster than the previous sessions' best time. After the best 2 of 3 sessions, Lachlan Douglas topped the standings and took out the top prize with his 1st and 2nd. Harrison Hill secured second with his 1st and 3rd, and Sam Campbell took the last step on the podium with his 3rd and 6th places!

Heading into round 3, Darland Kenyon leads the Championship with the round 1 win and 5th at round 2; Lachlan Douglas (6th and 1st) is 2nd in points. 3 points separate the two!

The Vroom Karting Championship returns to ACE Motorsport for the

INTER-UNI WINTER DERBY

This meeting features:

- **10 Minute Casual Sessions:** Trying karting for the first time? ACE staff and the Vroom community will be there to help you along the way. You don't have to be a member of Vroom to do casual sessions!
- **The ACE Motorsport 35-Lap Derby:** 30 drivers will battle overheats and the Alphabet Soup to qualify for the ACE Motorsport 35-Lap Derby!
- **Vroom x AUT Racing Winter Cup - Round 1:** Vroom and AUT Racing are coming together to host the first inter-uni karting series!
- **And UoA vs AUT Teams' Racing:** Team UoA (Vroom and UoA FSAE) and Team AUT will go up against each other at ACE Motorsport to decide the first Uni-Teams' Racing champions!

Registration is open for round 3 now! Casual sessions are \$30 each, and entry into the competitive meeting is \$95. Follow us on Instagram at @vroom_uoa and sign-up at <https://linktr.ee/vroomuoa> or use the QR code.

SEE YOU ON THE TRACK!

Wow, a Girl with Real Interests

Check out her poetry collection at <https://www.deadbirdbooks.com>

JENNY ROCKWELL

a message request from the man
with the slimy fishing rod
he is not referring to my obsession
with the bi-bachelorette or
my addiction to tiktok
pinterest boards of glittery makeup looks
he means what he thinks belongs to men
like surfing, skating, and *the outdoors*

i could tell him how much i love
girls, how we watch *vogue: grwm*
dye each other's hair bottle pink
over the makeup-stained sink
plait red ribbons into each other's
braids, do a seance
in mum's basement
make a shrine, grate claws on rock
comb milky hair, dark sea
night-embalmed

dm each other *omg you are so beautiful wtf*
& can never gauge if we are flirting or
just being friendly, make plans of
charging rose quartz and casting hexes
(always cancel last minute) cos we're
feeling anxious or our stomach
problems have flared up (again)
never get annoyed
send a million heart emojis
it's okay, i was feeling the same
let's do it soon tho i miss u xx

send tiktoks across the room
dissect a screenshot conversation
video thrifted clothing hauls, y2k finds
recommend dupe highlighters &
how to manipulate, lie, create chaos
grwm as I water my monstera with my period!
share a bucket of chemist warehouse bleach
how I get out any blood stain
no matter how big xx
hot-girl-mental-health-walks
when we were richer, get our nails done
@ lynn mall, iced caramel pumpkin spice
oat milk latte
i love girls who bottomless brunch in pon-
sonby
post a dozen selfies, tag fancy brands
help curate a caption like it's a poem

i could tell him i <3 girls
with green armpit hair
so unruly it might choke u!!!
shaved heads, kiss each other hard
in front of the destiny dickheads
baggy thrifted suits to the ball

how we take turns holding each other
when they leave, cos they always leave
& we are there to pick up the pieces
curled up in our messy,
tear-and-tan-stained bed
blast lana, do each other's
liner, thick and blue, drown
ourselves in hot pink glitter
wardrobe heap on the bed
we take turns trying on
lend each other sparkly booty shorts
YOU LOOK SO HOT OMFG XX
delete the photo we just posted

hysteric, blood-curdling shriek
clamber on tables, stiletto snapping,
hold back each other's hair
bite a man (groped us in the mosh)
tear through his flesh with our jagged
tooth gems, gone-girl him
in our crazy, psycho-bitch-era
feral feminine, femme-fatale
no more cool-girl, pretty-girl rage

kicked out the bar
so we sit on the curb drinking
\$9 cleanskin wine, laugh so hard
we might actually die
this time

i love phoebe-mitski-boygenius-sad-girls
how we cram in the poorly lit club bathroom
give strangers spare tampons & paw paw
i'm fixing some girl's eye makeup i just met
she's crying over a samba-wearing boy
more girls have come in, we're drunkenly
consoling her, some of the best friends
i ever had were strangers in the club bath-
rooms,
chunky docs sticking
to the tacky floor, unpacking trauma
under flickering fluoro bulbs

how we have all been assaulted
...never a surprise
how we talk about it
like it's just a given
just girly things

guide each other through panic attacks
encourage each other to eat
another serving
believe each other
the first time

and i love girls, i love girls
i love girls

and i want to be
just like
every other girl.



New Government House

(poem to *Old Government House* by Padriac O'Leary, Fashion Issue 2024)

Ivo Deliyski

New government house.
 Blue not red this time.
 And the reality of Mayor brown
 Effects the candelabras and the paintings of the other....barbarians.
 Like adults playing children.
 Academics only eat at the dining room. Criticising systems they
 built. Using language they created. Like privilege, gaping and glorif-
 ing and graduating the noble savage and the poor redneck.
 The sheep not need to worry about the postmodern shepards fatten-
 ing them up for slaughter. The ghost of the extinct wolf still bites.

And so the new ghost satiated at the fullness of his/their tenured seat
 of power. With class this time!
 Where he plotted the colonial nightmare won by
 Disease more than the gun. Neglect rather than land seizures. Victim
 rather than antagonist. Through good did they do that. They. This
 obscenity was only possible through good or god, interchangeable
 for the moral relativist atheists. They. Following the same christian
 dogma They think They are free from.

What a fucking disaster.
 And so We to be different. We Maori. We ordinary. Normal people.
 Not like Them. Those inhuman spiritual voodoo rapists. Not for us.
 We weren't bad. We have no evil. The white devil thought us that
 through his maimai. And what a great song that was! It made us all
 the same. A version of the others gaze. We survived.
 Who are we?
 How do you know you are Maori unless you were told so?
 How do you know your children will survive? You are nothing but a
 figment of the structure that made you the difference.

Stay strong Maori

You Wanna See Me Dead Cause Of My (Acting) (c)Hops

Viper the Rapper tickles my inner brainrot



TREVOR PRONOSO

Before reading this article, refer to Assistant Editor Kala Burgess' article on 'brainrot' which you can find in this current issue of the magazine if you flick through a few more pages past this specific piece you're reading right now. Once you've read it, now you have the appropriate pretext to what the fuck I am going to be yapping about down below.

Even as I predominantly talk and write and think about movies 24/7 for arguably an unhealthy amount of time—of which I self-deludingly justify as comprising a 'passionate' and 'rigorous' and 'inquisitive' extension of my personality—not even my affinity for music has escaped the supermassive black hole of my undiagnosed autistic ass going through my favourite artists' Wikipedia/IMDB/Letterboxd page and discover that they in fact do appear in certain films and TV shows that many casual listening fans—or even basic-ass A24 merch copping, vinyl record-purchasing hipsters—aren't aware of. I could've written about Charli XCX's 2021 film *Charli XCX: Alone Together* that details the making of her album *how i'm feeling now* during the COVID-19 pandemic and the crushing sense of loneliness, depression, and impostor syndrome she felt artistically during such a tumultuous time for her and everyone in the world. Unfortunately, I kept pausing in the middle of the film to play *Everything is romantic* off of her new *brat* record on repeat for 30 minutes at a time because I too have some issues I need to get sorted out 😞

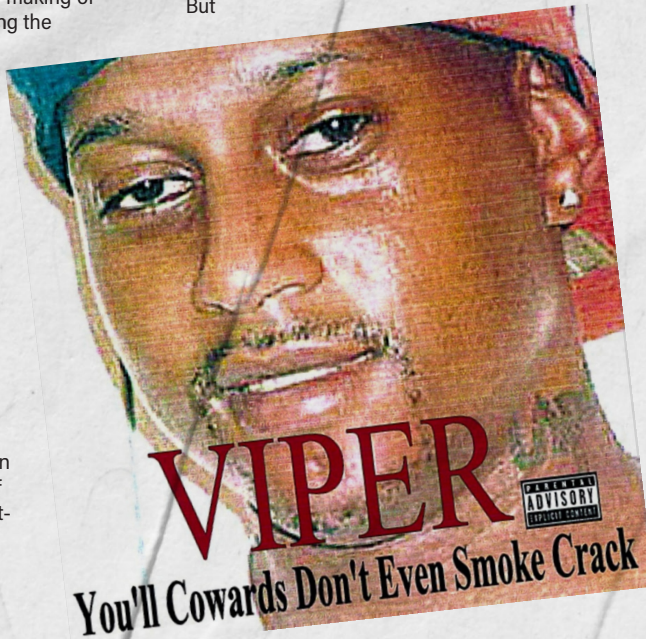
But in the corner of my eye, situated in the right-hand side of the recommended videos section on YouTube, I was paid a visit by one of the most glorious and most brainrot-coded song out there, specifically

"Viper - You Wanna See Me Dead Cause Of My Hops (OFFICIAL VIDEO)"

Viper. Boy oh boy where do I even begin... Viper... honey, my pookie bear.

To those uninitiated to such an unsung figure of hip-hop, cloud rap, and internet meme culture, Lee Carter, known professionally as Viper (or sometimes Viper the Rapper), is a rap artist and record producer based in Houston, Texas. His hometown neighbourhood in Houston—Hiram Clarke—is where he has spent most of his childhood and adult life, and is often referenced in his own discography, especially dubbing himself the *The Hiram Clarke Hustler*, of which is the eponymous name of his 2009 album that features the song *You Wanna See Me Dead Cause Of My Hops* mentioned prior, alongside other bangers such as *I Gots To Ball*, *I'm In A Gang But U Ride Solo*, *Fool*, and *How The Fuck These Buster Rappers Get Blessed*. Song title game is strong ngl.

But



most know Viper through his breakout 2008 single, *You'll Cowards Don't Even Smoke Crack*, which only got traction five years later in 2013 when it was uploaded on YouTube and garnered millions of views. As you can see in the CD cover art that comes with the song, the crudely simplistic text of his name and the song title overlaid atop a deep-fried, saturated image of himself looking blazed as fuck definitely soothed my irony-poisoned internet brain as well as others during that era of 2000s-2010s of YouTube poops (YTP) and low-budget independent content being the defining trait of YouTube's identity at that point in time. Words fail to even describe the aural orgasm of aloof musical arrangement 'choices' and lo-fi aesthetic of Viper's eccentric mix of chopped and screwed and gangsta rap. Akin to his chopped and screwed influence during its prominence in Houston's hip-hop scene in the 90s, *You'll Cowards* tempo is slow and laid back, while Viper's verses are delivered almost in a hushed comatose cadence, sometimes whispering his lines detailing how all these 'mark fools' are too pussy to take the hard stuff, because 'green ain't better than that hard, hard is so much fun.' I fucking love how unabashedly fucked up Viper allows himself and his general motor skills to become taking all these drugs and having that be reflected in the primordial cloud rap style of hazy production and borderline unintelligible lyric delivery morphing inwards the song's structure as its own non-literary musical component. Like cloud rap, the voice may just as well be another sound, another instrument that conveys emotion first, meaning later. Viper is for vibing.

Since then, Viper has taken advantage of his newfound fame by virtually pumping out music just how one's cardiovascular system would pump litres of blood at all times even as you eat, shit, sleep, and repeat. And "repeat" he did! As of 2024, he has released a whopping **1,500+ albums** since he began his music career in 1997. But a closer inspection reveals that 1,500 albums all ostensibly sound similar, even borderline

VIPER

The Hiram Clarke Hustler



Viper stars in *Fifth Ward* as Rip, a tall, short-tempered friend of James who sells guns to locals in the neighbourhood under the authority of the crime mogul operating within the area. Unlike the more optimistic and straight-edged James, Rip is all about that gang shit. During a verbal argument with James about his reluctance to join him in selling weapons that pays much more than his current minimum wage job, Rip succinctly describes the collective experience and credo of a large number of young black boys in the hood as such:

"College? Who you think you talkin' to? This me, Rip. A young brotha in America. Man, if I ain't dead or in jail by the time I'm 21, I'm lucky. Damn lucky. Man, we from Fifth Ward. The street life is all I got. That's all I'll ever have."

I'm almost shocked at how solid of a film this is. If you've seen any Spike Lee, the Hughes brothers, John Singleton, or are somewhat receptive to any social realist "ghetto film" tropes (street gangs, racial discrimination, drug use, domestic abuse, the desire to transcend social class, revolution, etc.), *Fifth Ward* can almost come off as disarmingly direct and unpretentious in its textbook depictions of such pet themes and socially conscious/unconscious character types. Nothing is really left up to chance narratively, which is its biggest draw if you're into screenwriting story setups, but leaves the performance of the actors to appear somewhat 'dry', 'prosaic' and 'studied' compared to other, more spontaneously naturalistic, ghetto films of its kind. If you can get past the crusty 480p VHS quality that remains its only copy, the somewhat noticeable use of ADR since on-location scene noise drowned out the sound of actors' dialogue, and the charming amateurishness of its camera and lighting setups that obliquely frames its subjects out of frame and the wild back-and-forth between overexposed and underexposed shots, then *Fifth Ward* is a nice addition to your personal coterie of "music artists surprisingly being very competent at acting" with the likes of David Bowie, Cher, Ice Cube, Tupac, and Snoop Dogg.

Alas, dear reader, we have reached the point of the article where I drop the ironic pretences and update you on where Viper is at currently. On January 4, 2024, Lee Carter was arrested and charged with aggravated kidnapping of a woman he had trapped in his garage for years and has repeatedly physically and sexually assaulted, alongside forcing her to consume drugs in

captivity. Initially a beggar on the street before Carter kidnapped her, the woman has reportedly escaped multiple times from Carter's garage, only to be brought to Carter by police once they treated her in a hospital. He would be released on a \$100,000 bond on January 8, but was revoked due to Carter contacting the woman multiple times, subsequently being charged with third-degree violation of a protective order. He would also be charged again with kidnapping and sexually assaulting a different woman on February 29, 2024.

I don't know how the hell I'm supposed to close off this article. Maybe it's the brainrot kicking in at 5am as I'm typing this, or maybe because of the lack of resolution and light-hearted positivity that sparked my fascination with him in the first place. The movie seems to be disappearing amidst the foggy of my memory, or maybe I'm beginning to experience the consequences of indulging in one's inner Viper brain: no thoughts, head empty, on the brink of stroking the id. Viper would be around the age of 52 this year, which makes him both the luckiest black man out of Hiram Clark, Houston, Texas, and the unluckiest man out of Hiram Clark, Houston, Texas. Just like the crossed-eyed stare Viper gives in the *You'll Cowards* cover photo, he saw both trajectories of his life at once simultaneously, and we never paid attention to it until now...

You can watch *Fifth Ward* for free online on YouTube.

Head to letterboxd.com/craccum to read our longer, unedited and more detailed film reviews!

identical, because they are.

In 2014, Viper averaged almost one album a day, with most of his material being recycled from his previous chopped and screwed works and endlessly remixing his previous songs and re-releasing them as new versions. To his credit, some of these remixes contain a level of freshness to them. In 2018, Viper released "You'll Cowards Don't Even Smoke Crack '18", a trap remix of his song with a much faster tempo and vocals re-recorded featuring an older Viper still spitting that cold spell a decade later. However, I do not have the temperament to go through all 1,500 albums and report to you which songs sound the same or barely different. You'll cowards don't even have the balls to do it yourselves.

So far this is all sounding so fine and dandy. But dear reader, the approximately one thousand words you've read so far is just an introduction. Viper's music isn't necessarily the topic of this article. Instead, the 1997 film *Fifth Ward* directed by Greg Carter, Viper's brother, of which Viper himself stars in as one of the supporting characters, is what I'm gonna be talking about lmaoooo

I warned you this was brainrot. For you to understand *Fifth Ward*, you've got to understand who Viper is and join me alongside this retroactive exercise of trying to reconcile Viper's music career with his brief acting stint he did when he was starting off. *Fifth Ward* tells the story of James, a young black teenager hustling to survive the cutthroat ghetto neighbourhoods of Houston. With the death of his older brother, Ray-Ray, from a failed home burglary incident, James tries his darndest to remain on the straight and innocent path towards success, his passion for arts and painting being his ticket to a more conventional life path of gaining a university education, and maybe moving out of the hood altogether. But all forms of troubles seem to befall James, stemming from the long history of racial segregation in the United States, creating generations of lost, helpless, and nihilistic African-Americans resorting to violent and self-destructive defence mechanisms to stave off crippling poverty and to cope with such emotionally traumatising ways of living. Whether it be the bottle, the needle, the poon tang, or the paintbrush, every single character relationship is infected by the cancerous and systemic white supremacist status quo that remains largely invisible except through frequent intimidation by police officers, or the bureaucratic labyrinth that is maintaining a steady worker's compensation.



WE'RE ALL VICTIMS OF BRAINROT

THE DISEASE SLOWLY TAKING OVER OUR BRAIN



KALA TAKABE BURGESS

In today's digital era, the internet is integral to academic life. While it can offer access to information, resources, and knowledge, it can have a negative repercussion.

I'm sure we have all heard of the term brainrot on the internet.

On Wikipedia, it is stated that the definition of brainrot is "a term used colloquially to describe a state of being excessively absorbed or fixated on a particular topic or interest, to the point where it consumes one's thoughts and attention, often in a way that is perceived as unhealthy or obsessive." Okay, I'm sure many of us struggled to read through that, probably due to the brainrot overtaking our brains.

Simply put, consuming content excessively causes a decrease in attention spans and mental fatigue. Maybe... you're feeling a little bit...dumber than you used to be.

The constant scrolling on social media is giving You and me brainrot. Whether you like it or not.

Basically, you are chronically online.

Now, I'm not saying it is bad in all cases. In fact, being chronically online can be helpful sometimes. When in conversation with others, you can understand what is going on when they mention a joke, as you are always online and can understand all the current trends.

Another helpful aspect of brainrot could be an expansion of career options. I often see businesses hiring a 'social media manager.' Now, with a bit of brainrot and overconsumption of the internet, you would be a perfect candidate for the job. You understand what is currently in trend. Tick ✓. You can make relatable content for others online. Tick ✓. You can scroll endlessly online for work. Tick ✓. (If you get this reference... you're a real one.)

As university students, we have to navigate the complexities of online environments and understand the impact of the internet on mental well-being to maintain productivity and health. Brainrot can be an obstacle in our learning path.

Short attention span: We may have experienced short attention spans previously in our lives, but the rise of short-form videos has made our brains develop for the worse. How could we sit through a whole film without being distracted? Now, we must constantly check our phones. Most prefer scrolling online for three hours rather than watching a film for three hours. Which of these two options makes us feel better? Definitely watching a movie.

Increased Procrastination: My procrastination has been and always will be bad. But has it gotten worse recently? Definitely. (As I write this article the day before it's due.) Every assignment is completed near the deadline. In fact, it often starts near the deadline. I frequently go on social media and tell myself to start doing work from, let's say 2:00 PM. Oh no, it's 2:01 PM. Now I have to wait until 2:15 PM. It's an endless cycle, and before I know it, it's already 3:00 PM. I'm sure many of you can relate.

Emotional Exhaustion: This !! We often feel drained or overwhelmed by online interactions and content. It's overstimulating. After every scrolling session, I feel exhausted, even though all I did was use my thumb...

Impaired Memory: Now, I actually feel like I have memory loss. It's like I can't remember things that are important to me. (i.e. Uni lecture content.) But instead, I remember useless information. The constant exposure to new data can be overpowering and too much to handle.

While the internet is a tool for academic success, we need to remember to

- Set boundaries. Establish clear internet use boundaries, perhaps including designated times for academic work and breaks.
- Practice digital detox. Having specific times during the day to disconnect from screens and engage in activities not involving devices.
- Prioritize sleep. A healthy sleep routine can help the brain recover from digital fatigue.
- If you are severely affected by brainrot, go touch some grass.

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5-10 August



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6:00PM
Friday 9th August

Clock Tower
East Wing

AUSA International Week

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2024/08 ABGS

Chinese Board Game Night

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08/08 18:00-23:00

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AUSA International Week

We offer
A wonderful night about Chinese board games,
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YOU'VE FORGOTTEN HOW TO THINK FOR YOURSELF

ECHO CHAMBERS AND THE ILLUSION OF CONSENSUS



KAAVYA GHOSHAL

TRENDING NOW: Girl jumps off bridge because adventure influencer told her audience to "seek thrill".

Just kidding! That's fake news. But, it could be true—at least, *you* might believe it was true if I were your favourite influencer who set up a go-fund-me to support the family of my not-dead friend.

The internet today is a scary, scary place. I say this while simultaneously scrolling on TikTok because there's no escaping it. It's a part of everything we do, from the research we conduct at university to the people we stalk on Instagram to the clothes that we buy online.

We spend so much time consuming (usually) short-form content that our attention spans have reduced drastically. We probably won't be patient enough to read a two-page article when a post summarises the same information in a few words. Or, even better, if it's a story of our favourite influencer talking about it. So, we like that post. Five hours later, a similar post pops up, telling us more about what we already knew little about. We like *that* post. Then, a reel shows up, further affirming the knowledge that we've gained from not one but two credible sources, and we like it too—and there begins the echo chamber.

An echo chamber refers to a space, in this case, your internet bubble, where individuals are exposed predominantly to opinions and information that *reinforce* their existing beliefs, with little exposure to diverse perspectives. This phenomenon is amplified by social media algorithms that prioritise content similar to what users have

previously engaged with, creating a self-perpetuating cycle of confirmation bias. The appeal of echo chambers lies in their ability to provide a sense of belonging and validation. In an increasingly complex and fast-paced world, echo chambers offer a refuge where individuals can connect with others who share their beliefs and values. This sense of community can be comforting and affirming, especially when one's beliefs are underrepresented or challenged in broader society.

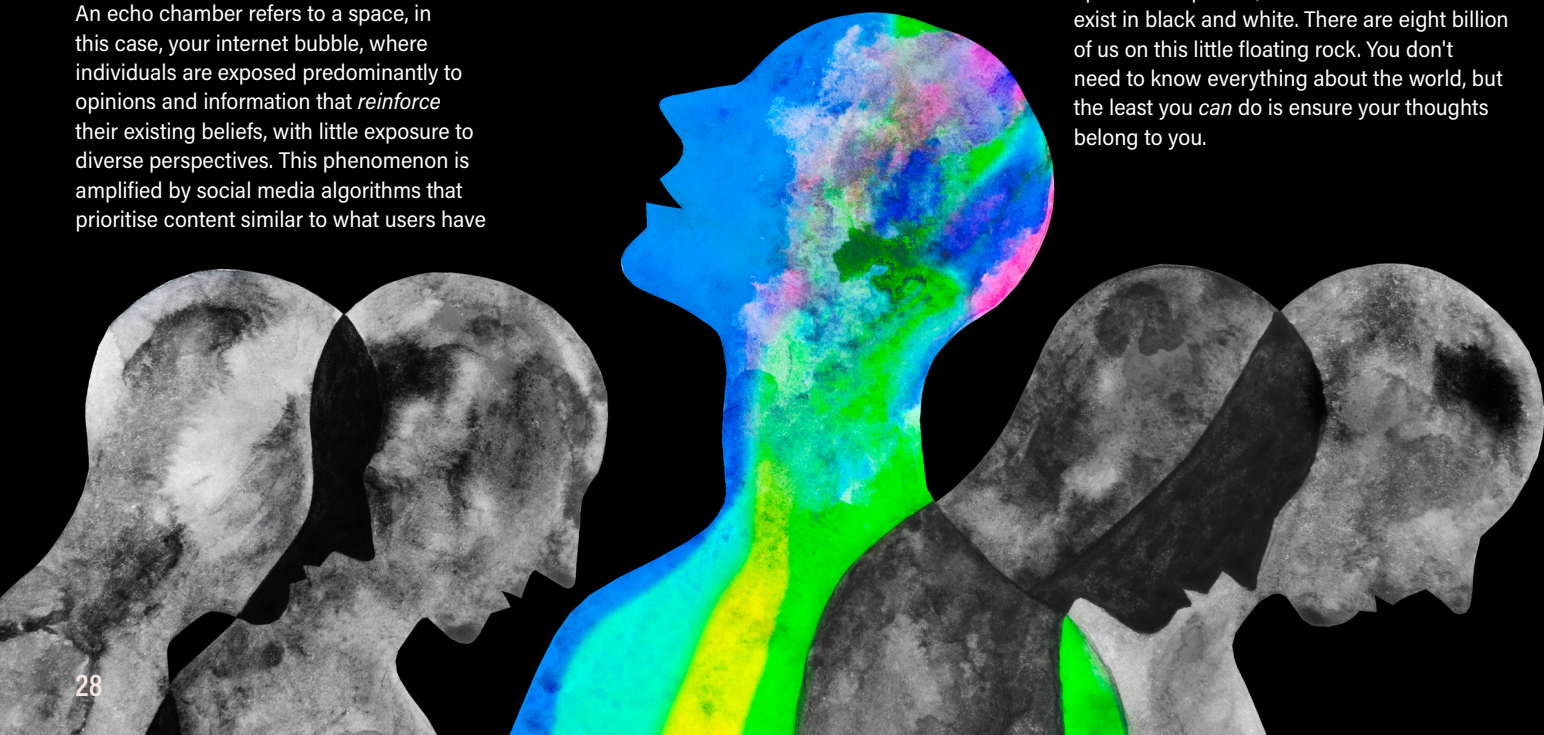
And sometimes, it's okay. It's nice to be surrounded by like-minded people who think just like you do. It's okay to join BookTok and believe that Colleen Hoover's books are literary masterpieces simply because every sixteen-year-old girl does not understand that good literature should not romanticise abuse. Well—I guess it's not *entirely* okay, but maybe that is something you'll learn with age. But what happens when you enter an echo chamber filled with people who believe that Maori people are being drastically overcompensated? What happens when you step into a universe where every post is talking about how your child *can* feel pain at

two weeks, and abortion is murder? You may not like these posts at first, but then you'll see one that *kind of* makes sense—and then another, and another.

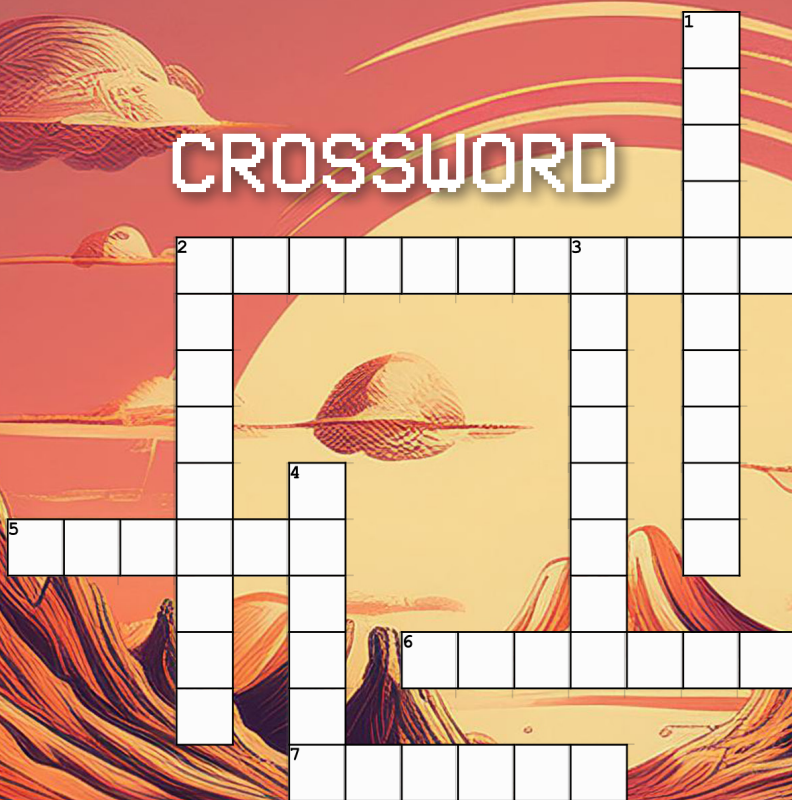
We've forgotten what it's like to think for ourselves. We've forgotten how to distinguish between fact and fiction and have forgotten that opinions are not fact.

We live in a world where a well-edited video or a convincing blog post can make even the most absurd claims seem credible. As we scroll through our feeds, bombarded by sensational headlines and eye-catching thumbnails, we become more susceptible to the echo chambers that shape our beliefs. But, the danger goes beyond just believing false information. Echo chambers can also polarise us, driving wedges between people who think differently. When we're constantly fed content that portrays "the other side" as wrong or even dangerous, it's easy to lose empathy and understanding. We start to see the world in black and white, with no room for nuance or compromise. This polarisation is so evident in our politics, our social issues, and even our personal relationships. It's making it harder for us to find common ground and have meaningful conversations.

I say this whilst being an extremely opinionated person, but the world does not exist in black and white. There are eight billion of us on this little floating rock. You don't need to know everything about the world, but the least you *can* do is ensure your thoughts belong to you.



CROSSWORD



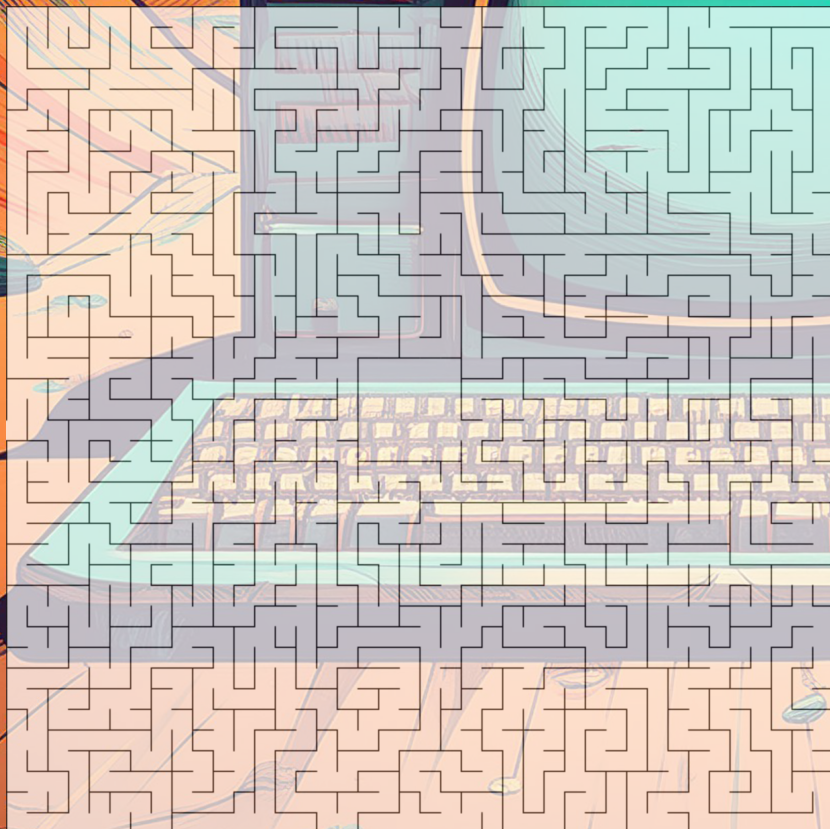
Across

- 2. Social media trendsetters
- 5. Search engine
- 6. Online domain
- 7. Online haters

Down

- 1. Virtual digital realm
- 2. Popular app
- 3. User responses
- 4. Online discussion forum

ESCAPE THE MAZE



SUDOKU

7			6	5				
		6				3		
	4		3		7		5	
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2	8	3	4	9	7			5
7		4	6		3			2

HOROSCOPES



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CLARICE DE TOLEDO

Good news is that we start off the week in a positive, brightening mood with the New Moon in Leo, taking place during Sunday's night. New Moons are a period of new beginnings, where we can be intentional with our goals and clear with what we want to attract in our lives. We could be trying to incorporate more creativity in our lives, improving our self-expression or seeking more joy and playfulness. These are all Leo's matters. However, Mercury will retrograde in Virgo on Monday, possibly causing some delays to our hopes and dreams, but it's a great time to revisit some past projects or ideas and hopefully improve them!

Don't forget to read your Rising Sign! If you don't know your rising sign, you can always consult me for help!

@claricedtoledo

ARIES

This week is ideal for putting effort into activities that are creative and promote self-expression. It's also a great time to enhance your skills at work or on a personal project, adding your unique spin to it. You might feel more energetic and motivated, though you may also encounter some frustrations due to Mercury retrograde. Focus on engaging in hobbies that bring you joy and fulfilment.

TAURUS

You might be focusing more on your family life right now, such as attending family events, visiting relatives, or even considering moving out and searching for a new place to live. You could also be looking into redecorating or repairing your current space. Additionally, you may be contemplating having an honest conversation with your family or housemates, and you might find yourself more in touch with your emotions or connecting the dots with something from your past.

GEMINI

This is the perfect time to start new projects related to writing or speaking. If you've been considering launching a podcast, newsletter, or any creative venture involving communication, now is the moment to do it! You might also feel more motivated to tackle

assignments, prepare for presentations, or even plan a weekend getaway. Your social life could also pick up this week, with opportunities to connect with friends or siblings, or you may find yourself needing to have an honest conversation with someone.

CANCER

This is a good time to explore job opportunities and apply for positions. However, be mindful of potential delays, as Mercury will be retrograde. You might find yourself spending more during this period or making a significant purchase or investment. It's an excellent time to put yourself out there and embrace the opportunities presented to you, even though you may see results more around late August or early September.

LEO

This could be a powerful period for building greater confidence and nurturing yourself as you learn to love yourself more deeply. You might feel that it's a time of new beginnings and changes in your life. Focus on setting mindful goals for the future and see how you can align your actions with what truly inspires and fulfils you.

VIRGO

This could be a time of reflection and introspection for you. You might gain clarity around a situation or let go of something, such as a job or a relationship. This period may be quiet, requiring you to be kind to yourself and allow a new perspective to emerge. You might also find yourself seeking therapy or engaging in your own spiritual rituals.

LIBRA

Your social life could get quite busy this week, with more time spent with friends and attending social events. You might also nurture new relationships, whether it's a new friend, a friend group, or someone special. Networking could be crucial at this time, so be mindful of connections and their potential impact. You may also find opportunities to partner with friends on a project, enriching both your social and professional lives.

SCORPIO

You might experience more clarity regarding your work or career, deepening your understanding of your professional path and objectives. However, be mindful of potential slowdowns due to Mercury retrograde. Despite this, it's still a good time to launch something new or plan a strategy for your future self.

SAGITTARIUS

Around this period, you could be focusing mainly on your studies, or an exciting trip. You could feel inspired to share your knowledge with others, or engage in activities related to writing and reading. Maybe you're considering publishing your work! Additionally, you may be contemplating your personal beliefs and philosophies, seeking to expand your mind and broaden your worldview.

CAPRICORN

This week, you might be called to confront heavier emotions or address underlying resentment or pain. I know, not very light. But it could also present an opportunity to come to terms with aspects of yourself that need healing and acceptance. On a more positive note, you might receive some money or make a significant purchase around this time.

AQUARIUS

At this time, your attention might be focused on your closest relationships. You could spend time with a partner or a close friend, or alternatively you might find that a relationship no longer serves its purpose. Even though Mercury is retrograde, it's still a good time to embrace opportunities for romance, such as going on a first date or planning something special. Additionally, this could be a very beneficial period for forming business partnerships.

PISCES

You could be feeling more inspired to get into the job market and apply for new positions. You could also be more mindful of your routine and work-life balance, exploring ways to improve your habits or make adjustments at work for a better balance. However, with Mercury retrograde, be aware of potential delays in securing a new job. Proceed with caution and trust the timing.

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