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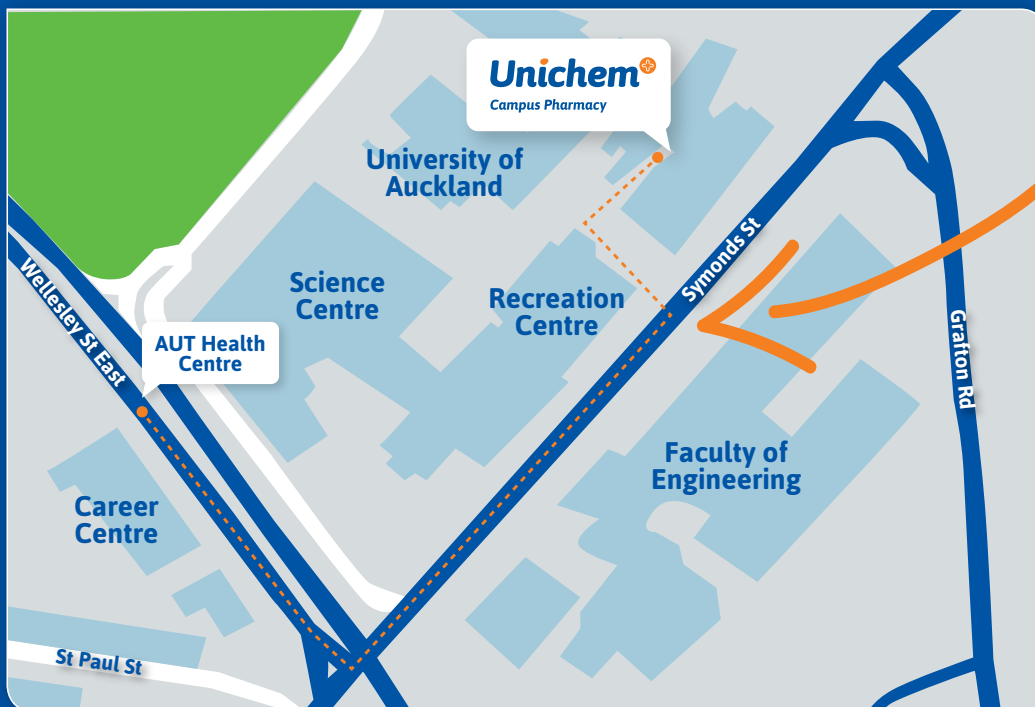


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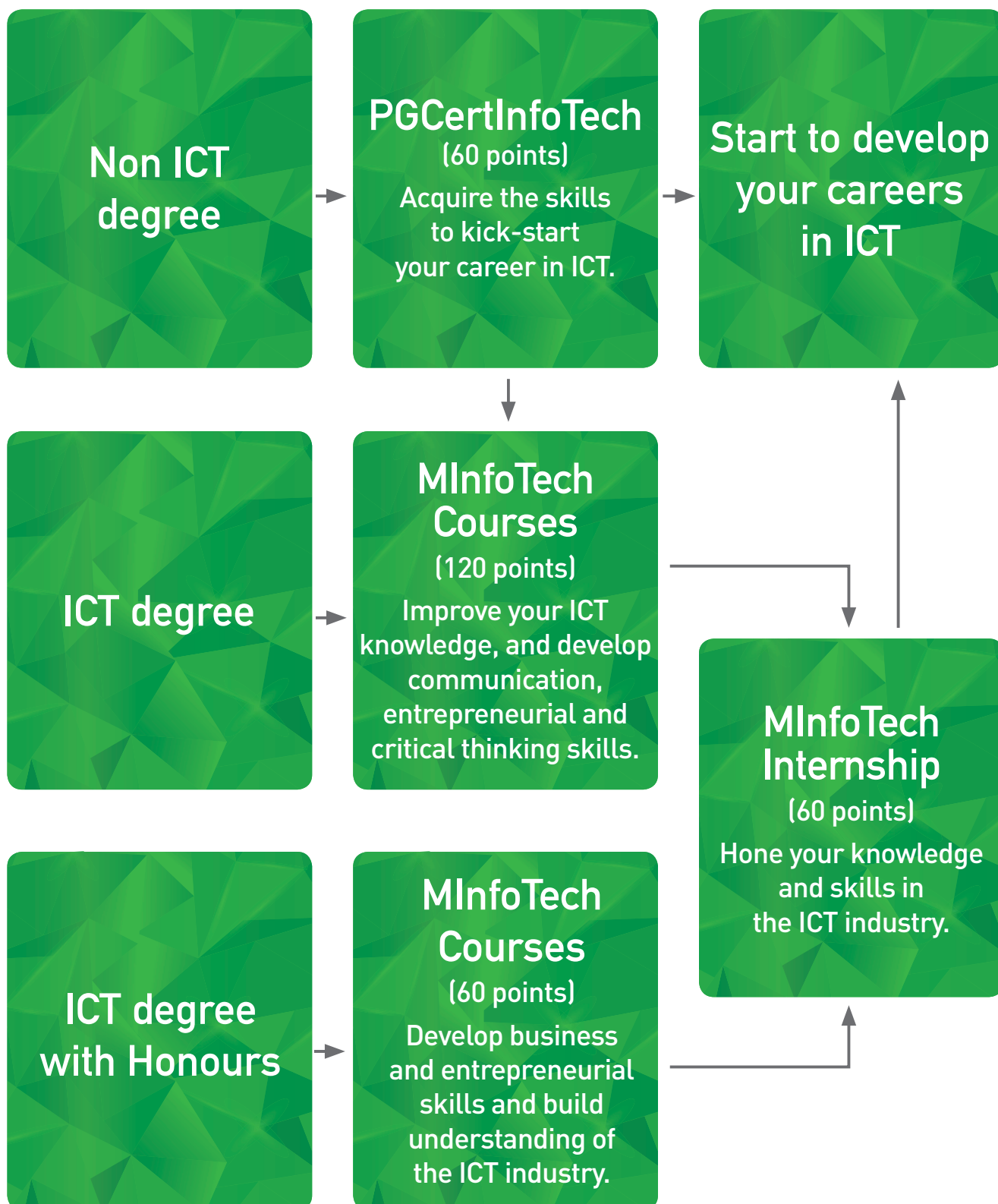
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/9

NEWS AND POLITICS

LONG LIVE JUDITH COLLINS

Lachlan talks about the race for National's next party leader.



/15

COMMUNITY

I'M A PACIFIC ISLANDER

Sinai writes a letter to her fellow Pacific students.



/16

FEATURES

BROWN NOIZE

An interview with the talented women behind web-series Brown Noize.



/28

ARTS AND LIFESTYLE

LANEWAY 2018

Chris Wong gives a rundown on Laneway's lineup this year.



/30

SCIENCE

HANDMAIDS OF THE GLOBAL SOUTH

A look into the rise of surrogacy tourism in India.



/35

COLUMNS

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Astrid gives us some advice on being productive.




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EDITORIAL

with Helen Yeung and Jasmin Singh


The Empowerment Issue, Kmart Decorations & New Year, New Editors.




Helen: And...after a long summer break of suffocating humidity and too many iced coffees, Craccum is back for 2018. As you've probably seen the pixelated photo of our sweaty faces at a migrant youth march on AUSA's Facebook page last year. We'd just like to take the chance to give a shout-out to those who firstly voted us into this editorship role, and secondly to Shakti Youth who brought us together as two women of colour passionate about activism and the arts. As you probably remember from our campaign, we bonded over miso ramen, house plants and unlikely animal friendships. Not only that, but we also bonded over the 32 degree heat when we met up with each other in Malaysia, in Jasmin's hometown, Ipoh.



Jasmin: Having Helen visit me while I was in Malaysia was a lot of fun because I got to be a tourist in my hometown. I also realised I don't know a whole lot about driving around the one-way streets of old town Ipoh because I got us lost 80% of the time we were there. Thank the universe for creating Waze. We're excited about the year ahead in our fancy new office. We've decorated it with some cute K-mart finds (some cloud bookends, pineapple fairy lights and a glittery purple clam pillow, our own personal coffee mugs) and fun posters. Moving on to business, the theme for this issue is empowerment. As women of colour we have faced a lot of hurdles in our work and academic lives. When Helen suggested empowerment as the theme of the first issue I agreed with it straight away because we share the same vision for what we hope to accomplish with the magazine this year.



Helen: We also had the best laksa while we were in Ipoh, just like to highlight that. It was my second time in Malaysia and I'd 100% go there again! Getting back to the theme though, we both agreed that empowerment was extremely important as we want to transform Craccum into a publication which promotes inclusivity and recognises diversity. I'm particularly excited for everyone to read the interview we did with the incredible women behind Brown Noize as well as the letter from Sinai from the Malosi project to her fellow Pacific students.



Jasmin: One of our focuses for the year was also to feature more things happening around the University community. Featuring the amazing clubs around uni such as the Emelia's interview with the Sinai showcases the often invisible but incredibly valuable work that clubs and groups around the University do. It's inspiring to see the work of the Malosi Project in empowering Pacific Island youth and their families, as well as their blog that tackles various social issues. I'm also particularly excited about the street style and empowerment spread in the lifestyle section and the exciting ways in which our cultural identities can be incorporated into the clothes we wear daily. We hope you enjoy reading the first issue!

WORLD NEWS

More Actors, More Casualties: in Syria, the War Goes On

BY ULYSSE BELLIER

"You'll be rescued with blood," a military officer of the Syrian regime told the people of Eastern Ghouta. Last week pro-government forces led airstrikes in the rebel-held locality near the capital Damascus killing at least 150, most of whom were civilians.

Earlier this month the same forces were bombed by the U.S. Air Force while attacking the Kurds in the east of the country, defending their allies in the region. This defence strike killed at least 100 fighters, including a number of Russian mercenaries. Less than two weeks later, proxy forces backed by Damascus were moving to the northern border to fight Turkish forces which entered into Syrian territory in mid-January. Al-Assad backed forces will there fight along the same Kurdish forces that they attacked in the east. For both, Turkey is yet the main enemy.

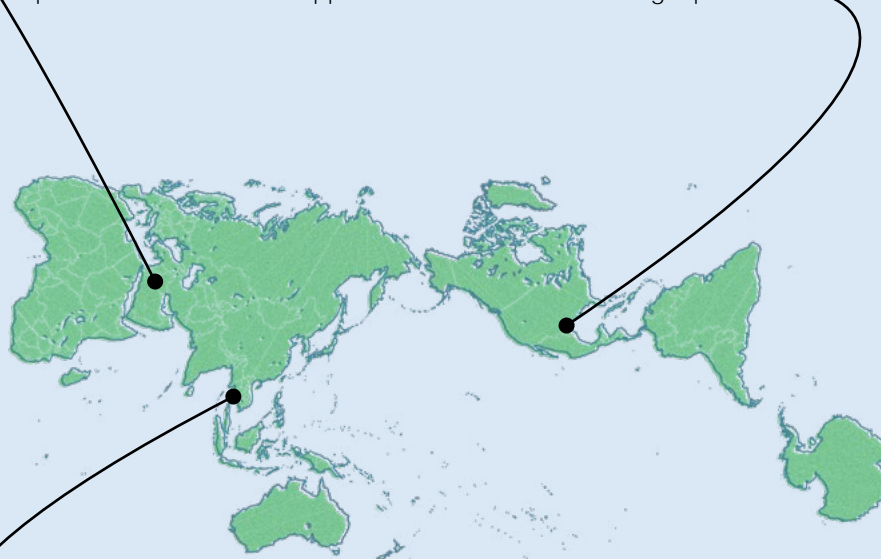
The Syrian civil war which began in 2011 is today a gathering of conflicting powers where the line between allies and enemies is not clear. Since the territorial defeat of the Islamic State a few months ago, most parties in the conflict do not have a common goal anymore. With Russia backing Al-Assad, the U.S. backing the Kurds and the NATO member Turkey clashing both, the Syrian conflict has never been so intricate. Meanwhile, the humanitarian crisis continues. ■

Sheep Embryos: The Future of Organ Transplants

BY BAILEY DEVON

At a recent American Association for the Advancement of Science conference in Austin, Texas, scientists have proven that we are now closer to growing artificial human organs than ever before. An ongoing study has shown it is possible to grow human stem cells in an early stage sheep embryo for a short period of time. With this development, scientists are anticipating that it will soon be possible to create human organs specific to transplant recipients, therefore eliminating the danger of organ rejection.

The human-sheep hybrid is created by adding adult human stem cells to an edited sheep embryo that has had the genetic code for the pancreas taken out. It is expected that human stem cells will adapt to fill out the missing code. Under the study, the embryo containing both species' cells was only permitted to develop over 7 days before termination. Further evidence may be demonstrated should the experiment receive ethical approval for extension over a longer period. ■



Winter Olympics Sees Korean Peninsula Warm Up

BY DANIEL MEECH

Pyeongchang's Winter Olympics has seen relations between North and South Korea improve after leaders Kim Jong Un and Moon Jae-in exchanged a symbolic handshake at the opening of the games.

Following a brief visit to the typically insular North Korea, South Korean President Moon Jae-in claimed that the Olympics had helped to ease tension on the peninsula, going on to say that he believed the good-will would continue to be built upon after the games.

Jae-in later declined an offer to attend discussions in North Korea's capital, citing fears that it was too early to enter negotiations with Kim Jong Un. However, he has since stated that he remains open to a North-South summit - a decision which seems popular with South Koreans, who voted 61.5% in favour of entering intra-pensinsula negotiations in a mid-February poll.

The Pyeongchang Winter Olympics have been a particularly emotional one for the two nations, after the opening ceremony saw the two inimical countries march under a single "Unification Flag". However, while relations continue to improve, experts warn against expecting too much: similar peace talks have fallen flat before, most notably in 2000 and 2007. ■

The TPPA 2.0: evolution or revolution?

BY DANIEL GAMBITSIS

The 'TPPA version 2.0' will be signed in March. But how different is the new 'Comprehensive and Progressive Trans-Pacific Partnership', involving Australia, Canada, Chile, Japan, Malaysia, Mexico, New Zealand, Peru, Singapore and Vietnam?

The CPTPP is said to give Aotearoa better market access to the markets of its signatories. This will be most beneficial in terms of Japan, Canada, Mexico and Peru, with which we do not currently have free trade agreements. The agreement should entail a reduction in tariffs, which will improve the situation for our precious exporters. The general costs of doing business should drop. Stephen Jacobi (executive director of the NZ International Business Forum) expresses the hope that more countries might want to join the CPTPP in future. The big fish would be the USA, which infamously dropped out of the agreement (along with the universally lauded Paris Climate Agreement). However, some say that it is perhaps better for the USA to be absent from the agreement for now, at least while they have such a protectionist leader in place. With the USA as a member, the agreement would've covered 40% of world GDP, but will now 'only' cover 14%.

But what about the big concerns people had with the TPPA? Is the CPTPP really all that 'progressive' as it is ominously labelled in its

title? Labour had opposed the TPPA during its time in opposition, marking a break from its previously uninhibited embrace of free trade. As recently as last year it bemoaned that the TPPA "will have ramifications for generations of New Zealanders. For their sake, we should not so lightly enter into an agreement which may exacerbate long-term challenges for our economy, workforce, and society." Labour emphasised its concerns about sovereignty, secrecy and inadequate economic modelling; NZ First condemned the Investor-State Dispute Settlement system. Labour's volte face is not all that surprising, however, given it signed the forerunner of the TPPA in 2005 with Brunei, Chile and Singapore and a trade deal with China in 2008.

The concern about increasing the cost of pharmaceuticals and medicines has been removed because the provisions at issue have been suspended. New Zealand will no longer be forced to extend copyright protection to 70 years (which would've cost consumers \$55m per year). The investor state dispute settlement system remains but its scope has been reduced. According to MFAT, there are 'strong safeguards to protect the Government's right to regulate in the public interest and prevent unwarranted claims'. Te Tiriti o Waitangi is 'fully protected'. Moreover, the CPTPP hasn't stopped the new government from banning foreign home buyers, a move to alleviate

our housing crisis. There are fears that the controversial provisions, which have only been suspended, will be revived if the USA ever joins. The core investor protections may still restrict Parliament's ability to legislate in New Zealanders' best interests. There has been no stringent economic analysis (as Labour has previously demanded). There has been no discussion on how the Crown will fortify protections for Maori, as called for by the Waitangi Tribunal.

The shroud of secrecy surrounding the negotiations has not been lifted, with an Official Information Act request being denied due to a secrecy pact between members to withhold negotiating documents till 4 years have passed. Jane Kelsey remains vociferously opposed to the agreement, denouncing the government for having failed to play a strategically like Canada had during the negotiation, which allowed it to obtain 'side-letters' to alter its obligations in areas to which it was opposed. NZ First now supports the CPTPP. Ironically, National (now an advocate for transparency) claimed it was open to supporting the legislation provided that the government release the deal's details beforehand.

The Greens remain opposed. ■

Could We Please Stop Calling Donald Trump Mentally Ill

To those calling Donald Trump mentally ill: please, stop.

I understand your concerns. Donald Trump is an asshole. He's a bigot, an idiot, a blemish on the face of society. He's the embodiment of everything I hate in this world. But he is not mentally ill, and it's about time that we stopped labelling him as such.

It's a trend that's been going on for some time now. Almost every news source on the face of the planet has featured some piece about his mental health, questioning whether or not Trump remains fit for office. The New York Times ran articles calling him emotionally stunted, the Guardian published opinion columns diagnosing him with malignant narcissism, and practically every psychiatrist in America crawled out of the woodworks to appear on panels for CNN, ABC and more. Hysteria reached its height (and journalism its absolute nadir) when Dr Lance Dodes appeared on MSNBC to proclaim Donald Trump a psychopath, claiming that he presented an "enormous present danger to us all".

But while it is true that Trump is dangerous - he's an unrelenting bigot who cares more about his own ego than the welfare of his people - it seems lazy and damaging to pin

this asshole on the backs of the mentally ill. Firstly, claims of mental illness have already been largely disproven - as Allen Frances, co-author of the DSM IV (the diagnostic manual used by most of the world's psychiatrists), points out, Trump "does not suffer from the distress and impairment required to diagnose mental disorder". But secondly (and far more importantly), these claims, in weaponizing the stigma surrounding 'mental illness', are helping to perpetuate its villainization.

Mental illness is already woefully underreported in New Zealand - many sufferers report feeling unable to tell friends and family, for fear of persecution. This silence is largely driven by our misguided perceptions of the issue. Stereotypical depictions of psychosis in the media, a history of victimization, and a general lack of cultural understanding have all contributed to the idea that mental illness is the same as moral illness. It's different, unknown, and therefore something to be feared. It's the Joker to the world's Batman - when we hear mental illness, we immediately think of Jack Nicholson in the Shining, or Hannibal Lecter discussing the taste of human flesh. But it's time we recognised that being a shitty person is not the same as being mentally ill. Just as you don't need a doctor's certificate to be an asshole,

suffering from some kind of mental distress doesn't magically turn you into Ted Bundy.

The reality is, using terms like sociopath and psychosis freely and without proper diagnosis threatens to make the terms cheap, ubiquitous, and more misunderstood than they already are. Psychosis is a serious issue that affects millions of people every day - it can ruin lives, destroy families, and leave people unable even to perform basic day to day tasks. It is not, and should not be conflated with, just generally being a bit of a dickhead.

Don't get me wrong: Donald Trump is, undeniably, a grade A douchebag. He's the kind of wanna-be despot who deserves a battering worse than a shit-talking squid in an aggressive tempura restaurant. But while you can hurl abuse at him for his backwards policies, his shit orange hair and his general incompetence, calling him mentally unstable does more to hurt the psychiatric community than it does Trump. Perhaps, instead of wondering whether or not Trump is fit to be president, we should ask ourselves why we perpetuate a society that rewards selfish, narrow-minded and bullish people. But I guess that makes for less eye-catching headlines. ■

Long Live Judith Collins

Lachlan Mitchell discusses the contest for National's new leader, shedding light on Judith Collins' suitability for the role.

Bill English has resigned, citing a desire to the return of public life and looking for a fresh start. He's done his dash and evidently, a second failed election is the last thing he can handle having on his political CV. But if the rumours of the last week or two are anything to go by, he knows that the wolves are done licking the wounds inflicted by Winston Peters, and were getting their claws ready. So rather than become one wolf's freshly caught dinner, he made his surprisingly tearful announcement to the caucus and immediately prepared an exit plan for the press. But ultimately, was anyone truly keeping their mind on Bill? Were people that interested in his fate? Unlike John Key vacating his seat to a very clearly designated successor, Bill English has no such protégé, no publicly friendly face to easily transfer the Key/English one-two punch towards.

It is a dilemma that has been facing the party since late 2016, as there has not been one singular figure that could unite the groundswell of centrist voters the way Key could, the way Bill somewhat could and the way Jacinda Ardern has been able to. I suppose that's the problem when you make your charismatic frontman the guy who been your accountant for eight years. So now the party of strength and stability is up for a very shaky time ahead – and I am very excited for one reason. It means that the supreme wolf; the Starscream lurking amongst the ranks; the Crusher herself gets to take a swing for the position. A very strong swing with a glove wrapped with barbed wire, and it is exactly what National has brought upon themselves.

Judith 'Oravida' Collins is the right person for the leadership of the party, because she exemplifies the full excess of crony capitalism that National has swung towards in the near-decade since Key took power. National took pains to maintain a publicly centrist outlook, trying to get the ultimate smooth talker John Key to make neoliberalism sound sexy and appealing. The public ate it up, he was Kathleen Turner in a bodysuit. Trickle-down economics,

baby. Lean in with that privatisation ponytail. But while Key was the face, Collins was the gnashing of teeth. She was let loose to be the brutal far-right heart that captures those increasingly important fringe votes, especially considering the cannibalisation of minor parties that has taken place in the last two elections. Maybe one day we'll start voting like we're on the MMP system, but I digress. But while many thought Collins was given a poisoned chalice in order to reign her under control, especially post-Oravida, she has swallowed that Grail and done the dirty work that National doesn't really talk about, but kinda wants you to know. Namely, the punishment-focused corrections system that ticks all the 'tough on crime' boxes but fails to do anything about recidivism. The increasing privatisation within the corrections system, while something I must stress Labour also has on their collective conscience, has been ramped up considerably under her watch. Crusher has slowly but surely done her best to remove the thought of empathy from within the prison system, something which should leave a black mark on anyone's reputation, but she seems to have embraced it. Rehabilitation and human dignity are not something ever laid out within her plans for our burgeoning prison population, a population which rivals the USA when it comes to inmates per capita. Even in cases where it can be proven that a miscarriage of justice has taken place, she has dug her heels in to try and halt the process. Ask Teina Pora about his

“It means that the supreme wolf; the Starscream lurking amongst the ranks; the Crusher herself gets to take a swing for the position.”

experience with the Minister of Justice. All in all, if John Key and Bill English (to varying degrees) are the men 'middle New Zealand' (whatever that is) would like to have a beer with, Judith Collins is the woman they would like to see maul an addict.

Most of New Zealand does not like her, to say the least, for Her Wrath hath been Uncompromising. But in the same way, she appeals to the vindictiveness (or apathy) in those who don't really care what happens to one of our most violated populations, especially those who think that possession of some cannabis is worth time in the slammer. Such a group is larger than you would like to think, but despite National's dogwhistling over the years, it has never been a substantial enough population to warrant putting Judith in the driver's seat. However, this has done little to dash her hopes, as the whispering in her ear from longtime stalwart Cameron Slater has only given her more desire to wrestle control of National once and for all. For those of you who evidently lead much healthier lives than I do and have never been exposed to him, Cameron Slater runs Whale Oil, a blog which exists solely to fuel the far-right's whimpers and subtly provide support to his friend. About as subtle as a hydrogen bomb, but that doesn't matter. Already, the hit pieces on Amy Adams and Steven Joyce are making their way to the top of Whale Oil. The campaign has begun.

But oh, how I support her campaign. I'm a Gree-
nie, so full disclosure: I'm delighted that such a shitstorm is on the cards. I think having her in the top spot would be unparalleled in terms of the drama and self-destruction that she is capable of causing. I have no doubt that the ever-hungry media wants Crusher to, well, crush the competition. Having Ardern vs. Collins in any scenario would be Duncan Garner's wet dream. Ratings! However, in terms of sheer Sun Tzu politicking, Judith Collins needs to wrestle control precisely because of how callous, how lacking in empathy, how corrupt she is. Because of how thoroughly unelectable she is, she needs to be allowed to fail. It is in National's best interest to quell the threat that is having her in the corner when she has nothing to lose. To put her in the spotlight so that there is nowhere to skulk off to is National's best bet. In order to rebuild itself post-Key/English, someone needs to take the fall. Or rather, someone who believes they will succeed despite overwhelming distrust from within the caucus and the general population. Judith Collins fits the bill – purging someone with longtime leadership ambitions while having a disposable figurehead come 2020. There has not been a single

“National took pains to maintain a publicly centrist outlook, trying to get the ultimate smooth talker John Key to make neoliberalism sound sexy and appealing.”

term government in New Zealand since 1975, and while you can certainly expect National to launch a bid against Jacinda Ardern, it is more logical to let the shit hit the fan early in their time within the Opposition. Only after this failure can National truly jump back in the game and put some of their more respected politicians into position, such as Amy Adams, Chris Finlayson or Nikki Kaye. At the time of writing, Kaye has already ruled herself out and Adams has just launched a bid. No word on Finlayson yet. The party of strength and stability has not had such teething issues in many years, and all we can do is wait to see who has the longest knife and the most appealing back.

I daresay that Nikki Kaye is rather glad to be sitting this one out. She may have made the wisest move of them all. ■

RULES FOR THE COLOURING COMPETITION

1. Colour in Judy and slip your entries with your details under the door of Craccum office (across from bFm).
2. For entries to be considered you must 'Like' the Facebook page and tag a friend on the Judith Collins colouring competition post.
3. Winner will be announced the following week on Craccum's Facebook, make sure you're following!

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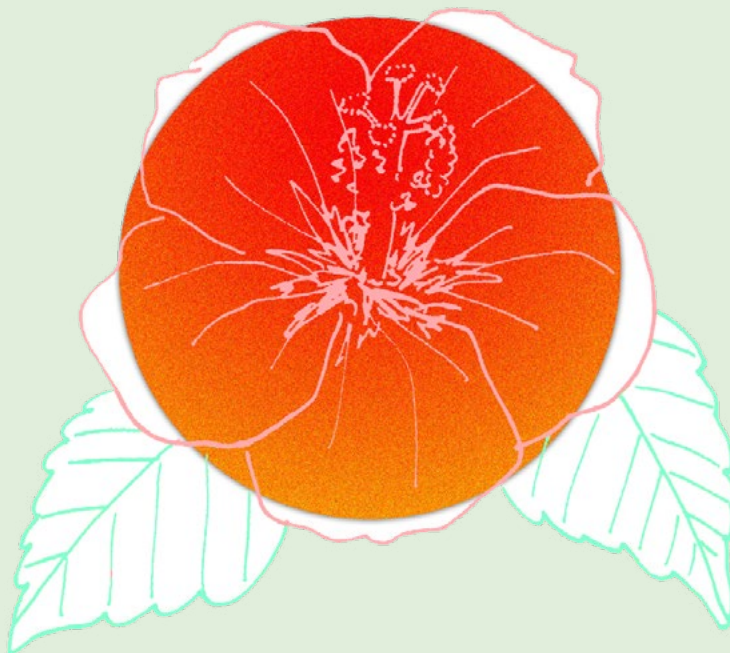
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The MALOSI PROJECT

Movement for Action and Law to Overcome Social Injustice

The university is filled with amazing clubs and communities for everyone. This includes groups that focus on empowering others, such as The MALOSI Project. Emelia Masari had the privilege of talking to Sinai Tupou-Paunga, from The MALOSI project at Law School, who has shed some light on the work they do.

What is the MALOSI project?

The MALOSI Project is a Pacific Island Law student based organisation at the University of Auckland. The objective of this project is to empower Pacific Islanders in our wider community. There are three branches to MALOSI that enforce this which are:

- (1) School Workshops for Year 11 to Year 13 Pacific Island students,
- (2) Community Workshops for families to educate them on their legal rights and
- (3) A blog-www.themalosiproject.com- that publishes articles which identify legal issues impacting Pacific Islanders.

What does the word 'malosi' mean?

In the Samoan language, the word 'malosi' translates to the English words 'strong' or 'strength'.

In a society where Pacific peoples face great inequalities across all socioeconomic, education, health and housing indicators - the

need to promote 'malosi/strength' in Pacific communities is greater than ever. In addressing this great need, it is undeniable that many of the laws and policy actions in place create and maintain the many inequalities which disadvantage Pacific peoples.

It is also undeniable that a tertiary level degree, in particular a Bachelor of Laws degree, not only allows University students to understand these unjust laws and policies, but allows for them to gain opportunities to overcome these injustices in the future.

Therefore, the purpose of 'The MALOSI Project' is to enable University of Auckland law students to be a part of the **M**ovement for **A**ction and **L**aw to **O**vercome **S**ocial **I**njustice to strengthen Pacific communities in Aotearoa New Zealand.

What are some of the things you have done?

Last year we visited six schools in South Auckland including Tangaroa College, Wesley College, Mangere College, Manurewa High School, Otahuhu College and Papatoetoe High School. At all of these workshops, our members were able to talk to year 11 to year 13 Pasifika students about their journey to law school, and teach them about the significance of Pacific representation in the law. Having university students talk to high school students provided a sense of hope. As the high school students are able to see themselves in our shoes, believing they can achieve higher goals becomes realistic for them.

You mentioned you had a blog, what is it about?

Our blog- www.themalosiproject.com- has published 10 articles related to pacific identity, voting, imprisonment of Pacific Islanders and the housing crisis. The importance of this branch is to reach a wider and younger audience by also sharing these article on social media.

How should we get in touch if we're interested in learning more?

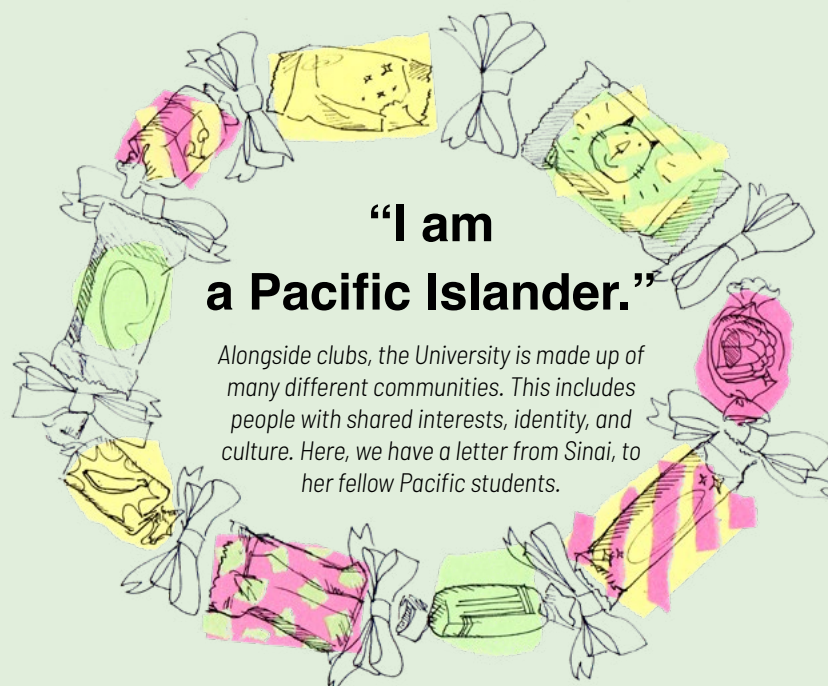
If you are interested in learning more about the MALOSI Project please contact us (Amelia Mateni, Ryan Mcallister and Sinai Tupou) through our facebook page "The MALOSI Project" and remember to like it while you're there!

Malo aupito. ■

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As Pacific tertiary students, we need to embrace our achievements and share them with our communities in order to normalise Pacific success in our wider society. We need to show our people that society does not define who we are and where we are going in the future.

From a young age we are already taught the skills required for us to pass at University such as public speaking and being self-reliant. Our participation at church can testify that when we participate in a skit or recite a memorised hymn or bible verse in front of our whole church community. Also in family events, we automatically understand our roles and step up to responsibility where it is needed while thinking on our toes. Subtly, our participation in cultural traditions have trained us to be leaders, good public speakers and responsible human beings- all the skills that we need being able to study independently at University and succeed just as much as anyone else.

Currently being at University and applying yourself in the field you are in whether it be in fine arts, architecture or medicine or law- you are succeeding and pushing beyond stereotypical barriers. Being at University and aiming to graduate with any degree is a success for our Pacific community. Rising above societal expectations and disregarding ideas that we are lazy, dumb or likely to end up in jail is a success for our whole community.

NORMALISE PACIFIC SUCCESS AND NEVER HESITATE TO CHANGE PEOPLE'S PERCEPTION OF YOU.

Remember the sacrifices made by our families to get us to the place we are today and show them our appreciation by pushing beyond societal expectations. "Te ke lava, teu lava, te tau lava":
You can do it, I can do it **WE CAN ALL DO IT.**

Get through this year by imagining the outcome of our academic hardships: the endless tears of joy by the people who made sacrifices for us and infinite flower leis. Make that moment worth it for them and inspire upcoming University students. Embrace the hardships that come from academia for yourself, for your parents and for our general society to finally put an end our negative stereotype.

God bless you all for 2018! ■



FEATURING: BROWN NOIZE

Helen Yeung and Jasmin Singh interview the amazing women of colour behind *Brown Noize*, an upcoming YouTube web-series.

Hey Natalie and Gemishka, so tell us a bit about yourselves!

GEMISHKA: Originally from South Africa, and moved to New Zealand when I was 15 years old. I studied film and media studies at The University of Auckland, and now work as a freelance videographer and production manager. We meet in high school Macleans College and we kept in contact since then. We got together when she had the idea for *Brown Noize*.

NATALIE: That was 10 years ago. We're closer to death than we thought! So we went to a really white high school where they make you wear kilts. From there we knew, we were the few brown girls in an all white school who were self aware and didn't want to blend in or assimilate. We were unapologetically ourselves the whole time which is why we were close and stayed in touch. I went to Radio College after high school. We talked about representation and discussed a lot of issues relating to people of colour all the time because we had the same taste in films and tv shows. I talked to Gem about a web show or even a tv show. We had big dreams and ambitions about pitching to TVNZ or *Comedy central* and making a million dollars!

How did the idea for *Brown Noize* come about?

GEMISHKA: There wasn't any show that reflected our stories, and our lives on New Zealand screens. There was no reflection of our reality on TV, so we decided to do something about it.

NATALIE: *Broad City* was a big inspiration especially being 20 somethings who are just trying to get by in life. They're flawed women who are doing stuff. Even with other TV shows realised there was nothing like the immigrant child's perspective on television. I decided to create something with representation that not just shows our perspective but the perspective of people who aren't normally represented in media and important social issues. We

had to break cultural divides in bringing our idea to life. Like in *Broad City* there was an acceptance of women being sexual beings was also a great part of the show. Illana is sexual but in an empowering way. So we also want to show women of colour being sexual creatures because we are, without stigmatising it was also one of the things we wanted to show. I called up Gem with my idea who had studied film and it all went from there. We also had other inspirations such as Bollywood. Even though it's extremely sexist we wanted to incorporate more bright and colourful clothes and show that we're not just stereotypical Indian women wearing sarees.

Why do you think *Brown Noize* is an important project?

GEMISHKA: It reflects the perspective of many people of colour living in Auckland, who don't have any representation of themselves on New Zealand television screens, but also internationally as well, which is astonishing in 2018. It is important because we want to show New Zealand-Indian and other non-represented characters as real people rather than stereotypes in adverts and side characters. And we hope that this can make the rest of new zealand accept all ethnicities as part of their culture.

NATALIE: But also with the climate at the moment, the immigrant perspective has become more relevant than anything. As well as the topic and importance of representation.

What barriers have you had to overcome?

GEMISHKA: The lack of funding opportunities that are available for people like us, but also for young and hungry filmmakers. However we did receive a lot of support from BSAG (Brown Sugar Apple Grunt) Productions, and other creatives who support diverse voices.

Natalie: People also not understanding that this is

not just a web series but a mirror to society and the actual hardships people of colour face on the daily. Also it's about representation and acceptance were trying to get in society.

GEMISHKA: There were also cultural barriers that we had to overcome in our own lives and with our project. Like with our families saying "What will people think?" and those kinds of thoughts and opinions.

What was your upbringing like?

GEMISHKA: Growing up in South Africa, and moving to New Zealand, was a huge cultural shift for me. Living in New Zealand, after my parents had lived through the apartheid, I realised how important it was to take pride in my culture, and to stand up for my cultural roots.

NATALIE: I was born and raised in New Zealand my dad's Malaysian-Indian and my mum's Fijian-Indian. I'm currently a stand up comedian and work part time at NZME. Growing up with immigrant parents and trying to adapt to the Kiwi way, I essentially had two worlds that I lived in. Which is one of the reasons *Brown Noize* exists.

What is your experience like being people of colour that are also artists/creatives? Is there any guilt or fear you experience?

GEMISHKA: There is definitely guilt for pursuing this industry at times. Only because I know how much my parents have sacrificed for my education. But we feel that we have something to say and that's what drives us to keep going. It was not an easy career to bring up with my parents. Of course, telling them that I wanted to be a doctor, or a lawyer would have made them extremely happy. My parents did want me to get a degree, so I guess we both compromised and accepted each other, which took a while for them to get used to the idea that I was following a creative career. It's definitely not a traditional career for an Indian woman, and there isn't anyone else in my family who is creative.

NATALIE: Being an Indian woman pursuing any sort of creative field is a rebellion in itself. I have struggled for a while with my family not understanding or approving with me and my creative work but at the same time the purpose of *Brown Noize* is bigger than me trying to get approval of my family it's about representation it's bigger than really both of us but in the best way.

What is the best way to support your work?

GEMISHKA: Follow us on social media, keep sharing our episode and videos, and tell your friends about our show. Keep spreading the noise. And if there are similar experiences you've gone through we

"Being an Indian woman pursuing any sort of creative field is a rebellion in itself."

would love to hear them.

NATALIE: Liking and sharing our content social media is where *Brown Noize* is right now and with the help of people spreading our social media we can hopefully get funding. Also people telling us about their experiences it's what inspires us.

Will getting funding be your main goal?

GEMISHKA: Yes, it's a necessity for supporting our team, and it will help us take the web series to a great quality, and further in the media.

NATALIE: We also want to make more episodes, we've already written the first 10 episodes but didn't have the funding to make more than one. Actually, we didn't have the funding for even one. We made the first episode on zero budget and hope to get some funding so we can make the ones we have mapped out.

What are some films or tv shows that you can recommend to people reading this article?

NATALIE: *Po and Tenjal* - Its a bloody hilarious sketch comedy series on Youtube made by two extremely talented creatives, it talks about their experiences as an Indian and Chinese man. *Kanjivaram* is another older Tamil movie that is brilliant!

GEMISHKA: *Broad City* is obviously one we have to mention because that's where our inspiration comes from for *Brown Noize*.

NATALIE: Our inspiration also doesn't just come from TV shows or movies, we take it from music and instagram artists that we follow. One of them is *MIA* the rapper and her style/general aesthetic and artists like hatecopy on Instagram. Also old school Bollywood movies. ■

DEMYSTIFYING LUNAR NEW YEAR: NO, NOT THE LANTERN FESTIVAL IN DOMAIN

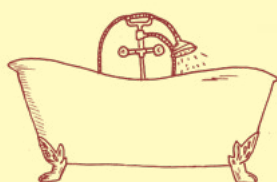
A collaboration by Helen Yeung, Daphne Zheng and Chris Wong of shared traditions, rituals and symbols experienced during Lunar New Year.



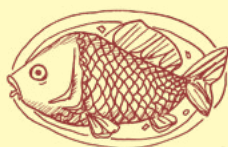
Red Underwear: Yes you read that correctly, the belief is that if it is your zodiac coincides with the zodiac of the year, the dog in this instance, this will bring bad luck, so wearing red underwear will help you ward this off. In case you haven't noticed already that everything for this festive season is red, the colour is also a symbolically lucky colour signifying happiness, loyalty and success.



Don't Clean Anything!: Literally, don't even pick up that one hair on the floor after midnight strikes. Make sure you clean everything during New Year's Eve and stop once the clock hits 12, anymore sweeping or dusting signifies that you are getting rid of all your luck and prosperity. Keep all these good things in your house for the year folks.



Showering Before Midnight: This is literally the same concept as not cleaning your house after New Years. Make sure you don't wash your hair on the first day of Lunar New Year either as the Chinese character for hair "fa" also has the same pronunciation as the character for wealth. If you want to get that 50 cent pay rise better not wash away your fortunes for the year.



Steaming Fish: Steam a fish on New Year's Eve and leave it overnight. Yes, this is wordplay again, the Chinese character for fish "yu" has the same pronunciation as the Chinese character for surplus, meaning you'll have surplus and prosper for the new year.



Eating Yee Sang: This one's more of a Southeast Asian Lunar New Year tradition. "Yee sang", which directly translates in Cantonese to raw fish, consists of salmon along with shredded cucumber, carrot, jicama, daikon and crunchy tofu skin where all of which are drizzled with a sweet plum sauce. Here comes the exciting part, all participants gather around the dinner table in a joint effort to toss the ingredients while shouting "loh hey". Following the belief that the higher the toss the higher your fortunes will grow for the year.



Red Packet: If you're white you'll probably know this one, the fascinating red envelopes that usually contain \$20 notes, you may have discovered this while eating dinner at your Chinese friend's house. As long as you're a child in your household, your parents will grant you a small fortune in "hong bao" or "lai see" and place it under your pillow. It's like the tooth fairy, but better. When you get married then it will be your turn to start giving this small fortune to the younger generation. It's a full cycle really.



Ancestor Worship: Most of the ancestor worship practices which take place during this time of the year are either of Taoist or Buddhist origins. Ancestor worshipping is a religious practice that is based on deceased members who continue to exist, with their spirits protecting the family, taking an interest in world affairs, and having an ability to influence the fortunes of the living. So it's important to worship ancestors before a reunion dinner and invite them to join in family celebrations with food, fruit, flowers and tea.



No Goths, No Minimalism: This is no joke. Want to wear an entirely black outfit to reflect your soul or a follow a fresh #hype-beast #streetstyle all-white look with your Adidas Stan Smiths? Well don't. We're 99% certain you'll be yelled at by a distant relative as these colours are both a symbol of death and mourning. So take this as a warning from us.

Blessings: If you don't usually celebrate Lunar New Year, don't try and butcher these please. When you greet people on the first day of New Year, you'll hear them say "gong xi fa cai" in Mandarin, or "gong hei fat choi" in Cantonese. Not only does it act as a blessing and congratulations for the new year, it also wishes the person to have a great and prosperous year. Along with this, older people are usually blessed with things related to health, longevity, wealth and their careers, whereas younger people are blessed things related to education, beauty, their love life and general good luck.



Zodiacs: There are twelve animal signs which represent each year, they work similarly to horoscopes but in a yearly cycle. There's tiger, rabbit, dragon, snake, horse, goat, monkey, rooster, dog, pig, mouse and ox with each one occurring once every 12 years.

Firecrackers: FYI the red firecrackers mentioned here are banned in New Zealand, but you can get plastic ones from your local Asian groceries. These iconic red paper crackers which hang on a string are used to welcome the year as the loud bangs are believed to scare off any evil spirits. As legend has it, on New Year's Eve each year, the Nian monster would come out to eat villagers and destroy their houses. The villagers discovered that burning bamboo and making explosive noises would scare away the monster, this was then adopted as a yearly tradition for all. ■





Forgetting Clarke Gayford: The difference between mothers and fathers

Rachel Buckman discusses Jacinda Ardern's pregnancy, parenthood and gender roles.

New Zealand has survived about a month of knowing that our Prime Minister is pregnant. I don't know how Jacinda's holding up, but for me personally it's been an emotionally trying time. The constant see-sawing between the extremes has got me all twitchy. On a typical evening, I could be at a table surrounded by fellow young women celebrating the progressive path our country is on and feeling hopeful for the future that now seems realistically possible. Flash forward a couple hours later. I'm sitting in bed, in the dark, internet tab open to the Stuff Facebook page where I've begun a seemingly endless process of angry reacting all the internet trolls within existence (it's hard to decide whether this process is more satisfying than it is self-destructive).

What unsettles me the most about the criticisms I read, is that my mind (naively liberal as it potentially/definitely is) cannot fathom the person that created such negative and unnecessary comments. They seem blatantly archaic, sexist, scare-mongering, and playing into stereotypes that belong in some *Mad Men* universe. None of these are characteristics I could imagine anyone in 21st century New Zealand wanting associated with them.

And here we find the ultimate paradox that plagues our world – I can't understand them and they can't understand me. So no constructive conversation can be had, and we progress nowhere. Settling with agreeing to disagree. (I know very few people who can peacefully disagree, so this still seems like a losing situation).

However, there is one argument I've seen circulating that I can engage with without descending into raging semi-feminist-preacher mode. Not because I agree with it in any way, but because I think I understand where it is coming from and believe, in this case, there actually is a constructive conversation to be had about where these opinions stem from.

Multiple people, both publically in the media and privately in the safety of their own social circles, have claimed that *having a pregnant Prime Minister isn't a good thing as it sets too high standards for women and working mothers*. Jacinda is setting

a dangerous precedent that mums can now do literally everything, regardless of it being practically impossible for any normal person to achieve. And since it *can* be done, women will be expected to rise to the occasion. New mums struggling to balance the work/baby load will be faced with the response: 'If Jacinda can do it, why can't you?'

Now this would be a completely valid argument if Jacinda had at any point said she planned to do it all. As far as I'm aware though, she never made an announcement stating her intention was to full time run the country whilst also popping home for every nappy change and to whip up freshly baked cookies for an afternoon snack.

People who make this argument have ignored what Jacinda said the plan was. In fact, they've completely ignored a whole other person who is vitally important to this process – Clarke Gayford. The man who will be staying at home to care for the eventual first child of NZ, meaning that his partner is in no way required to *do it all*. It's as if there is an inability to accept the extent of the responsibilities he's taking on. Or equally to believe that Jacinda has full faith in him and can leave him to carry them out independently.

Yet while I can tear apart their logic, our thoughts and feelings don't necessarily play by the rules of logic. While I think what Jacinda is doing *shouldn't* create impossible standards, that does not diminish how it genuinely it can be perceived that way. The fear isn't driven by her situation at all, it comes from the culture we live in. One where women still feel they have to shoulder the brunt of the par-

“In fact, they’ve completely ignored a whole other person who is vitally important to this process – Clarke Gayford.”

enting burden, and a father figure taking charge doesn't seem like a reality. All of this reflecting how ingrained the distinction between the mother and father roles still is. Instead of two equal units functioning together to create one cohesive parenting structure, we have two polar poles.

Mum. Dad. Both words come with different expectations.

A *New Zealand Herald* opinion piece complained that pushing the progression of working mothers would "normalise [women] giving up the reward (the baby)." With its Rumpelstiltskin, deal with the devil imagery, there are some problematic implications from such a sentence. If working full time equates to 'giving up your child', does that also mean it makes you less of a mother? Or love your child less? Or that time is the ultimate measure of a good parent?

Putting those problems to one side, how do the deeply negative connotation of this sentence fit with the fact we have been normalising such a thing for centuries when it comes to fathers. Centuries of males have been taught to take upon the 'breadwinner' role, and go out to support their family. None of these men have been accused of missing out on any reward while their wife stays at home with the children. The treatment is starkly different though, when we reverse the situation and have a woman in the workforce. It's the same balance of people, one at work and one at home, yet the mother faces hysteria and judgement at every other turn as if it's *not really the same*. As if each parent's true value lies only in the status quo.

When we lament the curse of gender stereotypes we like to focus on women because historically they've drawn the significantly shorter straw. While I would never be one to suggest we forget the social oppression of women, when it comes to progressing the nuclear-family to something a bit more equity focused, we need to consider the other side of the equation. To legitimise both women's rights and a father's equal place in the parenting dynamic. If we freak out when a woman goes to work, isn't that implying that men are incapable of nurturing a child just as well? Despite the countless examples of fathers who are incredibly capable and who prove their usefulness does not end at the insemination phase.

The parenting sphere is intertwined with gender norms. To call a woman 'motherly' isn't all that different from saying she meets the standard

"We don't live in a sixties sitcom which copies and pastes the typical family stereotype into every episode"

social norms associated with females. So if you don't meet those standards you fail twice over – as a mother and as a woman. Men are in no way immune to the pressures of expectations. A male friend once said something that scarred me to the point that I frequently quote him in outrage. "I'd love to be a stay at home father," he tells me. He then followed this up immediately, without even a change of thought, with: "Don't tell my friends." The conclusions are easy enough to draw. He didn't want to be seen as wanting to perform the role typically associated with women. It would make him seem, what? Weak. Softer. Less masculine.

By creating all these expectations and roles, what is dangerously threatened is the way we talk about raising children. When men and women meet on an uneven playing field riddled with intrinsic biases and complicated preconceptions, how can there be an open conversation about how they should raise their baby? The focus should not be about what the mothers and fathers are doing, it should be whether the environment and support is right for that family. We don't live in a sixties sitcom which copies and pastes the typical family stereotype into every episode. Families who don't follow the rule book of how a mother and father should behave – families with stay at home dads, single parents, two mothers, a combination of family members – they're not lesser. If the baby is loved and cared for, the method shouldn't matter.

We have talked Jacinda's pregnancy to death, but it is consistently a story about her. Not to belittle how strong and able she personally is, but this isn't just her story. There is a father actively in the picture too. Thank God for men like Clarke who are willing to break with the norm. The hope being that one day it wouldn't be considered abnormal, but rather not considered at all. Instead, we can leave the individuals involved alone to make a decision that works for them. And then respect them enough not to comment on it afterwards, knowing it's none of our business how they live their life. ■



Reaching Out

Rushika Bhatnagar talks about the importance of mental health, empowering those around you and helping someone in need.

Watching someone you care about go through a difficult time can be a harrowing experience. Mental health issues are not neat; they tend to be confusing and painful which makes it hard for the person to speak out and ask for help, making it an incredibly isolating experience. But your friend or family member does not have to go through it alone. There are signs that might indicate that its time for you to reach out and there are things you can do to help them in a healthy way.

Some of the best mental health support involves empowerment. Being able to build someone up by empowering them helps them regain self-confidence and autonomy which are both crucial in recovery. But it all begins with reaching out, the person themselves might not be able to do so as reaching out to get help is extremely difficult and absolutely terrifying.

Speaking as someone who is still in the non-linear journey of recovering from mental health issues, reaching out to get help has been one of the hardest things I have ever had to do. Being able to word everything I was feeling with all the confusing and conflicting thoughts and emotions I had was the first hurdle. Mental health issues are not neat, at times when attempting to talk about things that I was having a hard time with I either spoke about my issues in a joking manner making light of every issue, or in an 'aggressive' way where everything seem to "come out at once." Often when mental health sufferers reach out it can look really messy and upsetting and unfortunately we don't culturally know what to do with the intense mixture of despair and vulnerability that someone who might be 'reaching out' represents. As a result my jokes on the topic were often met with "omg same" and my more culturally negative emotions such as sadness and anger were met with a "I don't know what to say." No-one really teaches us what to do when we see someone in pain in a non-physical way.

The stigma of mental health overshadows discussions of these issues but the more we talk about it, the more conversations we have on public forums and in everyday life the closer we come to finding answers that could literally help save lives. Unfortunately, as aforementioned, these conver-

sations can't always be led by those who themselves are suffering, but you can help not only have these conversations, but also help the person you care about. You might find it hard to understand what they are going through and you might be uncertain as to how you can help but you can be there for them by listening to them and helping them access professional support if they need it.

The type of mental health support someone receives makes a huge difference in their recovery. What tends to happen in most situations is that when someone is in the throes of a mental health crisis, it's natural to want to make their problems disappear. Sometimes, we readily jump in to remove obstacles, fix, and make things as easy as possible for the person they care about. Such help is known as enabling. With enabling, people try to make healing possible for someone but they do all of the work. **You are not responsible in 'fixing' someone else or their problems.** This is unhealthy for both parties and can quickly become frustrating too. It removes the opportunity for the loved one to take charge of his/her own mental health recovery. The best help you can provide is help 'from behind,' rather than (pulling them from the front) you can provide support in order to help them take charge of their own mental health. Empowerment strengthens mental health recovery. For you it means lending appropriate assistance and support without taking responsibility for the person's recovery, and for them it means regaining a sense of control over their life.

So what can you actually do?

- 1. Reach out.** If you think someone is having a hard time, try talking to them directly about it and be patient. It can be really hard to start the conversation when going through a tough time, and due to the overwhelming emotions they might be experiencing it might take more than one attempt to get them to properly open up.
- 2. Actively listen.** Let them talk as much as they need but ask open-ended questions and repeat back to them phrases to understand at a deeper level and to show them you're listening. Listen without coming up with solutions, more often than not the person already

knows how to fix their own issues- they just need someone to listen.

- 3. Encourage them to get professional support.** Health professionals are trained individuals who can provide them the right support they need to have a health recovery pathway.
- 4. Help maintain their self-esteem.** When they talk it is important to be respectful, non-judgemental and avoid making the person feel inadequate in any way.
- 5. Help them build self-awareness and confidence.** Just as we do as all out friends, point out the person's 'blind spots' about their qualities and help them recognise their potential from time to time.
- 6. Check in often but don't let it take over your life.** Let them know you're there for them when need be and you will check in often but not 'on-call 24/7.' This sets some boundaries that helps make sure there is less emotional dependency.
- 7. Help them look at multiple different self-help techniques.** This helps elevate the sense of autonomy and can help them find techniques that genuinely help them recover. This can range from mindfulness to yoga to exercise and many others.

Small things make a big difference to people with mental health problems and the best ways you can help people is by teaching them to love and help themselves. So reach out, listen and help them to help themselves.

And more important than all, start talking about mental health and let's work towards breaking the taboo around it.

One in five adults in New Zealand will experience some form of mental illness this year. If you feel as if you might be suffering from a mental disorder, you can contact the University's mental health advisers on 09 373 7599 ext 87433, or +09 373 7599 ext 89320. Alternatively, you can visit rooms 034 and 035a of the Clocktower, Monday to Friday between 9am and 3pm. ■

Introducing: The Minority Movement

Co-founders of a trending street style Instagram run by Rushika Bhatnagar and Gayatri Adi show off their most recent photoshoot.

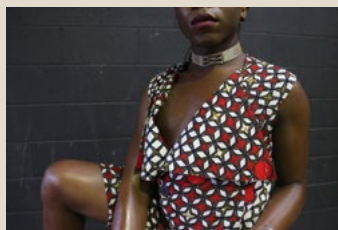
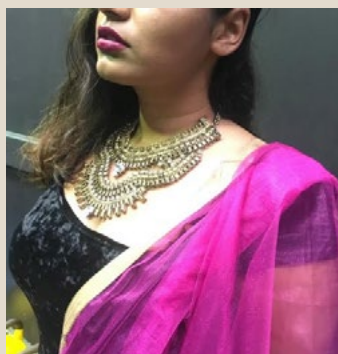


What is The Minority Movement?

@the_minoritymovement (Instagram) aims to present street style that is essentially a result of cultural fusion: It's a movement based upon reclaiming your culture.

What gave you the idea of starting this?

Immigrating to a Western country from an Eastern background can be tough in multiple ways, with a huge part of growing up feeling like a battle between two cultures. This battle is what inspired us to create The Minority Movement. We hope to eventually have a space that is representative of numerous minorities and their take on 'fusion street style.' ■



CAFÉ REVIEW

Petit Bocal

177 Sandringham Road, Sandringham

REVIEW BY RUSHIKA BHATNAGAR

Nestled between a chain of local stores in the suburb of Sandringham is a French inspired café come restaurant, Petit Bocal. For an authentic French experience and for the real taste of French bread/pastries, a visit to this minimalistic café is a must!

Make sure to make a booking though. Sunday brunch is one of their busier times. You will be seated, surrounded by large black and white photographs of the Eiffel Tower hung on the crisp white walls. A small vase with fresh flowers adorn every table. Although a tiny café, their big French windows let in the light, even on rainy days. Truly a Parisian inspired café.

The menu is vast, from your basic brunch menus of eggs



benedict (let me tell you that this is no ordinary eggs benedict!) through to their classic French styles escargots. The only trouble you'll have is deciding what not to try! By sourcing some of their fresh ingredients from local growers, Petit Bocal empowers the community they serve. And here's a little secret, if you're lucky enough to visit them at their less busy times, you will be able to choose the music through the iPad placed on the left of the counter.

Must Try: I am a HUGE fan of fresh bread, and the bread at Petit Bocal is in my top 10 must try in Auckland. I would recommend you try their sourdough! By itself, with cheese or order their eggs benedict. The bread is fresh, soft on the inside with an edible crunch on the outside and when you bite into it, it will take away all your pain. ■

THE EQUITY OFFICE – TE ARA TAUTIKA

Nau mai, haere mai and welcome!

The Equity Office leads the University's commitment to being safe, inclusive and equitable.

Our team provides advice, guidance and support for all our students and staff, with a particular focus on our Māori and equity group communities. Equity group students include:

- Pacific students
- Students with disabilities
- LGBTI (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Intersex) students
- Students from low socio-economic backgrounds
- Students from refugee backgrounds
- Women and men in those disciplines in which they are currently under-represented.



www.facebook.com/OurVillageOurKainga

www.equity.auckland.ac.nz



REVIEWS



Black Panther

FILM REVIEW BY ROHAN PATEL



As a superhero fan, I was swept up in the hype surrounding the Black Panther movie. I watched every trailer and video out there, and even listened to Kendrick Lamar's amazing soundtrack (on repeat for dayzzz), wondering how it was going to be incorporated into the movie (I basically obsessed about this movie for weeks).... And it all came together oh so beautifully. *Black Panther* (2018) adds a new layer of depth to the Marvel universe by showing us the incredible journey of T'Challa (Chadwick Boseman), the Black Panther as he returns home to his hidden nation. After the death of his father in *Captain America: Civil War* (2016) he must now take the mantle of king and continue to protect his people.

Black Panther starts off with beautiful imagery explaining the origins of Wakanda, the Black Panther and the mystical herb that makes him who he is. Wakanda's isolation from the rest of the world challenge's T'Challa's conscience in wanting to help people that are oppressed outside Wakandan borders versus protecting and hiding Wakanda like his forebears. T'Challa's reign as king however is haunted by the secrets of his father and as a result of this he ends up going toe-to-toe with an unprecedented enemy, Killmonger (Michael B. Jordan) who wants the throne for himself. The movie embodies the humour that all Marvel movies carry however adds its own brand, unseen in other Marvel movies. The humor stems a lot from how Wakanda understands the outside world from it's isolated technological haven.

Black panther as a whole is a funny and intelligent film and although it doesn't pack as much action into the movie as other Marvel films have in the past (and what's a good superhero movie without a lot of action!) it does have an amazing story to tell. ■



Little Dark Age

MGMT

REVIEW BY DARIO DAVIDSON



MGMT are back with a new full-length album, but it seems like they stopped by 1985 on their way here. This eclectic mix of tracks sounds like it was directly inspired by the most angsty sounds of the eighties. The first half sounds like a collection of singles trying to cover several genres. From the comedic "She Works Out Too Much" complaint song about a cross-fitting girlfriend, to the almost reggae-esque jams of TSLAMP, the first six songs have a heavy use of slightly off-key synths that give the album an old psychedelic feel to it. Not to say that the album is bad, the second half rounds out to a bit more consistency and there are sporadic moments of musical brilliance throughout the LP. With it comprising of only 10 tracks and clocking out at 44 minutes you won't have to dig very deep to find them.

The highlight sound is almost certainly the deep and driving bassline from "Little Dark Age", an instant earworm that will probably pull you into the rest of the album. The video is an amusing, in-your-face parody of The Cure's look, complete with tangled black hair and smoke-filled gardens while depressed looking, overdressed women look on and periodically sigh. The other redeeming moment is the visual delight that is the "When You Die" video. Using a stage magician as the protagonist to illustrate the monotony of the daily grind amidst an LSD infused smorgasbord of special effects; while VanWyndgarden croons a series of dark and depressing lines about death and suicide sung to a happy-go-lucky tune, it feels like one big homage to The Smiths.

Unfortunately, there is little else that's new on this album. Like MGMT's other releases, a few good hooks and catchy tunes are let down by VanWyndgarden's inconsistent singing style and vague lyrics. Recommended if you're feeling some 80's nostalgia and your "Meat Is Murder" cassette won't play, this will probably do the trick. ■



MANIA

Fall Out Boy

REVIEW BY CHRIS WONG



Ah how the mighty fall. Fall Out Boy, pop punk heroes of the 2000's return with their seventh album *MANIA*. And while they don't sound much like they did in their pop-punk glory days anymore, the album takes another step away from this direction with its electro-infused tracks. "Young and Menace" the opening track and lead single might as well be the ugliest song the band has written to date with its stomach churning EDM drops, but if that didn't turn you off already, then you'll be happy to hear that it's mostly an outlier and the rest of the album doesn't sound nearly as nauseous.

"The Last of the Real Ones" is a solid jam and one of the standouts of the record, with the band even paying homage to Kanye West with the music video, a shot by shot remake of "Flashing Lights" with llamas. The track, a celestial imagery-inspired love song, is full of lyrics which would easily be at home on a Tumblr blog, with the chorus as an example; 'Cause you're the last of a dying breed / write our names on the wet concrete / I wonder if your therapist knows everything about me'. The most quotable line on the entire record comes on "Wilson (Expensive Mistakes)" with 'I'll stop wearing black when they make a darker colour', being extremely relatable to everyone's inner emo, and showing that the band are still closely in touch with their fanbase.

The record also sees them experimenting with new sounds, "HOLD ME TIGHT OR DON'T" shows the band trying a new reggae-inspired sound, while "Sunshine Riptide" features reggae and dancehall singer Burna Boy. The latter half of the record show off more anthemic cuts such as "Church" and "Heaven's Gate" which bring some classic rock vibes into the fold, breathing some life into the album.

However *MANIA* is still Fall Out Boy's least essential and most disappointing entry into their catalogue, and is easily worth the skip. ■



Nigella: In Conversation

REVIEW BY RACHEL BUCKMAN



I have never watched any of Nigella's TV shows. Or read her books. The most I can say is I once read an unflattering *Women's Weekly* article of questionable accuracy. Due to my lack of background research, my expectations were based solely on her superficial presentation. The Nigella in my mind was posh (aka the accent), polished (the clothes), and border-line asylum-crazy-obsessed with food.

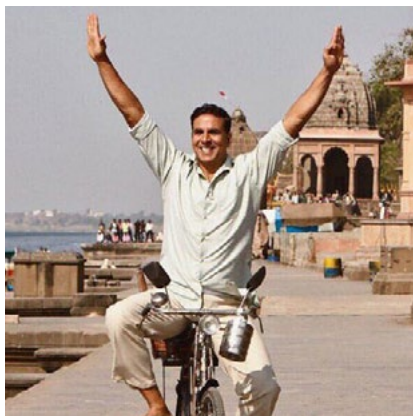
Having heard her talk, I wouldn't say she *wasn't* these things, but I was wrong to assign them as her defining characteristics.

IRL Nigella was, well, startlingly relatable.

This wasn't an event where Nigella gave a blow by blow of her recipes and then tried to ram her most recent book down the throats of the obliging audience members. She just chatted normally and gave those watching a glimpse behind the edited media persona. She talked about how oppressive she found childhood when she didn't like "running around" or "being told what to do." How she bonded with her grandmother over cooking, leading to her telling her own children that what she really wanted was grandchildren and they were a necessary middle step. How her role as restaurant reviewer came about in the process of her trying to avoid getting more job responsibilities.

Multiple times she emphasised how unproductive it was to build up pedestals for certain types of people. No one is morally superior because they can cook she said bluntly, or better because they read high-brow literature. Part of this was her belief that the joy of an activity such as cooking or reading is only harmed by creating a hierarchy. But also, she seem to genuinely want to make sure her audience left knowing that she was just a person. No more, no less.

This may sound harsh, but I didn't expect to like Nigella. And yet despite this I walked away feeling that, in some alternate reality, we could be friends. ■



Padman

REVIEW BY NANDITA BHATNAGAR



There are very few Bollywood movies released to date that've been about important issues faced by women. *Padman* (2018) is a movie about menstruation and its toxic stigma especially in rural communities. Based off a true story, *Padman* is a movie which focuses on Lakshmikant Chauhan (Akshay Kumar), a man who starts his own sanitary pad business after seeing the unhealthy way in which his own wife Gayatri (Radhika Apte), deals with her period (by using dirty pieces of cloth), selling them for cheaper prices as well as employing poorer women to work and make an income. It's an inspiring story of a man who gives up everything to make menstruation products more affordable and therefore accessible. He loses everything in the process, his wife, his family, his friends, but eventually succeeds in his business internationally and wins them all back.

In a time where Bollywood is thriving off nepotism, cheesy remixes, and bad dialogue, *Padman* was refreshingly honest about an important issue. It wasn't afraid to show real pads, real blood, and the real struggle which women who lack money and resources face. Lakshmikant himself went above and beyond any male of his time, or indeed our time, by testing pads on himself by strapping period simulators inside his own underwear.

Sure *Padman* had its own issues as a movie, with its one sided portrayal of rural women as helpless and uneducated, and its inaccurate statistics, but in a time where tampon tax still exists, the movie was a huge step in the right direction. It opened up conversation on an issue which is usually hushed up, guest starred actors as big as Amitabh Bachchan and Sonam Kapoor to show their support, and overall truly did empower its audience and inspire us to speak out. ■



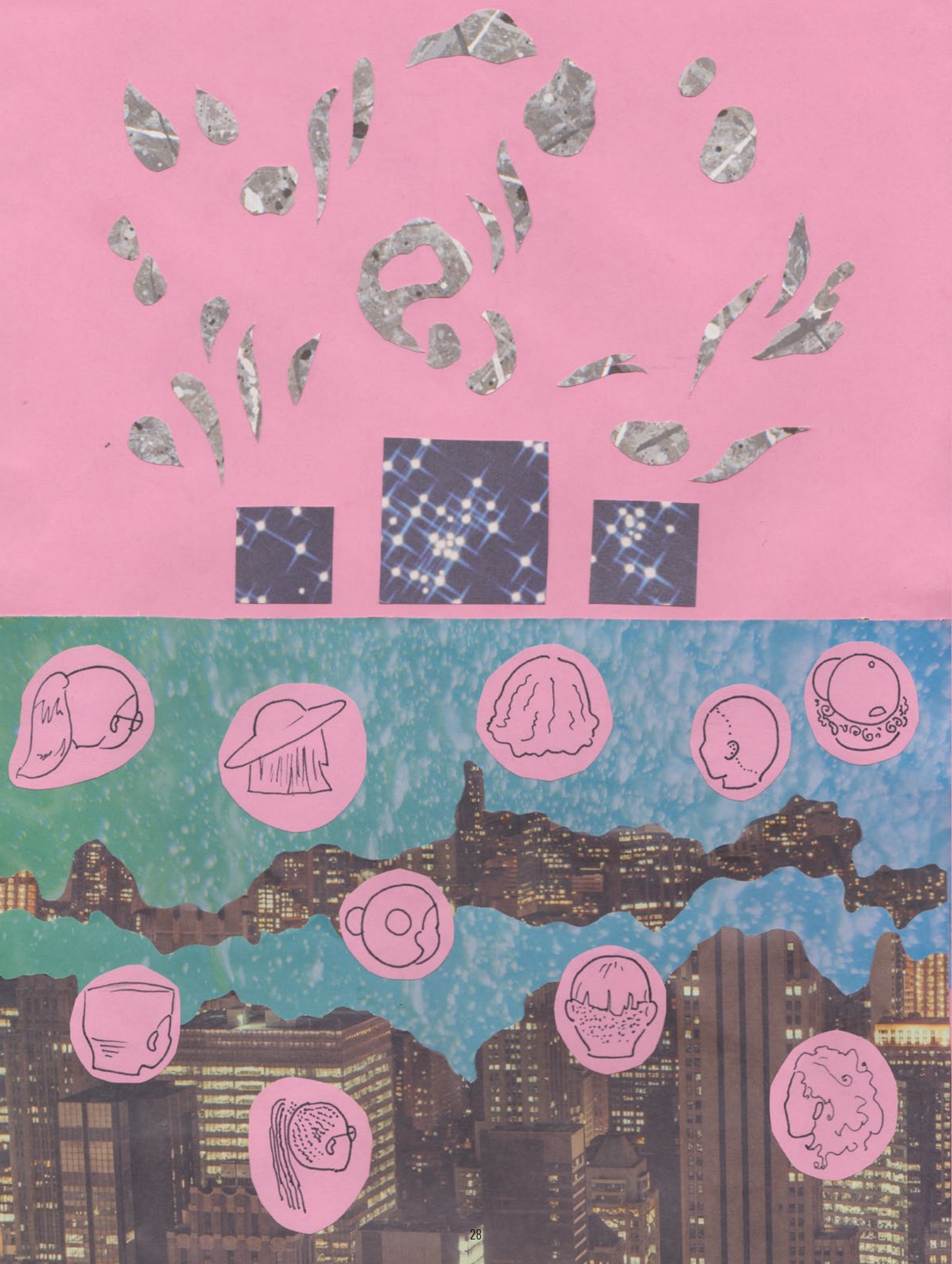
The Shape of the Water

REVIEW BY DAPHNE ZHENG



Guillermo del Toro is not subtle. In *The Shape of Water*, that's not a bad thing. Set during the Space Race, the film draws on creature features from the time, but subverts archetypes of the white American hero and places focus on the kinds of characters cinema often antagonises or ignores: a mute woman, a gay man, a black woman, and an anthropomorphic fish man. Del Toro's intention to invert these archetypes of good and evil rewrites folklore: the creature from the black lagoon is a god and those who choose not to understand this otherness become the villain. It's a critique that is rather timely: when General Strickland (Michael Shannon) sexually harasses Elisa (Sally Hawkins) in their place of work, it echoes the current #MeToo outrage that has blossomed from last year's Weinstein scandal. (Though, Del Toro asserts that these events are only timely because these problems have always been present. Thanks, Guillermo.) Subtlety is not necessary in these times.

I feel I can safely say that everybody is a fan of romance, in one way or another. And sure, the concept of rooting for a human to fall in love with a fish is, in theory, ridiculous. But the honesty of the characters as they tread through the narrative is so genuine and purehearted that its simply takes too much effort to resent based on logistics. There have been critiques from the disabled community that the film only further "others" those who are mute, and the film suggests that people who are disabled do not have a place in society. I'd like to suggest that the film follows narrative conventions of the stories its inspired by, rewriting the happily ever after to fit the strength and bravery of the characters in getting what they deserve. Then again, I'm not mute, so I'm open to critiques on my critique. ■



Another Year Of Heatstroke At Laneway 2018

Our arts editor **Chris Wong** gives a run down of this year's Laneway lineup, featuring reviews on the live performances of Billie Eilish, Pond, Wolf Alice, Slowdive and more.

Another year, another festival season. Laneway fell upon a scorcher of a day this year during one of the warmest summers ever recorded as fans flocked to Albert Park in their latest festival fashions to enjoy one of the highlights of the season. Boasting a huge variety of stalls on the food front as well as two separate bars, there was something for everyone with several vegan options also available.

Arriving a few hours after gates opened, the first act I went to check out was 16 year old rising alt-pop sensation Billie Eilish. Starting off with her strongest single to date, the misguidedly bouncy "bellyache", Eilish continued to hold the crowd captive throughout her set commanding a stage presence well beyond her years. Breaking out the ukulele for a cover of Hotline Bling, she continued onto the gentle but savage "party favor" before finishing with the EP highlight "my boy". Judging from this live performance and her debut EP last year, Eilish should definitely be one to watch as she continues her trajectory upwards.

Over on the Princes Street stage, Aussie psych rockers Pond, who share a revolving line up with members of Tame Impala, lit up the crowd playing highlights such as "Waiting around for Grace" and "Paint Me Silver". While the audio setup wasn't the best, the band easily made up for that with their incredible energy and stage banter.

It was now time for British alt rockers Wolf Alice to come on, one of the artists I was most excited to see, and who were on their first visit to the country. Opening up with an incredibly raw take on "Moaning Lisa Smile", Ellie Rowsell and co. launched ferociously into "You're A Germ", and with every scream, every piece of guitar feedback and each drum thrash, the band put forward every single inch of energy they had into it. Moving on to the *Virgin Suicides* referencing "Lisbon", the band started to slow it down near the middle of their set with the charming "Bros" and the sweet and dreamy "Don't Delete the Kisses", before leading into the 8 minute epic of an album closer "Visions of a Life". Never letting up their energy even during the mellower moments, Wolf Alice ended up being my personal favourite of the day.

Later in the afternoon saw the movement of the crowd towards the Rotunda stage as they started gathering for The Internet's return to Laneway, having only grown bigger since their first appearance in 2016. The collective slowed things down a gear with their blend of neo-soul and alternative R&B, playing through their many hits including "Girl" and "Special Affair" while also allowing guitarist and up-and-coming solo star Steve Lacy to perform his own track "Dark Red" to one of the largest crowds of the day.

Festival favourite Mac Demarco then took the stage bringing a relaxed air with his sun soaked jams, starting off with the mellow "On the Level" then moving on to "Salad Days", interacting with the crowd between songs as well as showing off some stage antics. Continuing on to old favourites "Ode to Viceroy" and "Still Together", Mac showed why his reverbed-out tunes were the perfect fit for the summer festival season.

Anderson Paak and his band the Free Nationals drew in the largest and sweatiest crowd yet, with almost every attendee at the festival closing in upon the Rotunda stage around 7:30. Kicking off with "Come Down" it was easy to see why this was, as he easily delivered the best performance of the day, continuously hyping the crowd up and delivering banger after banger. Throughout the set Paak showed us why he was one of the smoothest performers in hip-hop right now, often drumming, rapping and singing the same time, performing album highlights such as "Heart Don't Stand a Chance", "Put Me Thru", as well as incorporating a Dre cover into the set. Finishing off with *Venice* highlight "Luh You", Paak easily exceeded all expectations with his truly unforgettable set.

Also visiting NZ for the first time, legendary shoegazers Slowdive put on one of the most hypnotic and ethereal sets of the festival. Backed by a solid rhythm section the band showed off their hazy otherworldly sound with a cascade of shimmering synths, effect-heavy guitars and dreamy vocals along with a dazzling array of lights. Playing through older tracks such as "Alison" and "When the Sun Hits", as well as newer singles "Star Roving" and "Sugar for the Pill", including their classic cover of Syd Barrett's "Golden Hair", the band proved why they were one of the leading pioneers of the shoegazing scene, as well as a massive influence on a new generation of artists. However as impressive their performance was, the live mix didn't seem to do them any favours with the bass often overpowering the other aspects of the band's performance.

Having won a Grammy award for their 2017 record *A Deeper Understanding* the same day, The War On Drugs closed out the night with their brand of psychedelic and Americana-infused indie rock playing recent singles such as "Pain" and "Holding On" from their aforementioned album with their setlist mostly drawing from 2014's *Lost In The Dream*, as well as revisiting classics "Brothers" and "Red Eyes". Frontman Adam Granduciel was also no stranger to showing off his soloing chops with his numerous solos ricocheting off into the night, as he constantly thanked everyone for their support.

Approaching midnight, and feeling tired and sweaty, it was time to head home. Another successful Laneway had been done and dusted, and what a great way to kick off the year. ■

"Throughout the set Paak showed us why he was one of the smoothest performers in hip-hop right now, often drumming, rapping and singing the same time."



Handmaids of the Global South

Naomi Simon-Kumar discusses the cross-border surrogacy trade in India.

In an era defined by the economic promise of the free market, scientific innovation has ushered in major new developments in the fields of human fertility and reproductive health. With novel technologies allowing individuals otherwise unable to conceive a chance at parenthood, the demand for conception services worldwide has risen dramatically. Transnational surrogacy is just one of a panoply of medical industries that thrives under the leniency neoliberal order affords, allowing consumers from the West to circumvent laws and wait-times for services in their own countries. It is also an incredibly prosperous business of body commodification in the developing South: estimated to be worth more than 1 billion USD annually in countries such as India, where commercial surrogacy is facilitated under profusely lax regulations.[1]

Importantly, legal jurisdiction dictates the availability and convenience of these services along geographic lines, with commercial surrogacy outlawed in a number of developed countries, including the UK, France and Germa-

ny. It is only in today's age of global connectivity that cross-border surrogacy has emerged as a convenient form of low-cost medical tourism, offering consumers a way of conceiving outside the bounds of their own countries by means of assisted reproductive technologies. In most cases, commissioning parties are able to select a surrogate of their choosing from a catalogue. Donor eggs are provided from healthy, often very educated young women under the age of 25 who have been screened for genetic illnesses. The process is undoubtedly underscored by hierarchies of class, race and gender, and unlike egg donors, surrogates are overwhelmingly poor and often driven to rent out their wombs as an escape from a life of impoverishment. Donor eggs are priced along different margins depending on their characteristics, with one reported catalogue selling white donor eggs at a premium for £2,500 to £3,000, with the going price for Indian eggs £1,000.

In the space of the fertility clinics the 'work' of surrogates is valued, and they are cared for to ensure optimal viability in the most clinical sense. The success of the transaction after all is contingent on their ability to carry to term, and the

health of the surrogate a priority to this end. As one reporter describes, the facilities become 'residential colonies' where surrogates are subject to immense scrutiny by clinic administration. Clinic staff enforce tight regulations around the surrogate mother's activities over the course of a pregnancy, monitoring nutritional intake and hygiene, and even keeping a close eye on their social interactions with other individuals, including the intended parents of the child. The issue of outsourcing surrogacy remains a murky area, particularly given growing concerns about the exploitation of women in the industry. Prostitution, a less than ideal alternative for an underclass of illiterate, unskilled women, appears to carry far more risks. With surrogacy, women are compensated handsomely by Indian standards for their services, enabling them to be able to feed their families and support their own children's education.

Despite a recent ban issued by the Indian government prohibiting surrogate embryo transfers for non-Indian passport holders, the trade remains in full effect.[2] Dr Soumya Swaminathan,

[1] <https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2016/apr/01/outourcing-pregnancy-india-surrogacy-clinics-julie-bindel>

[2] <https://www.wsj.com/articles/india-restricts-foreigners-access-to-surrogate-mothers-1446132042>

director general of the Indian Council of Medical Research, explained why the government had decided to impose tighter controls on the local surrogacy trade. The ban, she notes, is a response to the concern around safety for women involved in the practice, as well as cases where children have been abandoned due to intended parents breaking the agreement for issues such as birth defects. She points out that the legal and ethical terrain where transnational surrogacy is concerned remains a deeply divisive issue. Many countries do not recognise surrogacy, which compromises the legal standing of newborn children, particularly in making citizenship claims – as well as in according intended parents absolute guardianship.[3] Nonetheless, surrogacy brokers continue to find ways to get around legal restrictions by setting up the trade in different locations, or moving surrogates between regions in the developing South to avoid penalty. One intermediary describes a project he envisions where women are inseminated in clinics in India, and flown in batches to give birth in regions Africa where regulations are even less stringent.[4]

Currently, an estimated 3000 fertility clinics in India offer commercial surrogacy services to a diverse clientele, two thirds of whom are foreigners. [5] Women who assume surrogate roles are often motivated to approach fertility clinics of their own accord, seeking a share of the spoils afforded by India's growing economic buoyancy. Many are reluctant to resort to surrogacy but come to do so as external demands place increasing pressure on them as they endeavour to support families and households of their own. Part of the stigma surrounding surrogacy in rural Indian communities arises from the misconception that a surrogate's role is akin to a sex worker.[6] For many communities in India, the fertile body and its role in

pregnancy carries important meaning beyond basic ideas of parenthood; it entails personal narratives of family, cultural continuance and ancestral birthright. To offer the services of one's body is seen then as a transgression damaging the sanctity of family and childbearing.

In the space of the fertility clinics however, surrogates are forced to reconceptualise claims to kinship in questioning what makes a mother, if not for the labour of gestation. The fact that an infant child will not share genetic markers with his or her surrogate mother, and that this may be physically apparent in terms in the ethnic distinction between the surrogate and the child they carry can be an alienating reality for the many involved in the trade. In one clinic, surrogates are not only forbidden from seeing the baby after birth, but are given drugs to stop lactation in order to prevent bonding between the gestational mother and child. The nature of the surrogacy arrangement is wholly intended to be as transactional as possible.

For many Indian women involved in surrogacy arrangements it becomes increasingly important to reach a kind of spiritual reconciliation in their decision to undertake the commitment of becoming a surrogate. In one researcher's discussion with participating families, the spouse of one woman equated his wife's surrogacy to the traditional Hindu principle of *tapasya* - a religious practice of asceticism and hardship that brings a devotee blessings of the divine:

"Surrogacy is like God helped her do this for our family. This is her prayer to God and ultimately she will get his blessings and her dreams will be fulfilled. Like saints pray under austere conditions, she is living here in the clinic, getting all those injections, going through all this pain. But she will get the fruit of her labour." [7]

Despite certain faith-based understandings of the process, the general handling of surrogacy arrangements is in actuality very clinical. Part of the clinic directives is ensuring potential surrogates understand the nature of the

procedures involved, but whether this fully outlines the risks associated with the process in language understandable for the surrogate is another matter altogether. The format of preparation for these women seeks to reconfigure prevailing ideas around the nature of their service, including the permissibility of surrogacy given that it does not require sexual activity outside of marriage. Yet, what various ethnographies have come to capture is the complexity of surrogate experiences and feelings in the social dilemmas around surrogacy. Some women recognise monetary remuneration as the driving factor for their consideration of the surrogate role, while at the same time stressing the altruistic intentions behind their service. This is the gift-giving surrogacy narrative, as an intended child is designated the 'ultimate gift' for commissioning parents. The state of commercial surrogacy exists in a culturally and morally ambiguous space: while the arrangement remains a contractual dealing, there are particularly strong elements of altruism and sociality that colour the process of reproductive labour, despite formal attempts to separate them. Surrogates emphasise the 'purity' of their duty as surrogates. A child's life is considered cross-culturally to be invaluable, and this is reflected in the ideas around gift-giving; surrogates see themselves as being remunerated for the service of their reproductive facilities, rather than the infant itself. [8]

For those familiar with the dystopic themes explored in Margaret Atwood's seminal novel, 'The Handmaid's Tale', the parallels to real-life surrogacy practice ring eerily true, particularly when considering the coercive elements of the trade. The prospect for reproductive trafficking as far as the outsourcing of surrogacy to the poor and vulnerable is concerned remains unaddressed. Determining the place of biotechnology in an international system already fraught with economic inequality poses a difficult quandary with no easy answer. Even with proper controls in place, is it even possible to imagine an ethical reality for commercial surrogacy? In any case, the surrogacy enterprise operates under a striking power-imbalance that we cannot ignore. ■

[8] Pande, Amrita.

[3] <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/jan/03/india-surrogate-embryo-ban-hardship-gujarat-fertility-clinic>

[4] <https://www.theguardian.com/science/blog/2017/mar/28/cross-border-surrogacy-exploiting-low-income-women-as-biological-resources>

[5] <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/jan/03/india-surrogate-embryo-ban-hardship-gujarat-fertility-clinic>

[6] Pande, Amrita. "At Least I Am Not Sleeping with Anyone": Resisting the Stigma of Commercial Surrogacy in India." *Feminist Studies* 36, no. 2 (2010): 298.

[7] Pande, Amrita. "Transnational commercial surrogacy in India: gifts for global sisters?" *Reproductive Biomedicine Online* 23 (2011): 618-625.

HOLLYWOOD

Each week **Lachlan Mitchell**, glorified tabloid writer, tries to cover up that he is blatantly copying *Vanity Fair*.



Britney in Hindsight

2007 is still somewhat of a blank spot to me. Honestly, 2005 to 2007 occupies little space within my brain – I suppose there was just little going on at the time. I remember Fergie was Glamorous. I remember reading *The Deathly Hallows* and my young brain frying upon the newly messianic figure of Harry Potter returning to life. And I remember Britney. This week 11 years ago, the world stood by and watched the mental health of Britney Spears completely unravel, pushed to the brink by bipolar disorder and unrelenting public obsession with her life. Even while it was still occurring, the reaction was one of ridicule with misogynistic overtones. It only fuelled the issue. It was the first public exposure to mental illness many of us had, and we could not have gotten off to a worse start.

We have to remember that the internet, while in nearly every household and workplace in the world, had still not seamlessly united with celebrity culture in the way we have long since taken for granted. Much like Janet Jackson's wardrobe malfunction directly facilitating the creation of Youtube, the public collapse of Spears created a new era in celebrity culture and how the internet delivered it to us all, unfiltered and without the slightest hint of empathy. This is of particular note when it comes to people my age – the slightly older group of millennials, now between 20 and 24, who had never had such a wide exposure to such a topic previously. We grew up with this moment being a point of mockery even into our teenage years, it was to inform attitudes long before we had an understanding of what we were being informed about. Even as kids, we knew it was something to laugh at. Spears' breakdown was unprecedented in terms of cultural osmosis – this was a mental health issue that was seemingly accessible to all, but yet, it was never treated as a mental health issue. It was a dehumanising punchline for late night comics, a stigma to replicate for social acceptance. 'Leave Britney Alone!', cringeworthy as that may be to our ears today, is something to consider. The melodrama of said video aside, the mere idea of giving someone with a mental illness any sort of space was a joke. It did not help that the video was packaged in an easily ridiculed gay femininity, which only heightened the mockery of Spears herself. While making a public figure out of Chris Crocker, the plea for empathy was ignored.

It was symbolic of how mental illness was handled by the public in the rise of the Internet Age. It is especially symbolic as to how mental illness was digested by my age

group, then regurgitated without any hint as to what actually contributed to the problem at hand. It has only been within the last three or so years that we have been able to turn the pop culture calendar back on Spears and think 'Oh wow, we kinda fucked up, didn't we? Shit.' This is in no small part due to a successful rehabilitation of Spears' image, one of a dutiful, if simple, doting parent who just wants to dance and be there for her kids. Bless her. But while there is recognition of the problem, have we (especially those my age) learned from it?

I want to say yes. Just as the internet delivered us into a new age of empathy-deficient consumption, it has also given us the opportunity to access so much more information about what we are consuming, how we are doing it, who we are interacting with. We've grown up and learned how to put words and definitions to what we are feeling and what we are seeing. Some of us have since experienced mental health issues since, many more of us have learned to empathise with these issues. God knows I certainly understand. The advent of social media, while decried by many a moral guardian, does have its uses. There is no exaggeration in saying that it allowed our generation to realise the grandiose '90s promise of an interconnected world, and that many people today would not have experienced fundamental moral growth without the people they met through it. The internet provides almost endless opportunity to learn from the mistakes of how Britney was treated, even though it is an event so thoroughly in our past that we don't think about it like that.

But that key word is opportunity – while so many of us have succeeded, so many more have fallen to the ingrained attitudes of the past, with the unwelcome new aspect of having so much information at your fingertips that you take in none of it. A lot of it is subconscious – just because someone is exposed to healthier attitudes, it doesn't mean that they'll recognise it as something to embrace. Sometimes people are so hurt that they don't know how else to be. I get that, it's just disheartening. Mental health still faces many of the same stigmas it did over a decade ago, even amongst our own age group. The lack of understanding, empathy and even forgiveness eludes so many of us, and it is incredibly troubling. Britney may be Stronger than yesterday, but I don't know whether we are. ■

ROAD TO #FITSP0

Each week our resident hedonist **Saia Halatanu** explores the unfamiliar world of health and wellness for your entertainment and his own longevity.



Into the Abyss

Thus far, the early stages of my life have been good to me. Insofar as I can recall, I've yet to experience any illness or affliction warranting worry or complaint. I've had all my shots as a child, leisured through my episode with chicken pox and never had any problems with my teeth. No serious infections to report, never known to be deficient in any vital nutrients and hardly had a cold or flu; never have I ever even experienced motion sickness.

In short, the state of my health has been pretty good. So good, in fact, that I've felt entitled to indulge in some of life's more hedonistic pleasures. I feel that it's only right - such a strong condition of well-being and sturdy immune system would only be wasted if not used to its full extent. (Why own a ferrari if you don't put your foot down every so often, right?) I mean, I've read about all the health warnings and noted all the dangers in partaking in certain activities, moreover, I've been told about the cumulative effects of neglecting to look after one's self, but, thus far those effects have not manifested in any perceptible manner. Furthermore, socialising over a few beers is one of our country's greatest pastimes, who am I to argue with tradition? And what is a brew if not accompanied by a cigarette? And the pleasure derived from this combo can only be heightened after a lavish dinner and followed by a night on the town. Of course this type of behaviour isn't for everyone but again, not everyone has been lucky enough to be born with the endowments to withstand such rigorous pleasures.

Last I checked - and I did as part of a regulatory practice before starting an old job - my bill of health was faultless. As I was informed at the time by the health professional, my hearing was above average, vision was better than perfect and my sense of smell, taste and touch, respectively, all present and accounted for. I do admit that this was some years ago, however, I know good and well that all my necessary functions are still operationally fine. How do I know? Well, Gal Gadot is a beautiful sight from any distance, I can still tell you that Ke\$ha sounds like rubbish, my nose alerts me as to when I **should** shower, I tend to flinch and move away when I feel pain and my taste buds still dance when they come into contact with ice cold beer. All signs of a healthy individual.

Now admittedly, there have been murmurs of objection in regard to my views on the state of my own health and of course ones health isn't limited to the operation of one's

senses. I'm aware of this, so let me also reassure you that the rest of my physiology is in perfectly usable condition as well. While friends have informed me of the audible wheezing noise I make after walking a particular distance, they are comforted when I reply that the sound only occurs when I'm doing physical activity - my breathing is perfectly tranquil and noiseless when I'm sitting still. Similarly, I have been told that my coughing and spluttering (apparently somehow connected to my penchant for smoking) isn't a good indication of the condition of my lungs. Why not? That's what they're supposed to do when they're clearing themselves - I'd be worried if they weren't doing that. Furthermore, it has been suggested that I should, for some unstated reason, "go for a walk." Well, I feel that I'm quite capable of that task already and am not in need of anymore practice. In terms of dexterity, I truly believe that mine is second to none, evident by the absolute precision with which I am able to pour a drink without spilling a drop, even after my twelfth. My kidneys and liver have never given me any problems despite the fact that I have not shown them reciprocal kindness, and any headaches I experience are only a consequence of my own alcohol-fuelled volition. All things considered, my body is whole and complete and my bodily functions operate as their purpose would have them - all this despite a pretty voluptuary lifestyle.

Nonetheless, despite being such a marvellous natural oddity on the inside, the presentation has seen some decline. I mean, I did notice a little discolouring in certain areas and some silhouettes weren't quite as detailed as I remembered them to be but I was of the impression that this was a mark of seniority. 'Character illustrated by age' was the look I thought I portrayed, 'character illustrated by Ralph Steadman' is probably closer to accurate. And so, at the behest of friends and family who concern over my appearance and well-being, and probably just to prove to them that I am completely healthy and in very little need of any upgrade, I plan to undertake a programme of self-improvement. Starting next week, over the course of the semester, I will attempt to endure all manner of health fads, diets and various methods of self-development with the aim of improving my health and well being. This column shall chronicle my pilgrimage to #fitspo showcasing how I've chosen to waste my time and money on things I don't really want to do for a purpose that I believe is unnecessary. In any case, join Craccum each week as we strive to provide the reader some entertainment at the cost of my comfort and pride. ■

PRUNE JUICE

Self explanatory, the drink helps you cleanse and digest. Each week **Sherry Zhang** breaks down life's incongruous mess into digestible chunks.



An Exploration on Conversing Over Space and Media

"I overthink your p-punctuation use. Not my fault, just a thing that my mind do." -The louvre by Lorde

1. Timing your snapchat replies to your crush with mathematical equation, the perfect ratio of 'seens,' use of bitmojis, and looking candid.

I once played secretary of press as my mate asked me if she looked cute enough, "but not like I'm trying too hard...no wait can you take it again... actually never mind I'll do it myself... where should I position the text? Over my face, or in the middle."

"Nah just leave it where it naturally falls so it's looks like you didn't just spend half an hr taking the same photo in the same position,"

"Right, yeah also I'll make it sound like I'm asking a whole bunch of people to the movies but it's just him. Yeah, ha that's brilliant."

2. Repeating the same process on facebook messenger, over text. Scientific formulas to open ended questions, the number of hahahahas, lols, and <3 emojis dropped in. To heart react or to angry react?

Remember how Gatsby believed in the green light, "the unattainable dream," and half the novel you read for NCEA English was about Leonardo diCaprio staring at that green light across the dock. I developed a similar kind of attachment to the green light icon on messenger. It meant that they were online... they were available. Except not really, because I didn't have the balls to actually chat anyone up. Slide into the dm's with thinly veiled questions about this week's assignment.

This isn't new. This isn't some millennial fascination with technology, urgency and fragmented relationships. I can promise you the baby boomers probably did the same thing with the number of telephone rings just dressed in big hair and leather pants. Even further back, some Romeo out there overthought a reply to Juliet with perfumed love letters and sonnets. Sappho must have over analysed something or other.

3. But now I'm an adult. Who doesn't really know how to email their lecturer.

It's a new academic year. I'm not a nervous first year anymore. And it's about time I know how to send professional emails. I've had my serious email address for a while now, making that shift from classics such as magicalmoonlight@hotmail.com (don't try to email me I've long forgotten the password) to various combinations of my first and last name followed by gmail.com.

I'm in a rock and a hard place. Do I begin with: *Hey John! Hello John Smith, Heya ya boi Jono,*

All sound terrible. And how about ending the email? I sound like an idiot when I say:

*Many thanks,
Sherry*

When I've spent the whole rest of the email already thanking them for office hours.

I'm trying to suck up, but not that hard. And Sincerely and faithfully, what's the difference? And then after the thank you, they reply with "All the best, Happy to help". Do I keep going? Do I go "thank you for replying to my thank you"?

4. Today I tried to network: emailing amazing powerful successful woman in their chosen career, knowing I'll be lucky to get automated reply.

My friend and I discussed it. I was going to email her from my serious email, not my @aucklanduni.ac.nz email. I was half in love with her, I'm not going to name who she is because that's shooting myself in the foot.

DO YOU REMEMBER THAT 30 SECOND CONVO WE HAD THAT TIME WELL I'M IN LOVE WITH U, AND I REALLY LOOK UP TO U. UR CONFIDENCE AND PASSION IN UR CHOSEN INDUSTRY, AND I JUST WANT TO LEARN EVERYTHING FROM YOU. I WILL BE MORE THAN HAPPY TO JUST GRAB YOUR COFFEE, ARRANGE YOUR PAPER CLIPS IN COLOUR ORDER, ANYTHING.

HERE IS MY CV PLUS AN ACROSTIC POEM OF YOUR NAME!!!111!

5. But honestly tinder is the best lesson I've had in just doing, just replying rather than overthinking.

It means nothing, there are so many possible matches. You might as well chuck in something wacky, or use the classic "cute dog" opener. It doesn't matter if they reply or don't, you'll never see them again. Even if you did, you probably wouldn't even recognise them. Ghosting is expected, I do it and you do it. Does it matter? Not really, we're all busy. Except when it's 1am on a quiet night.

And then it's the next morning.

And we'll never talk again. Or maybe we will, and I'll chuck you a cute Gif. ■

ECCENTRIC LIFE ADVICE

Each week **Astrid Crosland** provides instructions on how to improve your life in some small, but important ways.



One: How to Increase Productivity

The computer is the greatest and most terrible of the numerous devices we have let into our homes thinking they will make our lives easier. It allows us access to all the wonders of endless human knowledge. It also offers us access to the horrors endless contact with humanity facilitates.

There is a great deal of traditional advice directed at how to turn things on, but this is far more practical advice as requires no preparation, peacocking, or paraphernalia. In lieu of turning off the contraption entirely, which is simply not practical for many of us, I offer an exercise to streamline the functions of the computer into something akin to an electronic typewriter with digital storage.

The immediate observable results will be a sudden sense of true isolation, followed by a distant ring of relief, and a decrease in the constant anxiety that comes from being contactable at all times.

The recommended duration and frequency of this exercise for beginners is a few minutes per day though some naturally talented folks find they have an ability to go much longer. Ultimately it is consistency in the practice that will yield superior results. After the desired period, the steps may be repeated, with the final word in the last action supplanted with "On."

To accomplish the exercise:

- Find Wifi icon.
- Click it.
- Select "Turn Wifi Off". ■

She can't even turn around.

Sign the petition to ban farrowing crates.

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O WEEK 2018



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HOROSCOPES

Our local oracles Annalise Boland & Bianca D'Souza have studied the stars this week and provided us with predictions for our future. Stay tuned for a weekly update on your stars.



ARIES

MARCH 21 - APRIL 20

2018 is the year of self-empowerment, Aries. This could be in terms of your career, or even detoxing yourself from negative friendships. Stand up for yourself and you will see nothing but benefits in the long term.



TAURUS

APRIL 21 - MAY 21

It is a crucial time to make changes to your belief system and develop a different attitude towards living your life. Empower yourself by stepping out of your comfort zone and creating workable goals that will satisfy you in the long term.



GEMINI

MAY 22 - JUNE 21

Now is the time to open yourself up to those you normally wouldn't, Gemini. Be it family members or old friends, a simple conversation could not only teach you more about them, but also about yourself.



CANCER

JUNE 22 - JULY 22

By mid-Feb dear Cancer, you'll be feeling freer and more confident to go after what you desire. You can be in control of enhancing your own productivity by initiating new projects. Your emotions may be overwhelming at first; however if you embrace them and take a stand you will feel more empowered.



LEO

JULY 23 - AUGUST 21

Now is the time to organise your life. Instead of waiting for others to act, make the first move - this could be in regards to your romantic relationships or work. This will benefit both parties, and with your strong, resilient personality, you are more than likely to get what you want.



VIRGO

AUGUST 22 - SEPTEMBER 23

Virgo, you are in an excellent place to better yourself by exploring new opportunities for self-expression. Don't hold back - instead embrace the great position you are in to achieve your goals. You will feel empowered by devoting energy into looking after yourself.



LIBRA

SEPTEMBER 24 - OCTOBER 23

All the hard work you've done these past few months is finally paying off. Although you may face more challenges on the way before you achieve your goal, your determination will get you through it. Patience and perseverance will get you what you desire in the end.



SCORPIO

OCTOBER 24 - NOVEMBER 22

Although you are feeling nervous about the next few months, dear Scorpio, things will work out for you. The storm will pass and you will soon be welcomed by nothing but happiness. Keep your head up and surround yourself with positive people and you will soon be moving forward onto a more fulfilling and exciting chapter in your life.



SAGITTARIUS

NOVEMBER 23 - DECEMBER 22

It's time to renew an old project or hobby that you may have forgotten to include in the new year.

Sagittarius, you can empower yourself to the core by focusing on socializing, connecting, learning, and sharing your life with those who surround you and new people that you may connect with.



CAPRICORN

DECEMBER 23 - JANUARY 20:

Darling Capricorn, don't panic if you face some resistance or tension - take the time you need to get back in control of your life. Now is the time to quit a bad habit and remind yourself of all those empowering thoughts that help you regain balance.



AQUARIUS

JANUARY 21 - FEBRUARY 19

You're beginning to see positive changes in yourself lately, Aquarius, and it keeps getting better from here. Whether it's developing better lifestyle habits or moving past negative patterns, more and more you are becoming a person that you can be proud of. Keep moving in the right direction and you will love the person you become.



PISCES

FEBRUARY 20 - MARCH 20

Dear Pisces, this is your month! It is a beautiful time for making connections that last, being more hands on and taking on responsibilities that will help you reach your larger goals. Your sensitive nature is what makes you so special, embrace it!

THE PEOPLE TO SUPPORT (AND LOVE).

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