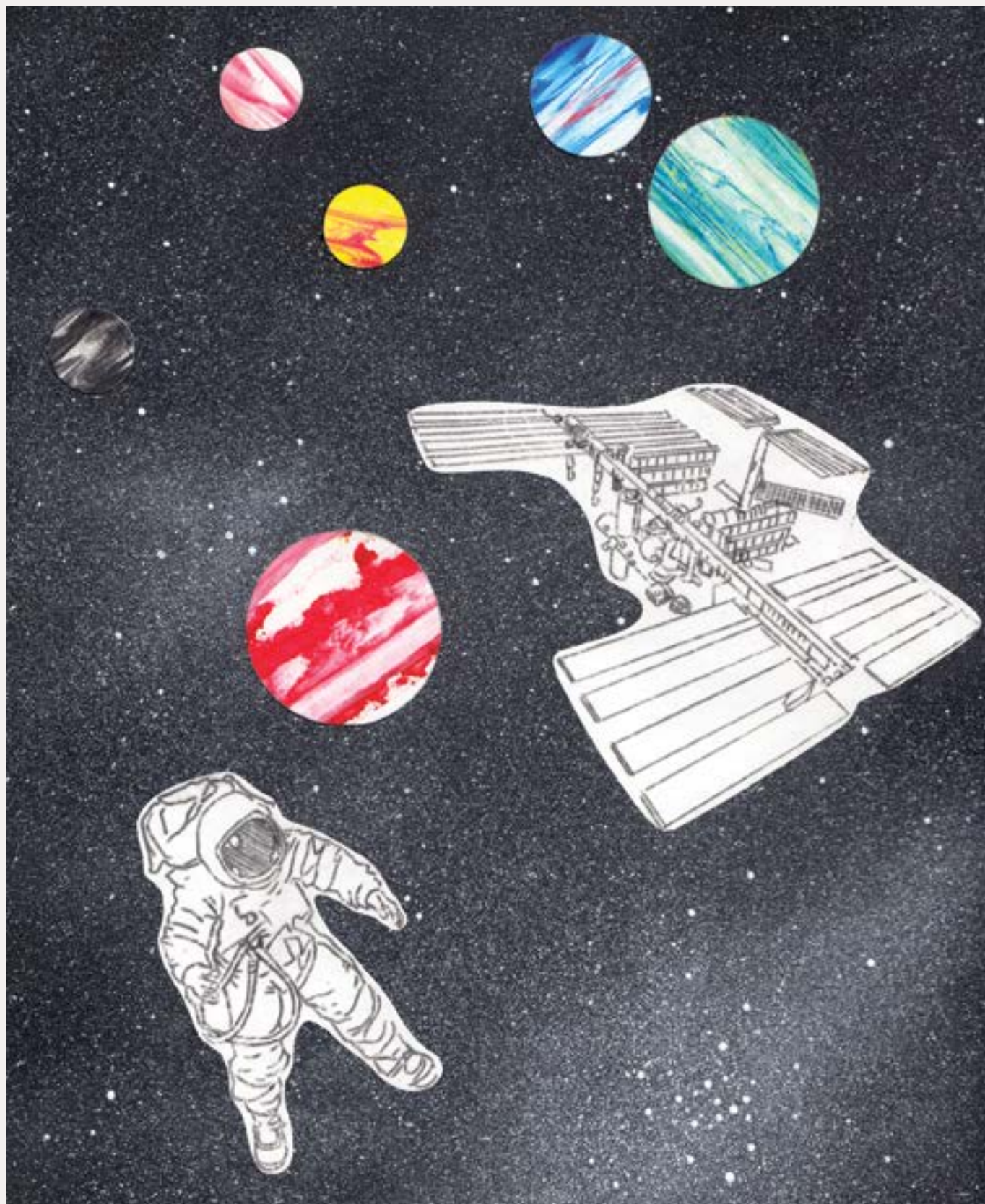


# CRACCUM



## The Final Frontier

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Lucie Green; steers clear of *Star Trek* references

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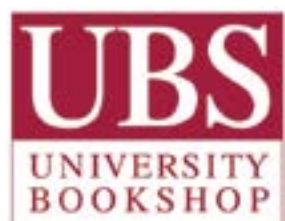
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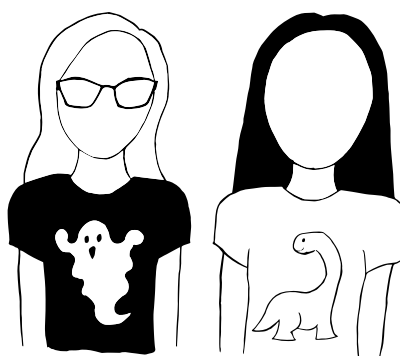
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Catriona Britton



Samantha Gianotti

## In Virginia, high school football is a way of life

We at *Craccum* are very fond of finding ways to distract ourselves from the crushing weight of ignoring course readings, bed times, and the fact that we haven't met our 5+ A Day requirement since 2008. Such means of distraction often manifest in the form of watching *Shrek 2* clips on YouTube, licking the flavour from Woodfire BBQ Copper Kettles, or weeping while watching *Remember the Titans* on Netflix for the seventh time in a month. During one particularly feverish YouTube spell, in between watching the music video for "Footloose" and "Ten Hours of *Kill Bill* Siren Sound", we stumbled across a video where a well-known vlogger sat down to do a paid advertorial for Tinder, giving her followers the skinny on how the app helped her meet her current boyfriend.

Paid advertorials offering cheeky promotion for a product are of course nothing new. Yet every man and his dog surely already knows what Tinder is for—an app to help you find a date, or meet new people, or to be downloaded in a fit of desperation after watching the cast and crew commentary on your DVD copy of *The Social Network* and realising that Andrew Garfield and Jesse Eisenberg were so in *love* with each other and did they *know* that they were both so in love with each other and if *those* two can't make it work then honestly what is the *point*?

There's certainly nothing wrong with people being paid money to promote products they

care about, or accepting free trials of things that their followers might be interested in. Hell, we'd accept and promote the shit out of a stack of Everlasting Gobstoppers, or tiny airplane-portion Cookie Time cookies, or some schweet *Remember the Titans* memorabilia. Whether we're seeing promotions for Tinder, or concealer, or that black charcoal mask that's all over Facebook and is terrifying and genuinely looks like it would rip out your nasal cartilage faster than you can say "Denzel Washington", the point is this: the corporate fat cats are working really, really hard for your money. Your time. Your approval. (Almost as hard as the TC Williams racially-integrated high school football team worked under Denzel Washington's tutelage in an early 2000s banger-of-a-football-film, amirite?) They seek out celebrity endorsements, targeting individuals with thousands of followers, having the people you love promote products they like in the hope that you might like them too.

And in doing this, they're giving us power. The bigwigs want us to buy certain things and watch certain things and listen to certain things. And it can be difficult to use this power wisely. (Great responsibility, and all that.) When we see films like *Manchester by the Sea* we may find ourselves giving tacit approval to a man accused of seedy and gross acts against women; when we contribute to *Dr Strange* grossing \$677 million worldwide we suggest that we don't *really* mind

when well-known characters are white and diversity is displaced in favour of actors with box office pull. But on the flipside, we can shape the trajectory of film or music or art or literature by demanding more, and abstaining from the things that don't serve to deliver us with enough. We can stand steadfast in our calls for greater diversity, or more effective representation in the movies we watch and the music we listen to; we can hold onto our hard-earned dollars and allow our abstention to amplify our voices when we speak out and say that what we've got now is not good enough. Platforms like Patreon and Kickstarter give us a direct line to donate to content producers we wish to support, allowing those out of the mainstream, privileged zeitgeist to receive direct support from fans, unconstrained by corporate concerns or agendas.

We get to decide where we draw the line, where we place our passions, where and how we spend our money. Whether it be taking a stand against films that partake in whitewashing and undermine the representation of minorities (@*Ghost in the Shell*, 2017), or supporting a film where high school football serves to heal a racial divide (@*Remember the Titans*, 2000), we can show what we care about through what we choose to consume. Denzel Washington demanded perfection from his players—we stand entitled to demand the same. ♦



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# THE FAMILY CARERS CASE RESURFACES

BY MEG WILLIAMS

The “Family Carers Case”, which may ring bells for some, is officially back in the Auckland High Court.

The case first appeared in 2012, when the courts ruled in a landmark decision that the Ministry of Health’s policy of refusing to pay family members to provide support services to their disabled family members was in conflict with the NZ Bill of Rights Act, as it was an unjustifiable discrimination on the basis of family status.

In response to this, the New Zealand Public Health and Disability Amendment Bill was passed under urgency. However, many viewed this as unsatisfactory as it still prohibits payments from being made to family members except in accordance with Funded Family Care policies. Effectively, the Bill as it stands only allows payments to some family members (but not spouses or partners) in very narrow circumstances.

The legislation also blocks any future claims being taken to the Human Rights Commission, the Human Rights Tribunal, or to the courts on the basis of the new legislation being discriminatory.

The issue has resurfaced, however, with a case being brought to the Auckland High Court to judicially review the decision to refuse to pay family members for hours they need to care for their disabled loved ones.

The plaintiffs in the current case are Dianne Moody, Shane Chamberlain, and Jane Carrigan. Mrs Moody is the mum and full-time carer of Shane, who is intellectually disabled. The case was heard before Justice Palmer of the High Court.

“He was very attentive and sympathetic to the plight of Shane and Dianne, as well as the family carers generally,” says

Golriz Ghahraman, one of the lawyers working for Shane Chamberlain’s case.

“[Palmer] was interested in the fairness argument, and in particular in the argument that there was a ‘legitimate expectation’ that not only fair process would be followed in making the funding determination, but an expectation as to the substantive outcome (that 40 hours of care would be funded).”

“This is a new legal argument in terms of New Zealand law, and His Honour asked that we address him on developments in this area in the UK.”

The Crown fought for the Ministry’s right to pay the family carers only for specified tasks. When asked by the judge whether this was a case about care or minutes and hours, the Crown said care could only be measured in terms of minutes and hours because only certain tasks could be paid for—not the full care provided by family carers.

“For the plaintiffs,” Ghahraman says, “another significant point was that NZ is a signatory to the UN Convention on the

Rights of Disabled Persons, which the Act does not appear to be opting out of.”

“We say the application of the Funded Care policy in this case creates a system that is discriminatory and degrading, in breach of the convention. We also argued that if the Government wants to opt out of an international obligation it must do so by explicit act of Parliament.”

“The Judge may rule on this point, which would be novel for NZ law.”

Paul Dale, one of the legal team members for Chamberlain, said, “The Crown say in this document that there is great fiscal consequence to making the payments sought.”

“But what is of great fiscal consequence is having this very senior and well paid team of Crown lawyers fighting over whether this lady should get paid \$15 per hour or not.”

The judgment will take at least a few months, and it is expected that the Crown will likely appeal any decision against them rather than advise the Ministry to reverse its policy. ♦



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# AULSS SEEKING SIGN-UPS FROM FIRST-YEAR LAW STUDENTS

BY ELOISE SIMS

Concerns have been expressed over the Auckland University Law Students' Society's decision to admit first-year students for the first time, after it emerged that Part I students were being charged \$10 more than Part II students for membership.

In a reported endeavour to make Part I students "feel welcome, and to ease the stress of first year", AULSS members have actively encouraged first-year sign-ups to the organisation.

While Part II and older students are being charged \$20 for membership (which includes free access to steins and exam workshops), Part I students are being charged \$30 for the same package.

A first-year student, who asked to remain unnamed, has expressed upset over AULSS' behaviour.

"The extra money they're charging us makes me, and other first-year Law students feel like they're exploiting our fear about getting into next year for their own monetary

gain."

"It's a strange spot to be in. We're full of a lot of uncertainty."

When contacted for comment on the difference in entrance fee, AULSS President Jason An stated that the increased cost was to compensate for organising workshops for a larger group of students, requiring "bigger lecture theatres and... more students to come and take these workshops".

He further noted that the time spent organising additional events was a factor, noting that AULSS already "ha[s] close to 30 events that we run in the course of a term so adding more for part Is [sic] will take a lot [of] our own time," and that while the AULSS Executive do not pay themselves a wage for their work, they wish "to be able to raise funds to make improvements at [the] law school."

Additionally, he expressed that there "must still be some benefit for making it into law school and being part 2 [sic] and up";

a benefit that cheaper membership would provide.

He noted also that the increased fee was to combat financial loss AULSS would suffer by allowing first-years to become members, as first-years are a significant market for stein ticket sales; if they receive free entry through membership, "that in turn makes [AULSS] lose money in future ticket sales and thus that must be recovered somewhere."

An concluded, "We are a student organisation. We don't charge extra so that we can pay each other or buy appliances for our common rooms. Our rationale behind every decision we make is what is fair for our students."

Fourth-year Law student, Meg Williams, has condemned the strategy as exploitative of the vulnerability of first-year students.

"Most of those students won't get into Part II Law, so it just sounds like a way to squeeze some money out of them before they're kicked to the curb." ♦

# "I HAVE A DREAM TO BE WORSE THAN HITLER" SAYS AUT EUROPEAN STUDENTS ASSOCIATION PREZ

BY LAUREN WATSON

You may have thought it was over after the "Auckland University European Students Association" had shut down. However, in the wake of the O-Week publicity storm, the AUT New Zealand European Students Association subsequently formed in early March.

The group claimed in an interview with *Stuff* that, much like the University of Auckland European Students Association, they were "trying to educate people on European cultures".

Activities of the club included meeting up once a week, to study a European culture and eat food related to that culture.

Their Facebook page featured a Latin motto that translated to, "Build better communities through understanding others"—in

contrast to the University of Auckland organisation, whose motto was thought to be reference to the SS, and whose page displayed images of William Hobson.

However, the club has somewhat come under recent controversy, after the organisation's President featured this quote on his Twitter biography:

"One question to ask yourself: are you a feminist? If so, fuck off into the kitchen."

"If not, hi, how are you?"

On the same account that has now been deleted, he also tweeted, "I have a dream to one day be worse than Hitler" followed by a joke about the Holocaust.

Both he and the Vice-President of the AUT NZ European Students Association

declined to comment on his tweets when contacted by *Craccum*.

In speaking with *Stuff*, President Steven Hofman of the Australasian Union of Jewish Students New Zealand said this "only adds to the discomfort Jewish students already feel in expressing their Jewish identity on campus, because of fear of vilification and abuse".

AUJS New Zealand have also requested AUT perform a full investigation into the club's activities, and the individual responsible.

AUT's Clubs Department have not formally responded at the time of print.

However, they have previously stated that the new club was not affiliated with the university in any way, having not registered with other clubs in early March. ♦

# HALF OF ALL AUCKLANDERS BLAME ASIAN INVESTORS FOR HOUSING PRICES

BY MARK CASSON

A recent survey has found that Auckland residents are blaming the Asian culture group and foreign investors for the ever-increasing price of the housing market.

Nearly 54% of residents surveyed within Auckland and Hamilton felt that Asian residences and foreign investors were driving housing prices up. The survey was done by the Asia New Zealand Foundation, with the findings displayed in their annual magazine, *Think Asia*.

*NewsHub* interviewed the foundation's Executive Director, Simon Draper, to comment on the results.

Draper stated, "We tried to shine a bit of light rather than heat on the issue."

"Four per cent of house sales to foreigners were recorded by Land Information New Zealand—and just over half were to Chinese people."

"So if you think two per cent is driving those house price increases, that seems a stretch to us."

The Asia New Zealand Foundation

has been studying and surveying New Zealanders on attitudes toward our Asian community for nineteen years.

With the mounting pressure from foreign investors, the housing market is sure to rise with a huge number of homeowners not being New Zealand residences.

But being a foreign investor, doesn't necessarily mean they're of Asian ethnicity.

University of Auckland student Pamela Widjaja said, "If they are targeting Asian people for the cost of the increasing housing market, then I do find that offensive."

"Most people are aware that Asians aren't to blame. People are mature enough to know that. But most investors are from overseas, and it does create an impact on the local residents."

Homeowner and local resident Max Zhang notes, "The whole world is changing, the traditional trading environment is crashing."

"Businesses are looking for other ways

to make money, and properties are a good way to invest money—which is what attracts a lot of foreign investors to New Zealand."

The study also found that 45% of all respondents thought New Zealand was allowing too much investment from Asia, but 51% were positive about the long-term benefits of immigration from Asia to New Zealand. ♦



# 1200 TEACHERS STRIKE FOR FAIR PAY AT UOA

BY MATTHEW NICKLESS

The Tertiary Education Union at the University of Auckland went on strike on March 16<sup>th</sup>, protesting the lack of equal pay at UoA.

A press release from the TEU stated that the strike was in response to the Vice-Chancellor's refusal to agree to requests made by the TEU for "an equal pay increase for all of our members", and a living wage for the lowest paid members of University staff.

It is estimated that 1200 TEU-aligned teachers and workers took strike action, with around 300 attending a rally at the City Campus.

This protest was the latest in what seems like a long and drawn out history of bargaining between the two parties.

While the University has continually

raised fees for students by the maximum 4% allowed, it would seem that they have been reluctant to do the same with staff wages.

The main point of the protest appears to be that while pay rises have been offered, the increments have not been equal across the board.

This leaves some staff with a wage that is below the living wage, calculated at \$20.20 per hour by the New Zealand Family Centre Social Policy Unit. It is for these staff members that the TEU is advocating in its latest strike action.

The issues raised by the TEU are not unique to Auckland either.

In Wellington, where the cost of living has been increasing, Victoria University also saw

calls for a living wage during Orientation Week.

Staff at VUW were joined by students and alumni who voiced support for the policy, reflecting the impact that University staff have on the student body and the wider community.

In speaking with *Radio New Zealand*, TEU spokesperson Josanne Blyth said that the strike action was to support the lowest-paid members of the University community.

"A lot of those people are on wages they struggle with."

"This is an institute that teaches equity, we have students work here—it's about them seeing that this institution can treat people fairly." ♦



# KETAMINE—PARTY DRUG TO ANTIDEPRESSANT?

BY LAURA KVIGSTAD

Ketamine is being used in a clinical trial at the University of Auckland for its antidepressive effects. Dr. Suresh Muthukumaraswamy, a senior research fellow in the University's School of Pharmacy and Psychology, is conducting the study.

The report "Recent Trends in Illegal Drug Use in New Zealand 2005-2007", published by Massey University, found ketamine to appeal to drug abusers for its 1–2 hour hallucinations. Ketamine was linked to a range of "unpleasant psychological effects including anxiety, panic attacks, flashbacks, persistent perceptual changes, depression, suicide, paranoid delusions, fragmentation of personality and aggression."

On December 1<sup>st</sup> 2010, ketamine was scheduled as a Class C drug under the Misuse of Drugs Act 1975. The possession of ketamine can result in 3 months in jail and/or a \$500 fine.

Participants of the trials will have been diagnosed with a major depressive disorder, are currently experiencing a depressive episode, and have tried two or more antidepressant that did not have an effect on them.

Rebecca Grass, a postgraduate student aiding in study, explains that they are using a

"sedative dose about a 1/10th of the anesthetic dose." She further explained that the dose is low to avoid psychosis and hallucinations.

Rachael Sumner, another postgraduate student contributing to the study, explained that before participants can enter the study they are given an approximately two-hour long evaluation—that includes examination of psychology, physiology and family history in order to reduce risk to those involved with the study.

The study has recruited 10 participants so far. Of these participants, three have completed the study, with two showing signs of benefitting from ketamine treatment.

Sumner wished to explain that participants are "wanting to further the understanding of depression, in order to make other people's experiences better than what they've had."

Muthukumaraswamy explained the trials will be underway over the next year, but hopes studies on ketamine will continue beyond this. ♦

IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS IN REGARDS TO THE STUDY, YOU CAN GET IN CONTACT WITH REBECCA AT [DEPTRIAL@AUCKLAND.AC.NZ](mailto:DEPTRIAL@AUCKLAND.AC.NZ) OR CALL 098891904.



Notice is hereby given for the  
**AUSA AUTUMN  
 GENERAL MEETING**  
 to be held  
**WEDNESDAY, 29 MARCH 2017**  
 at 1.00 pm  
 Student Union Quad

All motions for this meeting must be handed in to the AUSA Office Manager by the following dates:

Deadline for Constitutional Changes is 12pm, Tuesday, 14 March 2017.

Deadline for Other Agenda Items is 12pm, Tuesday, 21 March 2017.



your student  
experience



## An American In Auckland

*Fleeing the tyranny of the Trump Administration, Adnan Ahmed writes about his experience moving down under to little ol' New Zealand*

It's 7am in the CBD, and nobody is willing to serve me the nine beers I need to start the day. By nobody, I mean the faux Belgian bar on Vulcan Lane. To keep this fine establishment from calling the police on a degenerate ordering nine litres of beer in the morning, I asked for six orders of waffles for the eight other friends that I claimed will be joining me for morning drinks. Well of course, not all of us want heavy waffles for breakfast, some of us just want 6% beer. I down all the beers as fast as I can before the waitress comes back with the waffles.

"Bacon? Can't you see that I'm a devout Muslim?! I can't eat swine. My Muslim friends are so offended, they came and left, barely touching their beers. We will never drink another drop of beer from this establishment." I started off eloquent, but the sauce hit me and I'm pretty sure I said the first part of my statement a dozen times. She informs me I still owe her \$150 for all the beer, so I pay her with three crisp \$50 notes and leave. I hope the staff have a nice breakfast of rejected bacon waffles. It's on me, workers. The Belgian immigrant serving me probably gets paid minimum wage; she probably doesn't get bathroom breaks and has to clock out before starting her cleaning duties. This is a wonderfully efficient workplace process imported from the hard-working business administrators in their corner offices of America.

Two months ago, I barely managed to escape the Homeland with my American passport, a 24-pack of Budweiser, and a suitcase full of skinny-leg Levi's. I thought I would be able to barter those American jeans for rent, food and booze, but there's something shady going on in the Auckland property game, and my plan fell flat on its face. Also, 5% Budweiser is available in New Zealand. It's twice as expensive as in the Homeland, but still cheaper than even the cheapest 4% Lion Red. Why?

I needed to escape America. Trump is

in power, and he's got all the racists and fascists behind him. I don't think he really cares enough to dislike my kind so much, but he does have to perform for the people that voted him in. Along with that, I heard everything in Auckland is halal. So why not join the University and hang out with kiwis? Who doesn't love a Muslim-American refugee? Certainly not the 4,500,000 New Zealanders who are willing to take a colossal 1,000 people a year. With such a high number, NZ would be able to fill Eden Park full of refugees after only 50 years.

I honestly don't know what the hell happened. I don't know one person who voted for Trump. Either that, or about half of my white female friends were lying to me. I highly doubt it, however, as they don't think sexual assault is an acceptable form of greeting. Maybe Russia did do something. Maybe the Cold War didn't end with the falling of the Berlin Wall. Maybe it ended after Russia put Trump in power. I guess they won. But the numbers simply don't add up. Most of the fascists I have seen wanting to see Trump in power are too illiterate to register to vote. Or maybe, everyone's impressions of Americans are accurate. Maybe I'm wrong.

In any case, I'm here to stay intoxicated for the remainder of Trump's Presidency. And from what I hear, 4–8 years is about the average for a degree at UoA, so this works out well with the amount of Levi's I stuffed in my luggage. Where I'm from, the temperature ranges from  $-30^{\circ}\text{C}$  to  $38^{\circ}\text{C}$ , so being here provides stability. The walls in homes aren't insulated, and maybe it feels colder inside than I've ever felt, but at least the fascists are far away. It rains a lot in really annoying ways here, but we have Trump over in the US chipping away at everyone's civil liberties, so I think Auckland wins again.

I'm doing my best to make the World's Highest climb. Apparently, the Law School is

accepting more degenerates this year than ever before, and I'm in. But you first have to climb the highest ascent through Albert Park. And a minute after the plateau, the cops usher me into the basement of the library. I thought they were going to round-up all of us degenerates and execute us like they do down in the slums of Brazil. To my horror, I learned instead that there is no defence of provocation in New Zealand—I can't assault someone because I don't like their opinion. My god, how do you people talk about politics if punching an opponent isn't allowed?! Or are politics never discussed, and instead there are debates on whether an Australian should design the NZ flag?

As I sit there hearing all my professors either using Trump as an example for assault, or just generally making fun of him, I zone out and think about how America is the butt of all the jokes, and Canada is seen as virile; how thousands of Kiwis actually left their homes because the weather was great and protested the TPPA to no avail, but Trump effectively stopped it by just saying "yeah, nah"; and how I feel more American in New Zealand than I ever did in the United States.

No doubt the fascism will follow New Zealand just as McDonald's, Burger King, KFC, Subway, Carl's Jr, Dunkin Donuts, Starbucks, Pizza Hut, Dominos, Denny's and the Obesity Epidemic™ did. Kiwis will do anything for a bit of Americana. Hell, if you want to dupe customers into eating at your restaurant, just throw in an American state in front of the food you make (e.g. "Texas" Chicken or "Wisconsin" Burger). Lucky for most Kiwis, Trump only knows New Zealand because of Bob Charles, the golfer. Once he realises this is a huge country with a lot of coastline and resources, the Sky Tower may become the Trump Sky Tower. Goddamn, I need a drink. ♦

# Policy vs. The Politician

By Rachel Buckman

Passionate and controversial political debate is one of my favourite kinds of verbal jousting. (You could say I'm getting more joy out of election year than your average 20-year-old.)

Don't let that confuse you into thinking I'm an expert—I'm just opinionated and vocal. As someone with an average level of political knowledge, I've noticed something interesting about how us "normal folk" talk about politics. Our "political conversations" sound less like in-depth discussion about particular policies that matter deeply to us, and much more like a gossip session about our least favourite politicians.

The housing crisis seems to require an Economics degree to understand properly, but anyone can channel their inner high-school mean girl and make a judgement call on the personalities that continuously pop up in the news. We're doing it before we even realise it. The problem is, with a few throwaway comments a politician can forever polarise your opinion—so is it a valid place to base your political stance?

Case and point—Bill English. Only Prime Minister for a handful of months, but he's made a few choices I'd categorise as questionable. He's made it clear he's not a feminist. He's not pro-choice. He's not going to visit Waitangi on Waitangi Day. These are all statements that could easily turn you against him as an individual. If you decide you're not big fan of Bill English, does that also mean you're not a big fan of the National party? Are the two the same thing?

Mulling over an article about required child immunisation and Andrew Little's claim that it's "well worth looking into", a friend made an interesting conclusion.

"You know what the problem with the Labour party is? Andrew Little is stupid."

The man's level of intelligence isn't important. The point is that Andrew Little is just one person, yet every word out of his mouth has the appearance of also speaking for his party. Modern media can shoulder some of the blame for this. The internet allows quotes to stick like tattoos to politicians, following them around until they start to seem like political mantras.

We can claim to be neutral and unbiased, but it's difficult to distinguish between politics you don't

agree with, and a person you just don't like. Instinctively this may seem contrary to good and wholesome political discourse. While I do believe there is a need to become informed rather than just pick whoever you get a good vibe from, when it comes to our two largest parties, there is some justification to judging their leaders. Unless something quite strange happens, one of those men will be the next Prime Minister. No matter what your voting slip says, you're not just voting for a party, your vote also influences who is going to represent our country for the next three years. In an MMP system with coalitions and supply and trade agreements (excuse the lingo, I took Law121 and it potentially forever changed me), even if you're not voting for National or Labour your vote isn't exactly neutral.

We don't live in some dystopian system where our leader is all-powerful, but that doesn't mean the position isn't an *incredibly* important factor in how we perceive our country. The Prime Minister is the person who stands on stages at flash international events and who will, ideally, inspire awe in the eyes of impressionable young kids. Whatever degree of patriotism you possess, you still have a right to want a person you feel comfortable with being the figurehead of New Zealand. That means judging not just their policies, but their personality and morals generally. To a lesser (yet still very tangible) degree, you could say the same applies to every MP sitting in Parliament.

While politics shouldn't bubble down to a popularity contest, maybe it's impossible to separate the politics from the politicians completely. We can't have faith in policies if we don't have faith in the people creating them. However, it seems confidence is threatening to dwindle out in New Zealand. When was the last time you heard anyone (who wasn't a Young Nat/Young Labour member) voice passionate support for any of the options in front of them?

*Craccum* might not be the best litmus test for public political support. Yet at the same time, if some student is going to write an article in a university magazine, you'd like to think it would be a touch more optimistic than this. ♦

## CHARITY/ORGANISATION OF THE WEEK

SPCA Auckland helps protect approximately 15,000 sick, injured, lost, abused, or abandoned animals in Auckland every year. They are the only charity with the power to prosecute people under the Animal Welfare Act 1999. They rely entirely on the generosity of the community to do their important work, as they receive no government funding.

Community Editor Rebecca's cat Jack was ad-

opted from the SPCA. Initially he was very shy and nervous, but since being adopted he's developed an outgoing personality and loves cuddling anyone he meets.

If you're thinking about getting a pet, or interested in supporting the SPCA's great work, check out their website at [WWW.SPCAAUCKLAND.ORG.NZ](http://WWW.SPCAAUCKLAND.ORG.NZ) or give them a ring on (09) 256 7300.

## Upcoming Community Events

Ready to  
**Dress for Success?**

**When:** 30<sup>th</sup> March, 5:00pm–8:30pm

**Where:** The Sapphire Room, Ponsonby Central, 136–138 Ponsonby Rd

**Price:** Free!

**Age restrictions:** All ages

**Event info:** "Get the girls together for an evening of designer shopping and support a cause that makes a difference to the women in our community. Incredible designer and vintage garments. Clothing sizes 6–16+, shoes, accessories, handbags. In Auckland, we currently assist over 1,500 women each year as they enter or return to the workforce – through our wraparound programmes – dressing, career support and job retention and leadership."

**Find out more at:**

[HTTPS://WWW.EVENTFINDA.CO.NZ/2017/DRESS-FOR-SUCCESS-AUCKLAND-DESIGNER-FASHION-SALE/AUCKLAND/PONSONBY](https://www.eventfinda.co.nz/2017/dress-for-success-auckland-designer-fashion-sale/auckland/ponsonby)

Interested in politics? Want to do your part in NZ after the horrors of #Brexit and Trump? Come along to the

**Speaker Series!**

**When:** 3<sup>rd</sup> April, 6:30pm–9:30pm

**Where:** Owen G Glenn Building, in the Fisher & Paykel Appliances Auditorium

**Price:** Free!

**Age restrictions:** All ages

**Event info:** "The Management Consulting Club has assembled a line-up of the most influential MPs to undergo intellectual combat to secure your vote! Our all-star panel includes: Jami-Lee Ross (National), Jacinda Ardern (Labour), James Shaw (co-leader, Greens), Fletcher Tabuteau (New Zealand First), Marama Fox (co-leader, Māori), David Seymour (leader, ACT), Peter Dunne (leader, United Future), Geoff Simmons (Opportunities), Elliot Ikilei (Conservative)."

**Find out more at:**

[HTTPS://WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/EVENTS/693061960876086/](https://www.facebook.com/events/693061960876086/)





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# THE REBIRTH OF MĀORI REPRESENTATION IN POP CULTURE

*Daniel Vernon explores both the positives and setbacks associated with the revitalisation of Māori culture amongst youth in our new media landscapes*

When I enrolled in this university, when I applied for Studylink, and when I enrolled to vote, I declared each time that I was of Māori descent; a fact that my friends often tease me about. I can't really blame them when the only physical attributes that tie me to my Māori heritage are my big lips and my large, squashed nose. That's not my fault, though—my great grandmother ended up in an arranged marriage with a Pākehā man she could barely communicate with. The result of that marriage was sixteen children, and one of those children is my grandfather.

Growing up, I felt like I had perhaps inherited some of the negative connotations associated with my Māori heritage; alcoholism runs rampant through my fam-

ily, we often fluctuated around the official poverty line, and I have borne witness to handfuls of verbal and physical violence. Homophobia and sexism were topics of light conversation at the numerous family reunions I had to endure. Growing up, this all just seemed like the norm to me; most of my life was spent in a small town called Paeroa, and I attended the local low-decile high school where more than half the enrolment was Māori. All of them had similar issues to me growing up. Sure, we studied *Once Were Warriors*, but the only quote that lives from that is “cook the man some fucking eggs” and it's in the form of a meme online. I couldn't wait to leave and move to the big city and I couldn't have cared less about my culture at the time.

It all came to a head when I went home one weekend during my first year of study and I had to listen to my great uncle fat-shame his then three-year-old granddaughter as he ate a rotisserie chicken off the bone (dripping grease over a shirt that barely contained his pot-belly in the process). I decided at this point that I wanted nothing to do with this side of my family's heritage, and that I had to return to my true home—THE CITY—where progress was on the lips of my peers, and there were more retail options than just The Warehouse.

But as I grew older and moved away from some of the stigmas that made me resent being Māori, I became more aware (and thankful) for this side of my culture

“... I became more aware (and thankful) for this side of my culture that I seemed to have forgotten. I soon came to realise that Māori culture wasn't really a culture, it was more of a *community*...”

that I seemed to have forgotten. I soon came to realise that Māori culture wasn't really a culture, it was more of a *community*: a community where your favourite and most supportive aunts, uncles and even grandparents aren't the ones who are related to you by blood, but the ones who would give you the clothes off their backs and support you, no matter how big your dreams were: "When you've got nothing, you've nothing to lose". These people become your role models, your influencers, and you live by their words. Watching my Uncle Wally play music on a three-string guitar that was 40% fishing line, and re-working popular songs on the spot into funny roasts of people in the room, drove me to want to hog the spotlight and make people laugh. He was Paeroa's very own Billy T James. My Tipuna were my second parents growing up; my Kui—a very patient woman—taught me how to draw, and the art of a sarcastic sense of humour; my Koro, a weathered traditionalist, believes wholeheartedly to this day that I will be a successful comic book artist.

If we look further afield than our local communities, however, the search for Māori role models starts to fall short. Outside of Billy T James, various All Blacks, and the cast of *Bro Town*, growing up Māori in New Zealand made it hard to find a hero in pop culture to relate to and learn from. More importantly, it was hard to find someone who could inspire me to learn more about my heritage. This was a noticeable problem growing up; I felt disenfranchised by the negative aspects of Māori culture that I was exposed to regularly, and the lack of a positive influence in popular culture certainly didn't help either.

With an increased demand for accessible and government funded Māori content, Māori Television was launched in 2004 as a free-to-air broadcaster that specialised in both Māori-specific content as well as locally-produced content that didn't fit the commercial brand of the main networks. This initially-great achievement of Māori representation in

the media would soon be beholden to the confines of its platform: advertising, scheduled viewing, censorship, and unfortunately, front row seats for the death of the medium it sought so hard to represent. More noticeably, in the 2010s, television audiences began migrating in droves to a new platform that would be a true revitalisation of Māori culture, a chance for it to move forward in a modern landscape: the internet.

Around this time, the lovely ladies at the Paeroa Community Library didn't realise that they would soon bear witness to a social history milestone, as a small phenomenon unfolded in the aisles—the library's population suddenly went from a handful of conservative homebodies returning their soft-core *Mills and Boon* novels to an influx of Māori youth. This unexpected incursion during after-school hours wasn't because these kids wanted to wrap their imaginations around lack-luster tales of a boy wizard and his naïve friends; it was for the free Wi-Fi that the library offered, a gateway to partake in the early stages of the social media platform and to keep up with the hottest viral videos. Places like the library and McDonald's became a haven for social activity as a lot of the poorer local families couldn't afford a broadband connection (to this day my mum still has dial-up internet, and in turn, less frequent visits from me). It wasn't a surprise that the internet appealed to younger generations of Māori viewers and creators; it finally offered what Māori culture needed to survive—a platform where a generation could be honest, unfiltered and given a chance to build on tradition.

One of the first groups to take advantage of this was called *J Geek and The Geeks*—they became one of the first local internet sensations with their comedic song/video, *Māori Boy*, which earned over 50,000 views in its first week of release, charted on the RIANZ charts at number 38, and even Soulja Boy took a break from "jocking on them haterz" to retweet the video. The JGeeks described themselves as

"metro-Māori", blending traditions from Māori culture with metrosexuality and modern dance music of the time (Lady Gaga and Adam Lambert were cited as inspirations), and the group went on to produce successful viral follow-ups such as *I Love Hangi, I'm a Taniwha* and "Ghost Chips" (song). Despite their popularity, elder traditionalists disapproved of the JGeeks metrosexual elements and unorthodox uses of *Tā moko*, the *Taiaha* and *Patu*. But local online audiences loved it, and the group's mix of Māori tradition and use of *Te Reo* in their lyrics offered an entry point for a younger generation to learn about our rich heritage and to reclaim and be proud of what came before.

With the growth of social media, a proverbial double-edged sword was pulled from the stone: *internet commentary*. Debates and decisions around the use of Māori culture were no longer beholden to television and voting forms. The internet created a social forum where the public could support or picket against appropriate and inappropriate uses on these new platforms. One of the first examples of this occurred during the 2011 Rugby World Cup. During this time, one of the first viral trends had just taken off—flashmobbing. It mixed two things I personally can't stand: the element of surprise, and being forced to watch dance. During the mass influx of tourist activity, many young people took it upon themselves to showcase their culture by mixing the Haka with flashmobbing. The videos went viral, and caused a fierce debate. Many traditionalists said that the flashmobbing "bastardised" the meaning of the Haka, and feared that it's overused when it is performed outside special occasions. Others disagreed, stating that it offered a platform for young people to connect to their culture with pride, and with the videos going viral worldwide, many internet commentators agreed.

But, of course, with any rise to popularity and any unfiltered platform, there are those who exploit and use it for the wrong reasons. For example, we have Stan

"I felt disenfranchised by the negative aspects of Māori culture that I was exposed to regularly, and the lack of a positive influence in popular culture certainly didn't help either."



“...it can be downright exhausting to see such prominent Māori entertainers lay to waste an exciting new platform with century-old problems.”

Walker—a man whose failing music career has led him peruse an “acting career” by having eye-rolling cameos in otherwise great recent outputs from local studios such as *Hunt for the Wilderpeople*. Despite what I may think about his music, and his other entertainment endeavours, Walker has cemented himself as an icon and a role model for Māori youth, so it was disappointing when he recently inadvertently aligned himself with Destiny Church. To be more specific, Walker made the distinct decision to perform and speak at a Destiny Church event, even after leader (and darkest timeline Bono) Brian “Can You Believe All of this is Tax Exempt” Tamaki made a statement blaming recent natural disasters like earthquakes on “sexual sins” a.k.a homosexuality. Walker could have listened to the public’s calls for him to withdraw his support, or better yet, he could have used the platform to stand up against Tamaki’s statement and be a role model for our progressive forward-thinking generation. Instead, his silence and decision to go ahead with the performance all but said that he agreed with Tamaki’s backward-thinking wet dream.

And then there’s Jimi Jackson. Jackson rose to prominence online through his “everyday New Zealander” brand of humour, and with over 800,000 followers on Facebook he is arguably one of the most popular Māori “entertainers” online. Jackson found himself in an odd situation when he posted a behind-the-scenes picture of himself in blackface for a skit in his upcoming Māori Television series. What started as a shitdrizzle in terms of controversy soon turned into a full-on shitstorm

when Jackson went on a misogynistic rant directed at a woman who had questioned his use of blackface. He told her that her “fingers were made for hand jobs not typing” and ended it by calling her a slut. In the aftermath of his comments, Jackson’s fans jumped on the bandwagon with some poorly-spelt misogynistic attacks of their own. Māori Television barely blinked at the issue, sweeping it under the carpet with a lacklustre “We don’t condone the use of inappropriate language” response, seemingly more interested in keeping the audience Jackson could bring to the company, rather than the chance to take a stance against a poisonous point of view that plagues the very culture it’s supposed to represent.

The core problem still appears to be the fact that we can’t seem to shake these negative associations and stigmas from our rich and diverse homegrown culture, and it can be downright exhausting to see such prominent Māori entertainers lay to waste an exciting new platform with century-old problems. What’s even more heartbreaking is that these entertainers now have a more direct chain of contact to the audience that they inspire—and when that message continues to normalise homophobic and misogynistic behaviour, it continues to disenfranchise newer generations and potentially lead the culture closer to extinction.

But it’s not all grim. Māori representation has seen quite a growth in the last two years, with an increase in funding and more diverse representation through online content creation. ReQuest Dance Crew gained huge international acclaim

and recognition for their choreography in Justin Bieber’s “Sorry” music video, and have gone on to work with other international acts as far abroad as South Korea—in addition to nabbing their very own series on Māori Television. Locally-produced online shorts such as *Pussy*, *All Bi Myself*, *Aroha Bridge*, and *Funny Girls* have all explored themes of a bicultural nation, sexuality and feminism. This surge in creativity within and around Māori culture is leading to tremendous success both locally and internationally. Taika Waititi has broken boundaries by casting young, local Māori actors in his many record-breaking films such as *Two Cars One Night*, *Boy*, *Eagle Versus Shark* and the aforementioned *Hunt for the Wilderpeople*, showcasing that Māori have a diverse range of talent outside of roles that pander to racial stereotypes. We’ve even produced stars like James Rolleston and Julian Dennison who prove that a knack for humour and drama runs in our blood.

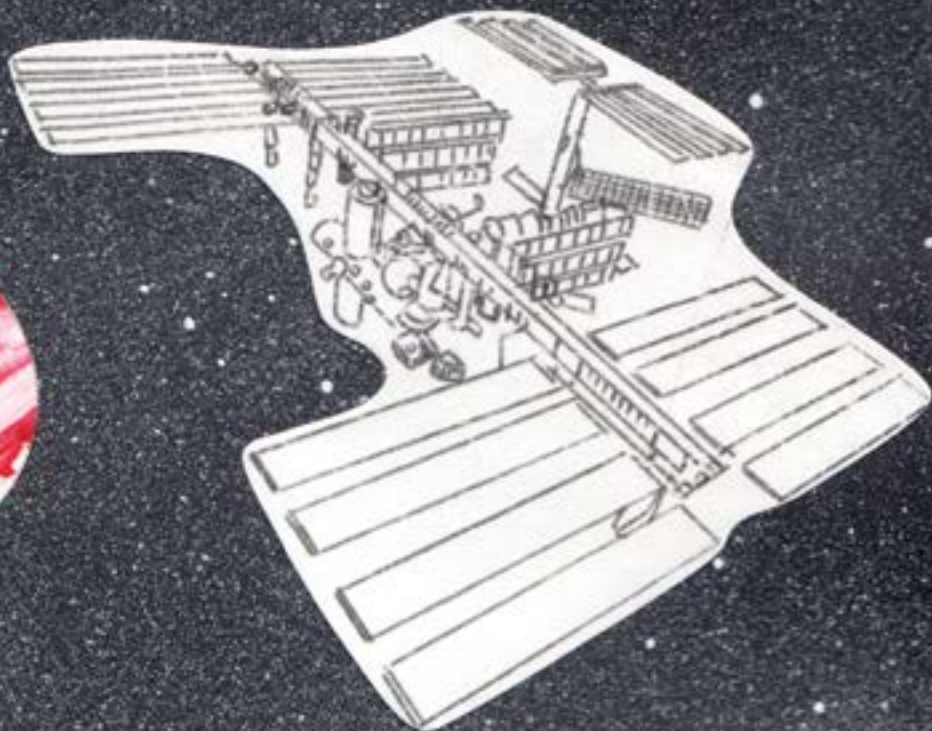
Moving forward as a culture, we need to begin to hold influential people accountable for their stale, parasitic views and support the forward-facing creatives who want to keep our culture rich. This means ditching the Stan Walkers and Jimi Jacksons that hold us back by re-enforcing stereotypes and, instead, choosing to support the content that relies on our views and feedback for funding. This will only help us to spread progressive thinking amongst our culture while preserving everything that we value about it. It’s not a lot to ask—and while you are learning and supporting, I promise that you’ll be thoroughly entertained. ♦

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# SATELLITES, PIE-ENDULUMS, AND EVERYTHING IN BETWEEN

*Danielle Maynard chats with British solar researcher, Lucie Green, about science entertainment, the European Space Agency, and nocturnal lifestyles*

**SO YOU'RE HEADING OVER TO NEW ZEALAND SOON TO DO A SHOW CALLED "COSMIC SHAMBLES LIVE" WHICH KIND OF SOUNDS LIKE NERD HEAVEN—CAN YOU TELL US A BIT ABOUT THE SHOW?**

It's very much a sort of science entertainment and variety show. It's led by a British comedian called Robin Ince. He has this really strong interest in science, and so what he really likes to do is get together a group of people—a group of scientists most often. We come along and we talk about the subjects we're passionate about. But, there's also comedians mixed into the group as well. It's always a really interesting night!

**IF THIS INTERVIEW AND THE SHOW HASN'T GIVEN IT AWAY ALREADY, YOU'RE A SCIENCE COMMUNICATOR! WHAT DO YOU FIND TO BE THE MOST REWARDING ABOUT THIS?**

My job is quite varied and interesting. I spend part of my time doing science communication, but the other part of my time is as a Physics professor at a London university—where I study the sun.

I really love doing the science communication aspect, because you go out and meet the general public. I find it so rewarding and inspiring to be talking to people in the general public who are genuinely enthused. It's not every day [that] you're thinking about amazing physical processes happening in our universe.

For example, I study these huge explosions and eruptions that take place in the sun's atmosphere—and when you talk to people about that, they feel the same sense of awe and wonder as I do. I really like that

shared experience.

**ESPECIALLY IF PEOPLE DON'T HAVE THE TECHNICAL BACKGROUND, IT'S STILL JUST INCREDIBLE TO HEAR ABOUT.**

Yeah, that's right! And in the show we're communicating not only in words and in visuals, but also doing demonstrations as well. So, there's going to be some fun bits of kit on stage.

One of the people who's coming along, Matt Parker, has made a pendulum out of a pie and is going to be doing some fun maths with his pie-endulum! Unexpected things will be happening.

**HAVE YOU ALWAYS BEEN THIS INTERESTED IN SPACE SCIENCE?**

I have, since being a teenager. And in fact I have sort of two passions. One is space science and one is art. And so for me, studying the sun brings together those two passions. At school I really, really, *really* liked physics, and that then developed into a love of space science because I can use the universe as my physics laboratory.

But in parallel to that, I was always really interested in art, and I was always painting. Actually when I left school, I had the plan to go and be an art therapist, but I sort of switched back to physics.

I like doing solar physics, because it brings together the aesthetic and the physics.

**YEAH AND I GUESS NOT MANY PEOPLE THINK THAT ART AND SCIENCE CAN BE COMBINED LIKE THAT!**

That's right, they're always separated out.

**CAN YOU TELL US A LITTLE ABOUT THE SOLAR ORBITER PROJECT THAT YOU'VE BEEN WORKING ON?**

Yeah of course! So Solar Orbiter is the big project that I'm working on at the moment, and it is a European Space Agency project to build a spacecraft that will go very close to the sun. I sort of jokingly talk about it like an Icarus-like mission!

It's not going to be damaged by going close to the sun—although it will get incredibly hot—but we're designing it to be able to cope with that extreme environment.

So Solar Orbiter will be put into orbit around the sun, and it will go around the distance that Mercury is from the sun. And then from that close-up viewpoint, we want to be looking straight at the sun's atmosphere which is where these big explosions and eruptions happen that I study.

But at the same time, when you have those events happen, the sun sends out material into the solar system. So our idea is to be looking at the sun, and at the same time, sitting in the material that it's sending out across the spacecraft.

We're going to be getting these close-up images of the sun for the first time.

It's really exciting to be working on this mission. In my department, we're building two of the instruments on board the spacecraft. It's a great time at the moment—I can literally go downstairs into our different labs, and see these telescopes that will ultimately end up in space orbiting around the sun.

**"I find it so rewarding and inspiring to be talking to people in the general public who are genuinely enthused. It's not every day [that] you're thinking about amazing physical processes happening in our universe."**



IT MUST BE AMAZING TO BE A PART OF THAT!

It is! And it's going to be launched at the end of 2018, so we're getting to a really exciting phase now where everything's just about coming together. For the first time, we'll actually be able to see the spacecraft. It's being put together in different parts of the country, but yeah, it's hugely exciting.

ON THE SUBJECT OF STARS, HAVE YOU CONSIDERED WORKING ON ANY RESEARCH RELATING TO THE NEWLY DISCOVERED TRAPPIST-1?

I'm interested in these planets that have been found around this star, and one of the things that interests me is that there's been a lot of research carried out about how these emissions from the sun—ultimately the ones that Solar Orbiter will study—will affect planets and the solar system.

So for example, these emissions batter the Earth's magnetic field, and they can create things like the Northern and Southern Lights. These emissions, when they reach Mars (which doesn't have a magnetic field), have the effect of stripping off the Martian atmosphere, giving it less ability to retain warmth from the atmosphere. So it had a really profound impact on the possibilities for life on Mars.

I think if I was starting again in space science, I probably would research planets around other stars. There's so many of them now! The work around characterising these planets' atmospheres, and then understanding whether life could form on them, is really important. And understanding how active their star is is a key aspect of that.

YEAH, IT'S REALLY EXCITING TO SEE WHERE THAT'S GOING TO GO—IF WE GET ALL OF THAT INFORMATION IN OUR LIFETIME AS WELL!

Yeah, that's a good point because it takes so long! New missions, new concepts creep forward.

WHAT'S BEEN YOUR FAVOURITE PROJECT TO DATE?

I think one of the space projects that I worked on is a spacecraft called Hinode,

which is Japanese for "sunrise". It's a spacecraft that's still in orbit around the Earth, and I particularly liked this project because, again, my department built one of the telescopes on board the satellite.

Because we did that, we then had the responsibility of maintaining and operating the telescope that's in space. So, for a while, my job involved what we call spacecraft or satellite operations.

It was my job to write the programme for what this very expensive telescope in space would do. And I really loved that process. It was done remotely, so I would do the job from Britain—but because it's a Japanese spacecraft, I would be working on Japanese time. So I would get up at 11pm, have a conference call with the Japanese and the Americans who were involved, and collectively we would come up with a plan of what we wanted to do with the spacecraft.

And then I would go away and I would be looking at pictures of the sun and working out what the sun was doing right then, and using that to construct my observation sequence. I'd write it on my laptop and I'd send it over to the Japanese computers and then they would upload it to their spacecraft. And then the data would come back.

I found it to be really thrilling to be in charge of a space telescope like that and to be able to get exactly the data that I wanted. And we did some great science with that data as well—looking at magnetic fields in the atmosphere of the sun evolutions. We got some really nice results from that.

THAT DEFINITELY SOUNDS WORTH IT DESPITE THE NOCTURNAL LIFESTYLE!

Yeah it was! Working at 3am and 4am in the morning, you know, everyone else is in bed and it's dark and it's cold and it was a lonely job. So I used to use Facebook a lot to find people in other parts of the world where it was daytime and we'd chat to each other.

But when the data came back in, it was so exciting. I absolutely loved that part of

my job.

DO YOU HAVE A PREFERENCE BETWEEN WORKING WITH THE LARGER SPACE AGENCIES, LIKE NASA AND THE ESA, OR WORKING ON YOUR OWN SELF-CONDUCTED ACADEMIC RESEARCH?

Yeah, I like a bit of both. With the big space agencies, we come up with these big international missions that might take thirty years to come to fruition. If you work with national agencies, then the budgets are smaller so you have to be, perhaps, a bit more innovative and think about technologies that can help answer your questions with smaller budgets.

One example is using very small satellites, and there's a branch of satellites that get called CubeSats. They are absolutely tiny. I'm interested in how we might miniaturise our detectors and our telescopes, and then to be able to put them on these CubeSats. Where would you send them?

YEAH, THE UNIVERSITY OF AUCKLAND IS JUST ABOUT TO LAUNCH A PROPOSAL PROGRAMME FOR DESIGNING A MISSION FOR A CUBESAT.

Oh that's fantastic!

YEAH! AND ACTUALLY THE WINNING PROPOSAL GETS TO GO ON AND BUILD IT AND LAUNCH IT!

Oh that's hugely exciting, good luck! Will that be built by students?

YEAH! SO STUDENTS ARE THE ONES WHO ARE LEADING THE DESIGN PROCESS, AND OBVIOUSLY WE'VE GOT A WHOLE LOT OF RESOURCES AND EXPERTS TO HELP OUT WITH IT.

I think that's so important. I'm a big believer in students and young people—you have such good ideas! You're free from decades of work of looking at one or two particular things, and forming strong ideas.

For me, working with students is really important because that's where the good stuff comes from. Creativity, new ideas and pushing things forward. •

*Lucie Green will appear in Cosmic Shambles LIVE, premiering in Auckland on Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> April at the ASB Theatre, Aotea Centre.*

"If you work with national agencies, then the budgets are smaller so you have to be, perhaps, a bit more innovative and think about technologies that can help answer your questions with smaller budgets."





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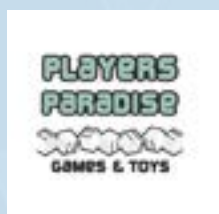
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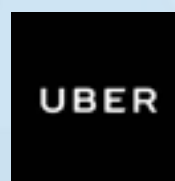
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ART BY ISOBEL GLEDHILL (@ISOBEL\_G)

## DAYLIGHT! THE DAWN OF DONALD GLOVER

*Nikki Addison wants to welcome you into the wondrous cult of the multi-talented Donald Glover*

Donald Glover is a genius. The man's a visionary, an intellectual, a philosopher king. He's a motherfuckin' mastermind, dangit.

When Trump was inaugurated earlier this year, online stores began to sell t-shirts saying "the only Donald we recognise is Glover". If that's not a sign of Glover's significance, I don't know what is. This piece is part fan letter, part tribute and part conversion. If you didn't love Glover (or, God forbid, know who he is) before, you will. By the end of this passionate tirade, you'll be every bit as obsessed/impressed/in love with him as I. Let's begin our journey, friends.

How does one summarise Donald Glover? The 33-year-old African American is an actor, singer, writer, producer, director, rapper, DJ and songwriter. In his high school yearbook, Glover was voted "Most Likely to Write for The Simpsons", a fair guess considering he went on to get a degree in Dramatic Writing from New York University's Tisch School of Arts. While at Tisch, the online sketches of Glover and his friends' comedy group caught the eye of Tina Fey, who later hired him to write for popular comedy show *30 Rock*.

In 2009 Glover left *30 Rock* and scored an acting role on the new comedy series *Communi-*

*nity*. Playing nerdy former-jock Troy, Glover perfected a blend of sweet and funny that made him one of the show's highlights. He had a shit-ton of great lines, such as his comment after falling for the school librarian: "I wish I was a book. She could pick me up, flip through my pages, make sure nobody drew wieners in me."

Since leaving *Community* in 2014, Glover's had small roles in a number of big films from *The Martian* to *Magic Mike XXL*. He's also been cast in the upcoming blockbuster *Spiderman: Homecoming* (which, side-note, looks super rad). *Community* creator and producer Dan Harmon summarises Glover's skill, saying "He's got the



mind of a comedy writer and the talent of some of the greatest performers on TV.”

In between his acting roles, Glover was writing. The incredible scope of his talent became clear with the launch of his rap career. Performing under the stage name Childish Gambino—which he created with the Wu-tang Name Generator—Glover addresses a range of heavy and increasingly relevant topics in his music, from alcoholism and bullying to suicide and racial discrimination.

In 2011, Glover flew to fame with the track “Freaks and Geeks” from his EP *Be Alone*. The track features a number of cultural references (E. E. Cummings—come on!) and emphasises Glover’s appreciation of women of all races: “Filipino, Armenian girls on my sofa / Yeah I like a white girl, sometimes we get together... / Are there Asian girls here? Minority report”.

Later that year, Glover released his first complete album, *Camp*. As well as writing the lyrics, Glover composed the music, programmed the drumming, arranged the strings and produced and designed the album. (Like I said earlier: genius.) Notable singles include “Bonfire”, “Outside”, and “Sunrise”. One of the more “hardcore” sounding tracks, “Bonfire”, discusses rap music and the expectations that go with it. Glover critiques the notion that rap artists must all be down-on-their-luck blacks who only rap about their trialling past: “They say they want the realness, rap about my real life / Told me I should just quit: ‘First of all, you talk white! / Second off, you talk like you haven’t given up yet.’” While having space for that kind of talk is important, there needs to be room for other forms of rap too.

“Outside” explores the former kind of rap music. Glover talks about the sacrifices his parents made so he could “get into that white school”, and the experience of growing up as a poor African American: “The world saying what you are / Because you’re young and black”. Moving away from the norm, however, the chorus insists that there’s hope: “There’s a world we can visit if we go outside.”

“Sunrise” is a shining example of Glover’s extremely clever way with words. The man’s intelligence and wit is envious. “My shit be Jackson, Jordan, Bolton, Keaton, Tyson: 5 Mikes”. Here Glover refers to five famous Michaels and the music rating system of hip-hop magazine *The Source*, where albums are rated from one to five mics (microphones). I’ll let that sink in for

a minute. Another ingenious line is the classic “I’ve seen it all / like I’m John Mayer’s penis hole.” Laffs.

Glover’s second album, *Because the Internet* was released in 2013. More bangers, people. More bangers. As well as singles “Crawl” and “Sweatpants”, there’s the contemplative tune “3005”. This track is one of the many reasons I heart Donald Glover. While I actually prefer the sound of his other songs more, the lyrics of “3005” show how relatable Glover is. He’s a regular dude, who gets self-conscious and insecure at times just like everyone else. “I used to care what people thought, now I care more / I mean, nobody out here’s got it figured out / So therefore, I’ve lost all hope of a happy ending / Depending on whether that’s worth it, so insecure, no one’s perfect”. Just stahp, Donald.

There was a musical pause after *Because the Internet* while Glover worked on *Atlanta* (don’t worry, I’m getting to that soon). Late last year, however, he blessed our eardrums with his latest album, *Awaken, My Love*. While his previous albums move between rap and hip-hop, *Awaken, My Love* is a blend of rhythm and blues, soul, funk and something else that’s hard to pinpoint. The album marks a shift from rapping to singing—just another of Glover’s many talents. The single “Redbone” is an absolute bloody banger that’ll have you playing it on repeat. “California” is another goodie, with some psychedelic notes up in there. Embrace the album, people. Listen to it from top to bottom. They don’t make shit like that anymore.

Now, *Atlanta*. Beloved *Atlanta*, the television show that stole the hearts of many. This is why Glover is referred to as a multi-threat. He does EVERYTHING. He doesn’t just star in the show—no, no. He also created, produced and wrote it. To top things off, the show took out Best Comedy Series and Best Actor in a Comedy Series at the 2017 Golden Globe Awards. (This is a good place to point out that Glover is also extremely modest, sweet and grateful. Sigh.)

*Atlanta* is a comedy-drama set in—you guessed it—Atlanta, Georgia. Glover plays the protagonist Earnest, a.k.a. “Earn”, an intelligent but poor young man struggling to provide for his child and partner in a city that won’t cut him a break. We follow his efforts to do something positive with his life while coping with the dark side of Atlanta’s black neighbourhood. As part of said effort, Earn reconnects with his

cousin Alfred, now a one-hit rapper known as Paper Boi. Earn signs himself up as Paper Boi’s manager, and, along with Paper Boi’s hilarious friend Darius, tries to make it big.

On the surface, *Atlanta* is a genius piece of comedy with clever lines, interesting plot stories and some damn fine acting. There’s some serious comedic gold here, friends. Just Google “Atlanta invisible car” and watch the YouTube link called “The Club”. How do you even think that shit up?

While *Atlanta*’s comedy deserves high praise, its relevance is where it really shines. Growing up in Georgia near Atlanta, it’s safe to assume Glover was influenced by his community. Talking about the show to *Deadline.com*, Glover said, “I wanted to show real people in real situations.” The show tackles a host of issues that are prevalent in American society, from police violence, poverty and drugs, to class and transphobia.

In the second episode, the issue of police brutality towards African Americans is addressed as Earn watches a black man get violently beaten in a prison holding area. Later, in the epic “Montague” talkshow episode, the concept of trans-racialism is discussed. And let’s not forget about the very final scene of the series. I won’t describe it for the benefit of those fools yet to watch the show, but it seriously disturbed me. That shit is really happening.

The way that *Atlanta* grapples with very real issues is both fresh and affecting. The show is hilarious at times, but there’s an underlying seriousness and sadness, because we know that a lot of what we see is an accurate representation of reality. We can laugh at the jokes and Earn’s shenanigans, but always underneath there’s a deeper meaning. Things shouldn’t be the way they are on *Atlanta*. There shouldn’t be racial discrimination, poverty, transphobia, police brutality. Using dark humour, Glover shows us that, regardless of how things should or shouldn’t be, these things exist. So basically, watch *Atlanta*. If it was an album, it’d get 5 Mics no doubt.

As my Donald Glover love letter/accolade draws to a close, I hope some readers will now look up this talented man and revel in the music, the comedy, the skill. Upon doing so, I expect there will be a few more Glover Lovers out there. In the words of the genius himself, I’m gonna sign out with a hasty “Gambino girl forever”. Forever ever, ever, ever. ♦

“Things shouldn’t be the way they are on *Atlanta*. There shouldn’t be racial discrimination, poverty, transphobia, police brutality. Using dark humour, Glover shows us that, regardless of how things should or shouldn’t be, these things exist.”

# What's On

## Hungry for Punk THE WINE CELLAR

**Hungry for Punk** is hitting The Wine Cellar this Friday 31<sup>st</sup> March. There's a huge line-up of punk bands going, so if you're into that, be there.

## Carmen with L'Arlésienne

ASB THEATRE, AOTEA CENTRE

Ballet fans, rejoice! From 29<sup>th</sup> March–1<sup>st</sup> April, the Royal New Zealand Ballet are combining the classic stories of *Carmen* and *L'Arlésienne* by French master-choreographer, Roland Petit. Tickets range from \$35–\$140 and are available from Ticketmaster.

## Bailey Wiley x Miloux Single Release Party

REC

Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> April is the **Bailey Wiley x Miloux** Single Release Party at REC. If you haven't heard Wiley sing before, look her up now dangit! The girl is badass. Doors open at 10pm and you can get tickets from Under the Radar.

## Four Days of Fashion EVERYWHERE!

From 29<sup>th</sup> March–1<sup>st</sup> April, Auckland is running their **Four Days of Fashion** with lots of events cropping up all over the city. From international fashion to local fashion—they'll be exhibiting it all. Better yet, it's (mostly) free! Check out what events are on and where at [heartofthecity.co.nz/fashion](http://heartofthecity.co.nz/fashion).

## The Raw Comedy Quest

CLASSIC COMEDY BAR

If you need a warm up for the Comedy Festival check out **The Raw Comedy Quest**. The competition started last week, as they try to find NZ's next and best stand-up comedian. It's hosted, aptly, at The Classic Comedy Bar on Monday nights from 8pm–10pm. Tickets are \$5–\$10. Strictly R18!



## SAMPLING SQUAD Little Bird Unbakery

*This Sampling Squad Session explores 2012 award-winning raw and organic bakery in town, Little Bird!*

Last year our Sampling Squad (Griselda, Dhanya, Chloe, Ghan, Marshall, Lynn) visited one cozy little cafe in Britomart, where we were greeted with customers crowding the entrance. The staff chose Cacao Triple Layer Cake, Cookies and Cream, Dark Chocolate Truffles, and Macaroons for us to sample. Our squad comprised of vegans, vegetarians, some with lactose tolerance, and some with no dietary requirements—and we were absolutely blown away by how delicate yet rich the sweets were, leaving us craving more.

It is also impossible not to mention how beautiful the sweets looked, decorated with edible flowers. Fresh! It was no surprise to find regulars who visit Little Bird Unbakery every week, traversing all the way from the North Shore to stock up on all the goodies. We were excited to find out about Little Bird's future plans to provide more "student affordable" (yus) options and make raw organic foods more approachable by minimising public stereotypes.

Little Bird is the creation of partners Megan and Jeremy, Megan being the chef behind the unbaked goods. Megan was diagnosed as lactose intolerant, and as having coeliac disease and a number of food allergies at a young age, meaning she was raised on gluten, dairy, and sugar-free diets.

Megan's fascination and love of food led her to train as a chef, which unfortunately had a serious effect on her health and caused her to rethink and redesign the concept of food.

Little Bird is very aware of the negative impacts that pesticides, herbicides and other harmful chemicals can have on the environment and our human

biology, with the process of growing and preserving food being stressful on our bodies. These chemicals have long-term effects on the soils and people working on the farms, and this is why Little Bird choose to source predominantly organic ingredients. Good for the earth, good for the body, good for the soul.

Not every wholefood cafe or raw cafe advertised as "health focused" uses organic ingredients! Little Bird is among just a handful that prefer organic sources due to organic options being two to three times the price of "conventional" products.

To deliver the best raw, organic foods to us, Little Bird makes them all by themselves. Seriously! E-v-e-r-y-t-h-i-n-g. Squeezing nut milk, pressing lemons, fermenting kimchi, baking their own bagels, and cracking Samoan imported coconuts to get the most healthy, nutritious, unrefined, non-pasteurised, non-pressured wholefoods.

To maximise nutrients and vitamins from these natural food processes, Little Bird has chosen to keep their food raw, meaning it has not been heated over 46 degrees celsius. 100% of Little Bird's packaged products are raw. Fun fact: this process keeps the enzymes alive in food, which in turn helps the digestion of food in our body, making us feel more energetic. It also enhances our immune system, leading to glowing skin, clarity, and strengthened nails! What more could your body ask for? ♦

*Show your student ID at Little Bird Unbakery and get a free macaroon with any purchase over \$10. Free, all day, bottomless coffee with every purchase over \$10!*





## TOILET REVIEW Law School (Building 810, Level 3, Toilet #1)

*Brought to you by the Auckland University Powder Room Society*

These are quite out of the way for the large majority of students, and to be honest, they're not worth that Law School hill. If you don't know the hill I'm talking about, consider yourself lucky. But if you already happen to be down this end of the university, or you're a law student looking to mix things up a bit, you may as well pay them a visit. In fact, this building (which is so dull on the outside you almost can't see it) is surprisingly exciting in its variety of toilets. Each level boasts toilet designs vastly different from each other, which is really unusual for the university.

These toilets are probably the classiest toilets I've visited at the UoA. The cubicles remind me of Chanel suits—the ones with the black trim. And the gold accents of the door handles and doorstop, which I photographed so poorly, only add to this. The wood grain, warm lighting and lack of windows or empty space give these toilets a warm, friendly feeling—perfect in this wintery weather we're dealing with at the moment. ♦

### GENERAL INFO ON LAW SCHOOL BUILDING 810

**Opened in:** *The Davis Law Library moved to the Building 810 location in 1992, so we can assume it's been there for at least that long.*

**Architects:** *The land of the Law School and a few of the buildings were once owned and used by the High Court of New Zealand.*

**Tip:** *Play a game of lucky dip in this building to spice up your life by trying a toilet on a random level, and delight in the surprise you get.*

**Wheelchair accessible:** No

**Bag hooks:** Yes

**X-Factor:** Yes

**Aesthetics:** 8.5/10 **Practicality:** 5/10

**Overall:** 7/10

YOU CAN FOLLOW THE AUPRS ON FACEBOOK (AUCKLAND UNIVERSITY POWDER ROOM SOCIETY), TUMBLR ([HTTP://AUPRS.TUMBLR.COM](http://auprs.tumblr.com)), AND INSTAGRAM (@AUPRS)

## GUIDE TO... Dealing with Stress

With the first assignments of semester approaching, it's normal to feel the pressure build. Getting stressed is part of student life, but that doesn't make it any less shite. We're here to help, amigo. Read our marvellous advice on how to cope with stress and rest easy.

**Embrace It:** Don't stress about being stressed—embrace it! Cling onto that worry and frustration and make it your own. Use the lack of sleep that comes with stress to do things you never have time for, like learning an instrument or teaching yourself how to paint.

**Fraands:** Rely on your buddies to lift your mood. First, gather and complain about your mutual stress. Then, create a group study session. This is a great way to eliminate stress, because you're getting some social relief all while getting actual work done.

**Listless:** Make lists! Lists are wondrous. They're neat and pretty and give your life some semblance of organisation. Make a weekly list with study tasks you need to complete each day, e.g. word counts that need reaching, readings that need doing or small tutorial assignments that need completing.

**Time Out:** Taking a break is imperative for stress relief. To combat that pressure build-up, go for a bush walk or try some yoga or meditation. If things get really bad, you can always fork out and get a massage.

**Draank:** If all else fails, drink your stress away with Shad-ows' famously cheap jugs. Please note: this is only a *temporary* fix. You will 100% be more stressed the next day when you realise a) how shit you feel and, b) how much time you wasted. You've been warned! ♦

## Top 5... Auckland Op Shops

### Search and Destroy 4 CROSS ST

If you're a seasoned op shopper, you'll know that CBD stores are extremely over-priced. Search and Destroy is the exception; it's the perfect place for boyfriend jeans, American vintage and old-school Chucks. With most items ranging from \$10-\$30, it's a score compared to K Rd!

### Whangaparaoa Salvation Army 4/26 KAREPIRO DR

Whangaparaoa has a few sneaky op shops, but you can't beat a good Sally's. Rack upon rack of cheap, funky clothing, shelves of retro ceramics and an entire corner dedicated to \$2-\$5 books. #bliss

### Helensville Hospice 36 MILL RD

One of our Lifestyle Editors lives in the 'ville and frequents this shop, with a 98% purchase rate. You can get radical furniture, crazy fabrics, unique art, bowling kits... There's also a great range of grandma clothing that is almost permanently half price.

### Dominion Road Salvation Army 200 DOMINION RD

A little more central for ya'll city slickers is the Sally's on Dom Road. This is the place to go if you're looking for labels but don't want to fork out \$40 for a secondhand item.

### Albany Hospice NORTHBRIDGE PLAZA

This pink gem sits above Westfield Albany. There are funky one-offs, interesting household items and lots of shoes. The ladies who work there are the sweetest. Be sure to look at the jewellery and accessories—once upon a time, said Helensvillian found a \$1 woollen beret...



your student  
experience

# STUDENT FORUM

★ IN THE ★  
QUAD

HAVE YOUR VOICE HEARD.  
TALK ABOUT THINGS THAT MATTER,  
★ ★ ★ AND THINGS THAT DON'T.

⌘ **EVERY WEDNESDAY AT 1PM** ⌘







## Are we already ghosts before we die?

With Anoushka Maharaj

Outside of painting shitty flowers and reading shitty books, my adolescent world was very small, and my concept of comedy was peppered with Judd Apatow and his gang of comedy goons. The humour didn't stray too far outside of being crude, but it was, on occasion, very funny and clever. Films like *Anchorman*, *The 40-Year-Old Virgin* and *Forgetting Sarah Marshall* defined a weirdness that I came to expect from comedy, filled with gross but ultimately endearing leads—a delightful contrast to the convivial and wholesome leads in Lorne Michaels' NBC-dominating comedy *30 Rock*. While they cannot be commended for their diversity or social awareness, they were *fucking fantastic* and contained iconic moments (Dracula musical, anyone?!) that will likely be hilarious forever.

Like most television shows and films from the early 2000s—and the formulae that made them great—they were funniest back then, and shows from those days that embody this are starting to overstay their welcome. *The Office* and *Parks and Recreation* made it out just in time (joined in comedy mausoleum by the late *Workaholics*), and are now safe in the preservation of their legacy, while new shows like *The Mindy Project* and *Man Seeking Woman* regularly dodge the axe. Along with *Always Sunny*, they are, however, amongst the last-surviving, well-written shows in the comedy world.

I'm not sure if it's because my sense of humour has been too reliant on extremes (the dark and the light), but in all my years of media consumption, not once have I found *Saturday Night Live* funny. Although I didn't know it at the time, I didn't enjoy it because all of them just seemed like farcical mascots. Which, in a way, they were. Since its inception in 1975, *SNL* has taken until now to divert from being a late-night excuse to celebrate unfunny white celebrities, and instead become a diverse, genuinely great place to find solace. Whether it's that they actively recognised their failings or it's owed simply to the passage of time, *SNL* has become steeped in wit, and

people are flocking (back) to it in droves. And like anything that causes Trump to angrily tweet at ungodly hours (so, any of his hours), you can trust that it's doing something right. Ironically, this orange demon is also the reason why *SNL* has a renewed sense of purpose.

As any artist knows, pain is one of the most significant forms of inspiration—so it's a remarkable thing to see this pain projected on such a universal scale, with *SNL* as the centre stage to air grievances and probe our subconscious (i.e. *who is more gross while buck-naked: Ron Paul, Rick Santorum or Newt Gingrich?*). After Kate McKinnon's tribute to Leonard Cohen and Hillary Clinton, it was reinforced that politics and life outside of it are now indistinguishable.

*SNL* has vastly improved in general, but it's undeniable that they have found their verve and confidence in their political sketches. Characters like Beck Bennett's Putin or McKinnon's Kellyanne Conway, while overtly critical, are a welcome deviation from the dismal real-life versions who aren't that far from characters themselves. Rather than dilute the politics or the comedy, *SNL* proves that the two share a symbiotic relationship (see: "The Fey Effect"). While *SNL* provides much-needed social commentary, it has thankfully veered away from offensive humour without losing its edginess. With the notable additions of Mikey Day (*Robot Chicken*), Leslie Jones, and the two geniuses behind the sketch "Bern Your Enthusiasm", Chris Kelly (*Broad City*) and Sarah Schneider (the first female head writer since Paula Pell's departure in 2008), the sketches embody more social nuance yet retain *SNL*'s quirkiness. Despite *SNL*'s shoddy track record in the diversity sector, the addition of Leslie Jones, Jay Pharoah and a whole host of incredible women like Kate McKinnon and Cecily Strong prove that the show *is* capable of evolution. In the last couple of years, the show has also brought on new cast members like Sasheer Zamata and Kyle Mooney—with

one of the youngest additions (in *SNL* history!) being the ridiculously adorable Pete Davidson.

Outside of its strict political themes, *SNL* has also developed clever shorts like "Girl in a Bar", where Cecily Strong fends off fake male feminists or "The Day Beyoncé Turned Black" where white people lose their minds after the release of *Lemonade*. Pandering to the extremes I love so much, a favourite "bit" as of late has included Kristen Wiig playing an overzealous aunt who repeatedly smashes through windows over surprise parties, and the brilliant chemistry between Colin Hanks and Michael Che makes *Weekend Update* incredibly enjoyable.

It's not all fun and mash-passing over at *SNL*, though. Lefties are often blamed for their complacency, and considering that *SNL* sits at the helm of liberalism, allowing Trump to serve as celebrity host on the show two days before the election was an indefensible bungle. Alec Baldwin, Season 42's resident Trump, pointed out that mocking someone who has incited so much fear and pain *across the entire world* is another way of normalising them—and minimising the effect of someone so hateful, whether it's conscious or not, is what is truly indefensible. It's painfully ironic that in recent days, Trump has vowed to cut federally-funded arts programs from the new budget—and it's heartbreaking to think that so many young people who draw their inspiration from creative outlets like *SNL* might be losing out on these programmes.

The arts play an important role in keeping us, and our institutions, honest—whether it's through *SNL*, or a student magazine. It's important to entertain, but equally important to educate. And while we are not impervious to destruction, we don't leave this world forgotten. For this reason, it is important to keep the arts at your side—if only because it encompasses the part of us that lives on, and the part that allows us to turn our pain into something extraordinary. ♦



## An interview with Josh Thomson from *Gary of the Pacific*

*Josh Thomson took some time out to take Craccum into the world of Gary of the Pacific (2017), a Kiwi comedy set on a rapidly sinking island. Josh chatted with Adorate Mizero about why Gary is kind of a loser and some of the awkward times on set.*

**YOU'VE WORKED WITH THE DOWNLOW CONCEPT BEFORE. DID THEY JUST CALL YOU UP AND ASK IF YOU WANTED TO PLAY GARY? OR WAS THIS DECIDED LONG BEFORE?**

I worked with the Downlow for yonks. They got me to act in a comedy radio serial called "The Radio Station" about George FM. In 2006, we did a short film, *The Tim Porch Story*, which won the 48 Hour Film Festival. When they won, they were awarded an editing suite. Because I didn't work with them, I made them a deal that I could use the editing suite whenever I wanted, so kind of ended up working with and for them.

When they were writing the film, any time they were writing any film, I would wave my hands around and go "Hey, hey, I'm literally right in front of you". So I kind of wheedled my way into every single thing they've done. They specifically wrote *Gary of the Pacific* for me because I was the most annoying person in the office.

**WHAT IS GARY LIKE?**

The character is a real loser. He keeps trying and getting broken down and takes a lot of shortcuts. He's just a monumental failure that keeps pretending that he's not. He's a weird and quiet guy, which made it a very strange character building process for him. There's a lot of me in it and also a lot of other people in the character.

**DO YOU LOVE ANYTHING ABOUT GARY?**

Yes. I think ultimately he just wants his family to like him, but the way he goes about it is very

stupid.

**IF YOU COULD PLAY ANY OTHER CHARACTER IN THE FILM, WHO WOULD IT BE?**

Oooh, good question. That's sort of the thing I'm not meant to answer [laughs]. Any of the other roles would be amazing because they were played so well. David Fane (who plays Gary's Dad) has an amazing role where he basically just laughs the entire time. He's so loveable and crazy that you can't help but love him.

Matt Whelan (who plays Nelson) is incredibly funny, and so is Dom (Ona-Ariki), Taofi (Mose-Tuiloma) who plays my sister, and Megan (Stevenson) the American actress. They've all made their characters so funny, and my character's technically an unlikeable guy. I was like "Man, you guys are having a fun day".

**I CAN IMAGINE IT WAS A GREAT TIME ON SET.**

We were on a tropical island, so yes, it was amazing. However, I would sweat buckets because everyone else was under tents, but I loved it. Now I kind of go "That's why some actors on set go insane". People just wig out or flip out. I reckon you just go insane after a while.

**DID YOU FIND YOURSELF DRIFTING FROM THE SCRIPT WHILE FILMING?**

There are little glimpses of improv. The problem with it, especially with a low budget film, is that time is money. Whenever they said that we had a bit of extra time on set to improv, we went insane. The few bits in the film that they kept are really really good.

**THERE ARE A COUPLE OF CRINGE/AWKWARD MOMENTS IN THE FILM. WHAT WAS THE MOST AWKWARD FOR YOU TO FILM?**

There's one scene where this guy is essentially naked. We didn't look at him naked, he was wearing what they call a "modesty pouch", like a little bag, and he flashed us. When we started laughing we would get told off. You must force yourself not to laugh. One time his pouch fell down a bit, we both knew we couldn't laugh, so we both made a weird noise, and a tear just rolled down my face.

The weird thing is the laugh goes somewhere else in your body. We just shut down, and I felt quite physically sick afterwards. Then for about five days afterwards I would wake up in the middle of the night and burst out laughing and go back to sleep. I just had to get it out.

I had to be basically nude in a room full of people in front of a mirror. It's a low budget movie, so I had to tape a bunch of stuff to myself. You might see the trailer where I drop a towel and you see my ass. In this scene, the directors were saying "Stop clenching your bum!" And I told them I wasn't. Now I've got a clenched looking bum. You get very self-conscious about filming these scenes.

**CAN YOU SUM UP GARY OF THE PACIFIC IN A SENTENCE?**

It's a bloody good time. ♦

*Gary of the Pacific is currently showing in cinemas.*





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## Number 1 Angel Charli XCX

ALBUM REVIEW BY CHRIS WONG

With *Number 1 Angel*, Charli XCX carries on from where last year's *Vroom Vroom* EP left off, further combining the avant-pop of PC Music with her own established sound. Produced in the span of two weeks, with a PC Music collective including SOPHIE and A. G. Cook, she continues to push the boundaries of commercial pop outwards. She incorporates and mixes unorthodox sounds with sweet and sticky bubblegum pop, keeping it "sticky-icky like lipgloss", as she sings on the hook to "Lipgloss".

The mixtape starts off strongly with a double shot of back-to-back bangers and features, including last year's "After the Afterparty" co-writer Raye, as well as Danish icon MØ in "Dreamer" and "3AM (Pull Up)". Charli XCX even manages to bring former MySpace queen Uffie onto the mixtape, to feature on the sugary retro-sounding jam "Babygirl", her bratty rapped delivery contrasting with Charli's vibrant and sunny vocals.

There are also a few gems buried deep towards the end of the mixtape. On the hazy and atmospheric "Drugs", featuring Atlanta singer ABRA, Charli sings about the consequences of living life in the fast lane. Finally on the infectious "Lipgloss", Charli introduces NSFW rapper CupcakKe into the fold, to close it off on the most irresistible and over-the-top track of them all, complete with references to iCarly and Cash Me Ousside.

Fans turned off by Charli's recent ventures into PC music will find solace in tracks such as "Emotional", a deliciously dark sad banger and one of her most mature songs to date, as well as "ILY2" a flawless bop with a piercing distorted guitar driven hook, both of which sound like they would have fit right into *True Romance*.

If this is what Charli comes out with after only two weeks in the studio, we should be in for a definite treat when her official album drops later this year. ♦



## The Salesman

FILM REVIEW BY HELEN YEUNG

CONTENT WARNING: SEXUAL ASSAULT

Oscar-winning film *The Salesman*, directed by Iranian filmmaker Asghar Farhadi, offers a realistic depiction of how a married couple's relationship goes downhill after the protagonist's wife is sexually assaulted in their apartment complex.

The story begins with Emad and his wife, Rana, moving into a friend's apartment after their old place was evacuated. The couple both work in theatre and are currently starring in Arthur Miller's play *Death of the Salesman* (hence the film's title). Upon moving in, the couple are not informed that the previous tenant was a sex worker; Rana is then sexually assaulted by one of the tenant's previous clients, exposing the audience to the realities of the psychological, physical and emotional trauma caused by sexual assault.

Farhadi's film exposes the harsh truths of patriarchal structures within Iranian society, and how women's experiences of sexual assault are commonly silenced, or perceived as humiliating within a highly conservative society. However, after what happens to Rana, the film itself takes a rapid turn to focus solely on the damaged male-ego; an over-empowering, emasculated anger that leads to revenge. Emad continuously finds clues that lead us to the identity of the attacker, but it becomes obvious that he is doing this for his ego rather than for any form of justice. Upon tracking down the attacker, the audience is seemingly meant to be thrown into a moral dilemma when it is revealed to be an old man with a heart condition and a loving family. At this point, the story seems to be trying to shake the audience's moral compass, asking us to sympathise with the old man as Emad threatens to reveal his true character to his family.

Having said all this, although Farhadi's realistic portrayal of human relationships in the film makes it watchable, its depiction of the place of women and the representation of their experiences should be reconsidered. ♦



## Amy Schumer: The Leather Special

COMEDY REVIEW BY CHESTER JERRAT

Amy Schumer's latest offering, *The Leather Special*, has a brutal one star average review on Netflix. One star. That means over 80% of the reviews are one star or below. This is, however, not entirely an indication of quality, rather an indication of the lengths sad white men are willing to go. Alt-right redditers have purposely tanked her reviews because they are lovely beautiful sexist wonderful people.

I'm don't particularly enjoy comics who do an entire hour of jokes about dicks and having sex. It's just not my thing. Having said that, I don't judge those who do, and I know it's possibly the most popular genre of stand up comedy. It's also a genre that's performed almost exclusively by men. But when a woman gets to the level that Amy Schumer is at, the selling-out-stadiums level, through the same crass humour that has elevated hundreds of men to the same level, she gets 1000 one star reviews.

Amy Schumer is the Hillary Clinton of comedy. It's about time we had a female comic selling out stadiums across the planet, I just would have preferred it was someone else. For fans of blue comedy, you will love *The Leather Special*. I really did enjoy it, but it left me a little empty. It feels like Amy Schumer hasn't developed herself—the show was good but felt predictable and didn't contain much depth.

I have some problems with Amy Schumer. Mainly her stolen jokes. Lots and lots of stolen jokes. However, I went in with fresh eyes and no expectations and I came out mildly satisfied. I laughed a bit, and I listened without being particularly bored.

*The Leather Special* does not deserve one star. It deserves 3 stars. A decent 3 stars. ♦





## Rostered On

TELEVISION REVIEW BY PATRICK NEWLAND

As someone who has worked in a big box electronics store for over three years, I have personally heard every piece of dialogue from the pilot episode of the independent Australian comedy *Rostered On*. The YouTube-released project had next to no budget, had to be filmed at the dead of night, within a very limited timeframe. And yet, the incredible writing shows just how little that can matter.

The show is a brutal critique of the real world of working at a big electronics corporate, and working retail in general. From the constantly stupid question, “Do you work here?” (no shit, Sherlock), through to the age-old “Can you do better for cash?”, the show is just way too real. To someone who has never worked in that environment, it may seem as though all the characters are a bit over the top, caricatures of real people—but they really are not. This show is brutally accurate. The theme of the show, that people don’t think of you as human if you wear a uniform, is all too true. From the incredibly insolent customer demanding cash for a camera that is not faulty, through to the store administrator getting angry at someone who just did what they were told, I have and do live this show.

If I ever get out of retail, I’m sure this show would lead to me needing therapy, but at the moment it’s just a nice release, to know that it’s not just me. I have been hoping for, and then looking forward to the show’s first full season for almost a year—now that it is almost here, I’m looking forward to it more than ever. The trailer for the full season is hilarious, and I’m sure the show will be too. If you work in, or ever have worked in retail, check out this show. The first season premieres on April 4<sup>th</sup>, and the pilot can be found right now on the show’s YouTube channel. ♦



## It’s Always Sunny in Philadelphia, Season 12

TELEVISION REVIEW BY ANOUSHKA MAHARAJ

Last week saw the closure of the twelfth season of *It’s Always Sunny in Philadelphia*, hereby marking the twelfth year of my devotion to it. Growing up revering shows like *The Office*, *30 Rock* and *Arrested Development*, the arrival of *LASIP* was a welcome addition to a life of comedy that valued dark humour. Comprised of a dysfunctional gang of five, these beautiful anti-heroes engage in shenanigans that can only be likened to that of lunatics.

After twelve years, I expected some waning in the hilarity—dead air after Dennis concludes a murderous rant, or a tired chuckle upon hearing Dee’s repetitive angry squawking. Whether it’s my sentimentality talking or just plain fact, I found that this was not so; it is just as delightful today as it was in 2005 to spend 22 minutes every week immersed in the absurdities that take place beneath the dull lighting of Paddy’s Pub.

While the schemes are less frequent, the gang spends more time directing their jokes inward, celebrating each of their characteristic flaws—such as in “Old Lady House”, “The Gang Goes to a Water Park” or “Hero or Hate Crime?”. They also tackled more topical subjects like in “The Gang Turns Black”, but took expectedly twisted angles like in “Making Dennis Reynolds a Murderer” and “PTSDec”. Because we’ve learned to accept their stunted personal growth, victories that came in the form of Mac finally embracing his sexuality or Dennis’s uncorrupted joy in “The Gang Tends Bar” were genuinely wonderful surprises. While a long way from the riotous yet genius beginnings that brought us Dayman and Frank’s sweaty, naked couch-birth, season twelve of *LASIP* is a ripened portfolio of a gang we have long-since fallen into step with.

In many ways, their chemistry is as enduring and effortless as Charlie’s love for the Waitress. While it isn’t perfect, it persists—and like any long-suffering (potentially dysfunctional) romance, it is still full of surprises. ♦



## The Body Laid Bare: Masterpieces from Tate

EXHIBITION REVIEW BY HILARY BARNARD

Do you like naked people? Do you like art? If, like me, you do, then get excited for Auckland Art Gallery’s major exhibition for 2017. *The Body Laid Bare* combines art and nudity (genius) in a collection of nudes curated by Emma Chambers and Justin Paton in collaboration with Tate. This exhibition contains works by Pablo Picasso, Henri Matisse, Auguste Rodin, and Barbara Hepworth (just to name a few). Even if you’re not into painting or sculpture, everyone knows who Picasso is, right? I mean, how cool is it that you, yes you, the average, in debt student, can go and see paintings by freakin’ Picasso?!

The exhibit takes you on a journey of the naked human body, beginning in the 1790s all the way through to today. The works are organised via themes that use a different lens to discuss the body and the political, historical and societal contexts in which the bodies were viewed and depicted in their times.

Here are some things I thought about:

- In *Historical Nude* we see classic, romantic paintings of soft, pale women, and hyper-masculinised men. Unfortunately, it was men that decided what was and was not appropriate to be seen in this era of art, and female bodies were often discussed as objects (gross).

- The *Private Nude* section shows the rejection of the academic nude. However, it was seen to be scandalous that women would be depicted nude in such domestic settings. There is a definite undercurrent of women empowerment!

- *Erotic Body* has the first depiction of a gay couple, and *The Kiss* (Rodin’s famous sculpture of lovers intertwined).

- Sadly, it is only at the end of the exhibition in *Body Politics* that we see people of colour, and art that directly addresses fluidity in gender.

And a note for feminists: when the curators were selecting works for this exhibition, they made sure to select renowned and talented women artists in an effort to support women in art! ♦



ART BY JOSH HART (@VRIJKOTTE)

# Podcasts 101

*With Jordan Margetts*

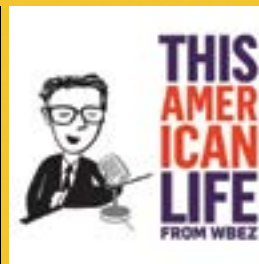
Like any cartoonish millennial, I'm totally addicted to media input. I watch TV while I sleep. *It's Always Sunny in the Park* plays in the background when I study. I can't spend five minutes alone without a phone game. And I get incredibly cranky when the internet is down. Most of these habits are totally indefensible and obnoxious. The fact I feel almost immediately transported to some terrifying antediluvian past whenever my battery dies is a sad indictment of my character.

So discovering an input I could defend, that made me more informed, was the best of both worlds. Imagine if they invented cigarettes that made you fit, or alcohol that cleansed the liver.

Podcasts, as I figure, solve (or ameliorate) three basic problems: (a) as above, most people I know need constant media input, (b) there's an almost infinite amount of information to sift through on Facebook (and the web generally), (c) most of us, if we're honest, know that our constant dependence on our devices is probably bad for us—our memories are worse, our concentration spans are down, etc. So a medium that actually provides (at times admittedly jaundiced) coverage, beyond just brain-rotting distraction is sort of genius.

This being said, adding to an already overfull media diet can be difficult. If you listen to music on the way to and from uni, and presum-

ably stream/illegally download vast quantities of TV and movies, then jumping blind into a new medium is a little daunting. So here's my theory: I think podcasting breaks down into four main camps: roundtable discussions (i.e. smart people yarning about X topic); documentary format (essentially based on the old BBC radio shows); serialised fiction (usually inspired by old-fashioned radio drama, a form none of us ever listened to); and interviews. Obviously there are topical divides too: popular culture, politics, and personal interest being the main categories. With this in mind, here's a broad breakdown of the big names and my personal favourites...



## FICTION

Podcast fiction is a weird one. Actually bothering to read fiction is difficult and time consuming and, because it lacks the easy-out of presenting visual stimuli, a good fiction podcast basically requires a mix of ambience, good vocal performances, and catchy writing. In this example, the most popular number is also the best:

RECOMMENDATION

### *Welcome to Night Vale*

Since about episode 20 (there are over a hundred now), *WtV* has been somewhere near the top of the iTunes download list. There's no real plot, it's just fortnightly radio broadcasts from a mysterious town somewhere in the desert. The only concept is that all conspiracy theories are true (a vast secret government controlling all our lives, angels, invisible people living in walls, etc etc). And while hitting all the right buttons for nerd-culture, it's also super smart and fun and post-modern.

NOTABLE

### *Alice Isn't Dead*

By the *Night Vale* team. This one actually has a plot, if an oblique one. But all the same conspiratorial darkness, and obsession with Americana. And unlike *Night Vale* there are only ten episodes, so an easy way to cram a full season.

## POPULAR CULTURE

It's almost impossible to keep up with all the TV, films, books, articles, and celebrity gossip that bounces around the internet. It helps that big magazines have started to take the old public-broadcast TV format and translate them to podcasts. There are shitloads. Some general, some specific (film alone has at least four notables).

RECOMMENDATION

### *The Slate Culture Gabfest*

[my overall pick!]

The self-professed motto of the show is to have the sort of conversations smart grad-students would engage in about popular culture. They pick about three topics a week (one is usually a film) to deconstruct and, with varying levels of friendliness, go round the table parsing out the

relevant issues. The debates often get heated, and the topics are super varied. Apart from its tendency to over-plug other Slate products, this is almost definitely my go-to podcast.

NOTABLE

### *The Great Albums Podcast*

By Pitchfork, they go through a famous album first overall, then song by song.

## POLITICS

It's difficult keeping up with the news, and having a weekly roundtable (usually from Trump-land) show up on your phone every week is a great way to truncate all the stuff you don't have time to read.

RECOMMENDATION

### *The Weeds (by Vox)*

Round-table discussion devoted to policy. What makes this show unique is the attempt to discuss actual policy mechanisms in an accessible way (rather than just covering broad concepts)—there's lots of stuff on healthcare, law reforms, and of course POTUS Donald Trump.

NOTABLE

### *NPR Politics*

A good hour-long weekly round-up and one shorter discussion per week. A bit dry, but super informative.

## DOCUMENTARY

I'm probably using the wrong nomenclature, but I mean the shows that are heavily produced, usually feature a score, often a host, and a series of snippet interviews. These are more like distinctive non-fiction "programmes" than round table chats.

RECOMMENDATION

### *This American Life*

Possibly the most famous podcast in the world. There's a weekly set of interviews with members of the public, all structured around a theme that's significant to daily life. From politics, to coping with stress, to racial violence.

NOTABLE

### *On The Media*

I could easily have included this on the politics list, but the old-school production values shift it over to the doco camp. Basically a politics podcast, but one that's more interested in deconstructing the way the media interacts with politics, than politics itself. The interviews are typically pretty argumentative, and the segments short.

## INTERVIEWS

This one I struggle with. First because there's a bloody million of them. Secondly because, as a rule, I'd rather listen to critics talk honestly about someone, than sit there quizzing them. It's also pretty hard to narrow these down, because most interview shows are themed. I find interviews are usually best when you actually care about the guest, so they don't tend to make it into my weekly rotation.

RECOMMENDATION

### *The Ezra Klein Show (Vox)*

This is the obvious exception: typically socio-political interviews, with either public figures (politicians, journalists) or some kind of author or academic. The guests are interesting 90% of the time, and Ezra Klein clearly preps and has a whole boat load of theories to test against his guest of the week. This is the only interview show I listen to week-in-week-out.

NOTABLE

### *WTF with Marc Maron*

Like *This American Life* or *Welcome to Night Vale*, this is a genre-defining show. Marc Maron (a slightly douchey, frankly average comedian) has had everyone from Louis CK, in a great interview, to Obama show up to his garage to record. The show is beloved, and I get why. Some of these conversations get "real" in a way you almost never hear in interviews. This being said, Maron comes off a little self-obsessed, and I'm not that interested in actors. So this is a sometimes listen for me.

Fair warning, this is a massively truncated list of favourites. I don't have space for self-help, science, films, book reviews, or history podcasts. There's heaps more good stuff out there. If, like me, you think your cell-phone addiction is probably making you stupider, this is an easy antidote. ♦



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## Amateur Hour



*With  
Jordan Margetts*

# Stuff You

*Each week Jordan, disgraced former-editor-in-chief, tries to impart political wisdom but mainly just cries in the shower.*

I've never been great at keeping up with New Zealand news. Not a great confession for a columnist, but it's true. It's the journalism that keeps me away. I don't mind reading something biased, or something I profoundly disagree with if it's good. New Zealand journalism is not good. It's scarily bad. I'm borderline convinced it actually makes you stupider. But now I've committed to a column and have to try to keep up.

At time of writing (*Craccum* deadlines are such that sadly I'm always writing a week out) I stumbled on a *Stuff* article titled, "The global 'food experiment' and the future of NZ nutrition". Sounds exciting. Sounds predictive. Sounds like something I, with my love of bacon and cheese, probably know very little about.

Sure enough, upon reading, I actually became less informed about nutrition. The basic premise of the article was that "low nutrition" foods have been mass produced and sold in the West for the sake of cheapness, and because high-calorie-low-nutrition foods are easy to produce in bulk, they now completely define our dietary habits. As far as I can tell this is factually true. But from here the article devolves into a total mess.

Apparently, our bad food causes cancer. After a little time on the internet it seems like this is vaguely possible, in a probabilities sense, but is basically useless as a predictive measure on an individual basis (smoking doesn't guarantee you cancer, but we know the link is very high; in this case, the link between sausage rolls and cancer is not especially high or significant). Without getting myself into a technical discussion that I'm nowhere near smart or qualified enough to cope with, here's my point: why on earth, in an article about nutrition, in a country where one in three people over the age of fifteen is obese, would you make some spurious point about cancer?

There is a very serious discussion that needs

to be had about nutrition. Going by obesity statistics alone (measuring malnutrition is much harder), we can see a disproportionate effect on, well, poorer people, and Māori/Pacific Island populations. We see fast food companies targeting impoverished areas. How do we encourage poor people to buy better food? The conservative response is to tell them off for budgeting poorly and note that you can buy reasonably healthy food cheaply. But of course, making your kids eat tinned tomatoes is much harder than making them eat fish and chips. One response is education. Another is school breakfasts/lunches.

The article published by *Stuff* mentioned none of this. After waxing lyrical about the horrors of nutritionally impoverished food, the writer, Ben Warren (a nutritionist), gives us a list of things we "as individuals" should do. These include buying supplements. Buying in season fruit and veggies. And eating more offal. Two things are immediately apparent. Firstly, that Ben is only thinking about rich people. Have you seen the cost of dietary supplements? Or noticed how quickly fresh kale (which Ben notes is about the highest nutritional content per calorie of food) goes off in the fridge? At the Dominion Road Countdown, kale is about \$5 for around 6 stalks. This advice is not about what "you" as the individual can do. It's about what people like Ben, featured in the picture on the page, can do. People with expensively cut grey hair, and few wrinkles, and an expensive looking trendy shirt that says he's casual, but because he chooses to be. You bet that Ben could buy a suit.

But really, this isn't Ben's fault. Ben isn't a journalist. Ben isn't a policy expert. Ben is a nutritionist. A profession that deals almost exclusively in helping people for whom food is too accessible to get hold of food, which provides less energy so that those same people do not store too much fat on their bodies and damage

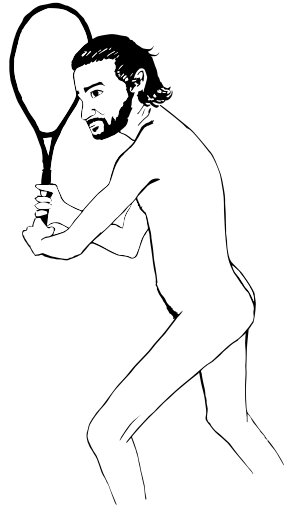
their health or appearance. Sidenote: it's funny right, that for most of human history we fought to produce food with as many calories as possible so that people could survive (which is the "experiment" Ben alluded to in his op-ed). And now the West has so many calories that we need to try to produce radically inefficient food, like lettuce, so that we don't overconsume calories and get really fat and gross and unpleasant. This is what Ben's whole profession is all about.

Which gets me to my second problem. The publication. The editors. Whoever commissioned/accepted/edited/selected this particular piece decided that *Stuff*'s responsibility, as one of New Zealand's largest online publications, was not to engage thoughtfully with an issue that affects untold numbers of Kiwis, but was to provide a brief scare-piece and impractically expensive advice for the individual. Aside from the article just being bad, it aggressively pushes the responsibility upon the individual, who is expected to budget for food which is less efficient, harder to find, less comforting, and by-and-large more expensive.

So alongside articles from the *Herald* that tell us about genius millennials who have no life, six jobs, and a massive mortgage so they can break into an exclusive property market, we also have uninformed and uninformative articles from *Stuff* telling people to go spend money on vitamin B tablets.

The really sad thing is that you and I are trapped. If we want to engage with contemporary New Zealand and discuss things that affect us a little more directly than Trump, Obamacare, or gun laws, then we have to read New Zealand journalism. But it's hard to make yourself when they feed you such garbage. We need some young people to start magazines, to start informed blogs; we need to stop putting up with cheap mendacious journalism. But maybe we're too inert. Maybe next week I'll just read about Trump again. ♦

## How to Talk About Sport



*With  
Mark Fullerton*

# Super (average) Rugby (format): An Open Letter to SANZAAR

*Each week Mark, disgraced former-editor-in-chief, tries desperately to meet his deadline.*

Dear SANZAAR,<sup>1</sup>

There's a lot of talk right now about the Super Rugby format, and it's about fucking time. If the season ended last week, the Blues would have made the playoffs,<sup>2</sup> which is obviously an affront to all things decent. Word coming out of various camps is that three teams are facing the chop. Should it be the Force or the Rebels or the Brumbies? There seems to be an awful lot of Aussie bashing, which is never discouraged in a rugby setting, but also seems to ignore the fact that South Africa has six teams, one of which has a fairly atrocious win rate of two (games) (ever).

But while the Kiwi journalists bay for ARU blood and the Australian journalists go "oh well come on guys our teams aren't even THAT bad" and the Sunwolves hide in the shadows so nobody remembers that there's actually a Japanese team in the competition and the Jaguares continue to pretend that they aren't really just the Argentinian national side in a clever disguise<sup>3</sup> but are still consistently shit, while all this is going on, SANZAAR seem to have placed the New Zealand teams under

a protection order. From the Blues all the way down south, it seems like the New Zealand conference is safe.

Well, you see, this is where they're wrong. If we're going to be chopping teams from the roster, we need look no further than our own backyard.

The Crusaders will be the first to go. Jesus once killed a fig tree because it didn't produce fruit for him, so if our lord and saviour has that little patience for a fruit tree then we sure as shit shouldn't have to put up with whatever stuttering and staggering version of the Crusaders we've had to watch since 2009. If a horse is past working age, you either put it out to stud (à la Richie McCaw) or send it to France and teach it how not to drive (à la Dan Carter). If a horse is so clearly beyond functioning, no matter how majestic and glorious it may have been in its heyday, you shoot it.

The Highlanders will follow shortly after, if only as a pre-emptive strike against a scenario that will inevitably play out should the Highlanders continue their winning ways. Part of the appeal of Otago University to prospective students has always been that things are a little bit shit. The University is fine but nothing amazing, the weather is absolute balls, the flats are a bit run down and the Highlanders, until recently, were awful. But now they're improving, and with an improved sporting landscape, the students will begin to demand a higher standard of life. Flats will be done up to Herne Bay standards, driving rent prices up and driving students away. A lack of students will leave a gaping hole in the Dunedin economy and in a few short years the Edinburgh of the South will

become the Invercargill of the North and the Highlanders will have been sold into manual labour in a *Mad Max* style dystopia. Probably.

The Chiefs will also go because Hamilton is the most depressing city in the world. The Chiefs deserve to exist. Hamilton doesn't.

The Hurricanes are so talent-rich at the moment they're just going to keep winning and winning. But nothing lasts forever, and it won't be soon before they go the same way of the Crusaders, so might as well pop them on the trash heap too.

So this leaves the Blues, all on their lonesome and with a guaranteed run to the playoffs. Of course with all that free Kiwi talent floating about, they'll soon become the most sought after franchise and we'll see a great northern migration, followed by a massive upturn in the turnstiles. Bring the players, bring the audience. Not long after a fully sold-out season, the rugby powers will decide that Eden Park is woefully inadequate in its current state and will divert many funds to delivering either a) a new stadium or b) subsidised chips, with every sane rugby fan praying silently for the latter. In the interest of fairness, the blue and the red and the Chief's colours and the yellow and the green<sup>4</sup> will all mix to form a snotty brown jersey, which a clever graphic designer will darken and darken until it is a nice trademarked adidas Black, with the acronym of their slogan, 'AllIn-thistoGether' stencilled across the front.

Yours sincerely,  
Mork •

<sup>1</sup> South Africa New Zealand Australia something Rugby.

<sup>2</sup> Don't ask how. It is abundantly clear now that the Super Rugby format is flawed, and was clear about thirty-seven seconds after the format was announced, when everyone shuffled uncomfortably in their seats, each one afraid to admit that they would have had less trouble if they were asked to decode the Rosetta Stone over the telephone with a nasally indisposed Glaswegian.

<sup>3</sup> The clever disguise being the Argentinian national team are called "Los Pumas" and the Argentinian Super Rugby team are "Los Jaguares", with a puma and a jaguar being essentially the same fucking animal.

<sup>4</sup> Honestly a green Highlanders uniform is fucking reason number one to dump them.



By Popular  
Demand



With  
Michael Clark

# Ode to Night Vale: How *Welcome to Night Vale* Combats Depression

*Each week Michael, long-time writer and all-round teddy bear, tries to persuade you to take pop culture seriously.*

In the Spring of 2015, I started getting panic attacks. I didn't know that's what they were at the time, but I locked the door of my editing suite, hid under my desk and started gasping uncontrollably. I didn't tell anyone because I didn't think it was normal behaviour. That was wrong. But it was about the same time I was introduced to *Welcome to Night Vale*.

*Welcome to Night Vale* is a fictional podcast about a single cursed desert town described through a series of cheerful community radio broadcasts. Each episode, the town is disturbed by a different Lovecraftian nightmare and radio host Cecil reports this between ad breaks, press announcements, cultural events, and weather reports. Jordan Margetti, in a previous issue of *Craccum*, described the tone perfectly: "clues leading nowhere. Voices in the night crying out vague woes. World's decaying into entropy." It's probably the most existential thing you'll ever listen to. Yet it's calming. It's comforting. It's embracing. Whenever I felt an attack coming on or whenever I couldn't sleep, I listened and it calmed me down, usually allowing me to drift off to sleep.

And I'm not the only one. During a keynote speech, co-writer Joseph Fink admitted that they have received numerous emails from people who have anxiety or depression telling them that their work helped them. In an interview, he describes a woman living in the Philippines who said listening to the show kept her calm during the typhoon. In another interview, the voice actor Cecil Baldwin tells of an American marine in Afghanistan who listens to *Night Vale* to relieve stress. Cecil often speaks of queer youth living in hostile environments that seek comfort in the show.

*Night Vale* never really broaches these topics head on like a lot of other shows do, yet it has helped countless people through the torture of their own situation. So how does *Welcome to Night Vale*, a show about hooded figures, almighty glow clouds, and other unseen horrors, help people deal with depression and anxiety?

The answer lies within the setting itself. *Night Vale* is a safe space. Of course, it is not physically. The town is constantly under attack by some unknown force and when it's not, the city council, the secret police, and all the other forces that control the town impose a ridiculously strict and impossible order. History is often altered and the radio programme is clearly a propaganda tool. The cursed town defies all laws of space and time. Despite all this, *Night Vale* carries with it a sense of community unlike any other. Characters are diverse and fundamentally relatable. They are normal people like you or me. They are local business owners, teachers, coaches, mothers, fathers, lovers. They stick to each other when the town is in a pinch and weather the impossibility of *Night Vale*'s unique living conditions together.

Because *Night Vale* is set up as a radio show, the narrator assumes that *you*, the listener, are a citizen of the town and as such, you are involved in the events. The show invites you to take part in its setting and no matter who you are, you're stuck in the same situation as everyone else. Race, sexuality, gender, and heritage aren't issues in *Night Vale*. Instead, deathly shadow figures, hooded figures who steal children, and street cleaners are. All are welcome into *Night Vale*'s community and all are equally at risk of dying a cruel and traumatic death. As soon as one puts their earphones in and starts listening to the podcast, they are not only

transported to this strange town but invited into the community with open arms.

Once inside, *Night Vale* and its inhabitants become surprisingly relatable. A lot of the podcast appeals to the human condition; it reassures the listener that everyone is suffering the same existential dread and it's okay to feel this way. *Night Vale* is a town that makes no sense at all, but it does not mean that it is a place unlike our own. Like Baldwin says, "The problems that the denizens of *Night Vale* face are just a microcosm of the problems that our Western countries face. Issues of alienation, ever-present surveillance, monolithic corporations dedicated to production at any human cost... These are all front page issues." The secret police who enforce irrational rules and comically monitor the town with Orwellian persistence allow an outlet for our own anxieties with the man behind the curtain. The absurd *Night Valian* belief that mountains aren't real despite evidence to the contrary reflects the absurdity of dogma. For some people, the world makes no sense to them at all and *Night Vale* hyperbolises this for them, picking apart the strange and the unknown portions of our lives and running with it.

*Welcome to Night Vale* accepts that the world is a weird place and we are not going to uncover all its mysteries and that's okay because we're all in the same boat anyway. We're all experiencing the same world and weathering it together. *Night Vale* is a world not unlike our own, but one where no one is excluded. A world that I can sink into and be reaffirmed that it's okay. You're not alone. Get out from under that desk: "When life seems dangerous and unmanageable, just remember that it is, and you can't survive forever." ♦



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## Quarter-Life Crisis



With  
Caitlin Abley

## Dirty Old Town

*Each week Caitlin, disgraced former-editor-in-chief, tackles an item from her list of Twenty Things To Do In Your Twenties and tries to pass it off as journalism.*

Christ. Another week, another challenge, another column. Deadline day rushed towards me, yet I still avoided my list of Twenty Things To Do In My Twenties like a pregnant woman avoids raw fish, deli meat, and being tolerable on Instagram. I procrastinated by tidying my room (already serial-killer clean), by polishing off my CV, by telling my dog all the things I loved about our relationship. I scrolled through Facebook endlessly. I found an excerpt from Kafka's diaries (in meme format—god love the democratisation of high art) and felt a crushing sense of empathy with his writer's block:

*January 20. The end of writing. When will it take me up again?*

*January 29. Again, tried to write, virtually useless.*

*February 7. Complete standstill. Unending torments.*

Sure, Kafka's *The Castle* was 400 pages, and I merely had to shit out 800 words of self-aware trash (150 of which could be taken up by describing the whole painful process in detail, amirite!) but still, the sentiment resonated. I looked at my list, willing something to jump out at me. Entirely uninspired, I closed my eyes, pointed at the screen and vowed that I would do whatever task my finger landed on. Opening my eyes, I found I had committed myself to number 8:

*Party for 24 hours straight.*

What the fuck? Okay, whoever suggested that this was a vital rite of passage for twenty-somethings clearly has never stepped foot in Auckland. Where would you even go to party for a full day? I still live at home (along with 80% of my friends), so funneling Speights at 9am while my dad was pottering in the garden and my

mum was doing her cryptic crossword would be the exact opposite of a wild time. If you're lucky, you could go to a restaurant that served alcohol at lunchtime, but your bank balance would emerge even more lifeless than the establishment's midday atmosphere. Even if you eventually made it to a bar, you'd be kicked out at 2am because Auckland has a draconian set of liquor laws designed specifically to make you stay home and binge drink—and then you'd still have seven hours to kill before making it the full 24 hours.

Luckily for me, I was just in time for the most wonderful day of the year; the one day we can all get away with drinking from dawn till dusk till dawn again—St Paddy's. My mum's parents immigrated from Ireland to New Zealand in the 1950s, and they found themselves welcomed into a friendly new community—of other Irishmen. Half of Mt Albert was inhabited by Irish immigrants, and they gathered regularly at the local Irish Club. I spent a significant part of my childhood in the clubrooms, my hair bound up in pink foam curlers before Irish dancing concerts, shrouded in my very favourite smell of cigarettes, beer, salt & vinegar chips and furniture polish. St Patrick's Day at the Club remains a comprehensive banger, and better yet, it starts at 2pm and runs till the wee hours.

So that would account for about twelve hours of my day. Making a start on the remaining twelve, I made myself a poor-man's mimosa at 9am with some flat Lindauer and tropical Just Juice, which was precisely as unappealing as it sounds. It was hard to feel like I was actually partying when all my friends were either in class or at work. Not even my favourite Spotify playlist (2006 Emo Bangers) or playing the Dropkick Murphy's "I'm Shipping Up To Boston" on repeat could get me in the raving mood. At 11am, I resigned myself to slumping

on the couch, watching *The Departed* and finishing the rest of my bubble-less bubbly.

Finally 2pm rolled around and I hauled ass to the Club, where I was greeted by a few hundred baby boomers in green, most of whom were already way more fucked up than I was. I was being out-raved by people three times my age. It was time to step it up.

Three hours later, I stumbled outside, after pouring a few beers down my throat and more than a few beers down my dress. I checked my phone, and saw an unread text:

*Hey, are you going to B's birthday party?*

Shit shit shit shit shit that's *right*, I had a toddler's birthday celebration to go to. I was definitely way too jolly and way too beer-stained to be acceptable at a two-year old's party. I decided to walk there to give me time and adequate fresh air to pull myself together. But, of course, my remit was to *party for 24 hours* and goddammit I hadn't come this far only to give up in order to be "socially acceptable". I went to the party, hooned some Pimms, imparted a few nuggets of wisdom on the birthday girl (she looked sceptical; far too intelligent to trust my slurred words) and hightailed back to the Club. I remained there for the next seven hours, until I found myself limping around in circles, scream-singing along to "The Fields of Athenry" and swallowing back the Guinness-vomit rising in my esophagus. It was time to go home.

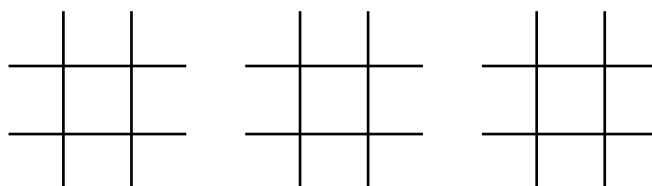
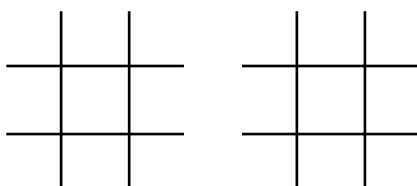
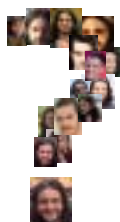
I stumbled into my house at 3am. I put a frozen pizza in the oven and promptly burned the living shit out of it. I consumed the entire blackened lump while (inexplicably) watching old episodes of *The Good Wife*. I fell asleep, pizza in hand, six hours away from completing my 24-hour challenge.

Complete standstill. Unending torments. •



# EASY SUDOKU

							3	8
	3	5						
	7		1	3				5
		3		8	1	9		
		7	6					3
			9			8		6
			7		6		8	
1						4		
7		8		5	9			2



# HARD SUDOKU

	6	3		7				
				4	5			7
			3					8
	7		9		4	3		
1	3						6	2
		5	2		3		8	
9					6			
3			7	8				
				9		8	4	

Answers: 1. Led Zeppelin 2. Scooby-Doo 3. Peru 4. An aeroplane 5. Las Vegas, all on the Strip 6. She was the first cloned mammal 7. The Persian invaders 8. Liver 9. T2 - the tea shop, the lane in which you can drive with two or more passengers and T2: Transporting 10. Cyprus, with 23

# KISSES AND QUIZZES

## EASY (ONE POINT)

1. What rock band included members Robert Plant and Jimmy Page?
2. Which 2002 film starred Sarah Michelle Gellar, Freddie Prinze Jr, Matthew Lillard and Linda Cardellini as a mystery-solving quartet?
3. Inca Kola is a product of which country?

## MEDIUM (TWO POINTS)

4. DB Cooper is infamous for his 1971 robbery of what form of transport?
5. Fourteen of the world's twenty-five largest hotels are in which US city?
6. What was significant about Dolly the sheep?
7. Who did the Greeks defeat at the Battle of Marathon?

## HARD (THREE POINTS)

8. Afflictions of which part of the human body normally begin with the word Greek *hepat*?
9. What acronym links a popular retail outlet, a type of road lane and a film sequel?
10. England and New Zealand both hold the Tier One rugby record of consecutive wins with 18, but which Mediterranean nation holds the actual record?

# HERALD'S HEROES

*Every week we'll trawl the comments section of the NZ Herald Facebook page to find the hilarious, the repulsive, and the outright absurd.*



For the first time, but almost definitely not the last, this week's Herald's Heroes honours are shared between two star-crossed lovers. Unfortunately for Cheryl and Andrew, the most toxic couple ever to appear on *Married at First Sight*, their union was never meant to be. Fortunately for DeeJay and Alex, a lack of scientific analysis hasn't changed the fact that these two guys are destined to be forever linked by a love of the worst reality television show to ever grace our eyeballs. Who needs Tinder when you have the Herald Facebook comments section? (yes, the likes on their comments are from each other) •

# the people to blame.

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# SHADOWS


*Head to Shadows to redeem your \$50 bar tab!*


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