

C R A C C U M

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Something Else

Cam Says:

Don't get me wrong. The ongoing global pandemic is a truly important and largely tragic topic. But I feel we need a forum this week where we talk about something else. And this is just that.

I cannot do another editorial about isolation, alert levels or quarantine. I can't write about CoronaChaos and when every conversation veers towards the impending economic recession, the largely inadequate overseas response, or some boomer telling me it's a hoax, it gets a bit much.

So this week, we're talking about something else.

Last week, Madeline Chapman from the Spinoff, ranked the biscuits in New Zealand, and while she did a pretty decent job, I want to publically go on the record and state that Chocolate Scotch Fingers and Choc Thins deserved better. They deserved a higher ranking and are under recognised and under appreciated as legitimate biscuit options. The Number One Biscuit was a decent choice, and look: game recognise game. But as a nation, we must come together to appreciate and value these biscuits - it must be our highest priority.

Peace,

Cam



Dan says:

We're not writing about the coronavirus this week.

To be frank, we're sick of it. The virus - and the related lockdown - have been clogging up our news feeds for months now. It's all we hear, think, and write about. And it's beginning to block out all the interesting things happening outside of the virus itself.

Here's something you might have missed this week: University of Auckland lecturer Mark Harvey, who teaches Dance Studies, spent last week recording an interpretative dance video with his dog. The video, titled "Let's Share the Ground Together", saw Harvey don a frilly necklace of toilet paper rolls and roll around in his backyard.

"We appear to have spread this virus from the animal kingdom, so I wanted to explore the lives of animals around us, in this case, the life of my dog - to follow my dog, to see things from her perspective," Harvey wrote - apparently completely serious - on the university website.

"Of course I'm interested in the big questions, on how to make the world a better place - but also how we can we connect people around these big issues, to explore what motivates people to consider and act on issues such as climate change, colonisation and inequality, but by taking a sideways rather than didactic approach."

The video is as strange as it sounds. If you're interested in watching, you can do so by following this link: <https://youtu.be/qB9MS7uhkvY>



LIVE

Fitness

PRESS TO PLAY ON SPOTIFY



University Cuts Costs at the Expense of Casual and Contract Staff

JUSTIN WONG

The University of Auckland has said all staff and its contractors are still getting paid during the lockdown, but casual staff were not and contract staff working on Semester Two's foundation courses were asked to work without pay.

Tertiary education providers, such as universities, polytechnics/institutes of technology and wānanga are considered state sector employers by the government and are expected to pay employees their normal wages through periods of self-isolation.

The same goes for government agencies, schools and crown entities such as ACC and Kāinga Ora.

While some service staff, like security and gardening, are employed directly by the university, some services, such as cleaning and on-campus food outlets, are contracted to third-party suppliers, who employ their own staff.

The university told *Craccum* in a statement that it is not aware of pay cuts by its contractors, as contracted service providers and on-campus food vendors have been covered by the government's wage subsidy.

"We are working with all on-campus retailers to understand the financial assistance available to them and what further support the University may be able to provide."

However, the university also said those working on casual contracts would not receive any wages, as they only get paid for the hours that they work.

Vice-Chancellor Dawn Freshwater said in an All Staff Forum on April 1st that the university will be looking to shift the duties of casual employees to permanent staff.

"The current policy is to preserve our permanent workforce as much as possible in order to reduce the potential of redundancy."

"This means that, in the first instance, we will be reviewing our non-permanent staff (casuals, fixed terms) with a view that many of these agreements will come to an end and no longer continue."

"This will provide opportunities for permanent staff to register their interest who are available for alternate duties."

Two casual staff working at the University Recreation Center told *Craccum* they were only paid until April 9th, and they were told by email there were no exemptions on not getting paid unless it was proved that "the casual staff were needed and still working" during the lockdown.

The university's attempts to cut costs in the wake of the lockdown has also affected contracted academic staff working in the second semester.

In an email, teaching staff of the New Start General, a

part-time preparation course for an undergraduate programme, were asked to work without remuneration.

"Covid-19 has changed our world and the impact of the fallout requires us to rethink our future," the university said in the email.

"You may wish to continue with us or find a replacement lecturer by consulting your Head of School. However, if you wish to withdraw your services we will understand."

While most foundation course lecturers are full time academics who have been paid extra to guest lecture, some lectures and tutorials are delivered by outside staff on fixed term or casual contracts. Staff have been asked to respond by May 4th.

Other New Zealand universities are also making staff changes to reduce costs, with Victoria University considering cutting pay by a fifth or moving to a four-day week, and Lincoln University asking staff to volunteer a five percent wage cut.

"The university's attempts to cut costs in the wake of the lockdown has also affected contracted academic staff working in the second semester."

AUT Paramedicine Students to Do Placements at Healthline

CAMERON LEAKEY

Paramedicine Students at AUT will now complete placements at Healthline, the national telehealth service, following the cancellation of existing placements due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The COVID-19 Alert Level system does not permit frontline ambulance clinical placements at Alert Level 3 or 4.

Students studying Paramedicine in their third - and final - year are now to complete 12 eight hour shifts at Healthline instead of placement with the ambulance service. Tony Ward, Head of AUT Paramedicine, told Craccum that "Paramedicine students in their final semester have an opportunity to undertake clinical placement in a structured programme and complete their studies in this COVID environment".

However, some students in Paramedicine have expressed concern over the newly organised placement at Healthline. An online petition was launched on change.org, titled 'Against Free Labour: No to Paramedic students working in telehealthcenters (sic)'. The petition has a target of 500 signatures and as of May 1st has received 376. This petition, created anonymously by a 'Concerned Student' expresses upset that students are being "forced to work for free" and that the placement may result in students feeling "under prepared to enter the workforce".

AUTSPA, the AUT Student Paramedicine Association, did not respond to Craccum's request for comment. Craccum has been unable to get in contact with the student who started the petition.

In response to students, AUT has stated that the choice to begin placement at Healthline is at their own discretion.

"They can always defer the practical component of their study until ambulance clinical placements resume. We just don't know when that will be" Ward said.

Ward further affirmed the decision by AUT Paramedicine, telling Craccum that students have the right to voice their opinions and that the department was open to talking to students. Ward stated that the faculty "has been working with the best intentions to provide students with an excellent alternative to ambulance clinical placement, I believe we have"

Andrew Slater, CEO of Healthline, supported statements from AUT Paramedicine, highlighting the continued growth of virtual health consultations and the existing success of Healthline's clinical placement programme. Healthline is the third largest employer of paramedics in New Zealand, outside of the two main ambulance services.

The decision by AUT Paramedicine is similar to that of the School of Pharmacy at the University of Auckland, who informed students at the beginning of April that their clinical placements were to be replaced with placements at Healthline as a result of disruption due to COVID-19. These placements were postponed as a result of issues with the training software required for students to begin the placement. As of April 30th, Fourth year pharmacy students have yet to be informed when their time at Healthline is due to begin.

AUT Paramedicine Students will begin clinical placements at Healthline on Monday 4th May. The roster is already full.

More than \$100k Claimed by University Sports Clubs and Facilities in Wage Subsidies

JUSTIN WONG

Four University of Auckland clubs and its staff common room were paid around \$104,000 from the government's COVID-19 wage subsidy scheme.

The university's staff common room received \$42,088 for eight employees, while the Auckland University Rugby Football Club got \$33,688.80 for the wages of six employees, the Cricket Club got \$15,429 for three of its staff, and \$12,600 were given to the Hockey club to pay the wages of three employees.

Under the wage subsidy, employers can claim \$585.50 per week for each full time worker and \$350 per week for each part time worker.

Tertiary education providers, such as universities, polytechnics/institutes of technology and wānanga, are considered as state sector employers and are ineligible for the government's wage subsidy.

However, Jayne Russell, group general manager employment from the Ministry of Social Development, told *Craccum* that private organizations separate from the state sector could be entitled to the wage subsidy if they had experienced a revenue loss.

Clubs at the university operate as independent organisations, as they have their own constitutions and are responsible for their own operations and finances. Many student clubs are also registered as incorporated societies.



Responding to *Craccum*, the university said the staff common room, which is located at the Old Government House and its membership only open to staff, PhD candidates and members of the University of Auckland Society, is eligible for the wage subsidy scheme because it is an incorporated society.

The university also said the more than \$42,000 subsidy is for a full-time club manager, a part-time custodian and six part-time bar staff.

Auckland University Rugby Football Club General Manager Matt Megaw told *Craccum* the club is only an affiliate with no direct links with the University, other than a

news.

\$5,000 scholarship.

Megaw said the subsidy would be covering the full-time wages of the General Manager and the Director of Rugby, as well as the wages of four part-time employees, including one coach, a Junior Rugby Development Officer, one finance officer and the bar manager.

Jeremey Chen, the President of the Auckland University Hockey Club, said the club was also registered as an incorporated society that complied with the university's rules to use on-campus facilities.

He told *Craccum* the subsidy is for the salaries of three coaches for the men's and women's teams.

"In past years, we have funded their salaries through a combination of donations from club members and through community grant funding."

"With our coaches having been involved with our teams and the hockey season commencing pre-lockdown for their particular grades, along with a view to the season resuming later this year, we felt that we should attempt to honour their contracts as best as we could."

The Auckland University Cricket Club has not responded to a request for comment before the time of publication.

While the student unions at Victoria, Lincoln, Otago and Canterbury universities have applied for wage subsidies, Auckland University Student Association (AUSA) has not and said it has no plans to do so.

President George Barton told *Craccum* that AUSA has not experienced a 30 percent decrease in revenue - a situation that he expects will not happen - which is part of the requirements to apply for a wage subsidy.

"Unlike other Students' Associations like OUSA (Otago University Students' Association) and UCSA (University of Canterbury Student Association) which finance part of their operations through bars and cafes that are directly part of their Associations, our income is considerably more certain in a context like this because it's mainly from the University and our investments."

"We have experienced a decrease in income against what we were expecting this year but it is not sufficient to meet the wage subsidy's 30% decrease threshold."

"In addition to this, the lockdown and present situation have also meant a decrease in expenditure in some of our cost centres (such as Events and printing for *Craccum* magazine) as well."

Barton also said AUSA has not heard that student clubs are struggling financially, as he believes most of the large student clubs would have likely lost income from sponsorship and sales, but they probably won't have any large expenditure because large events like steins and balls would not take place.

"I encourage any clubs that would like any advice or help to get in touch if they think that might be helpful."

AUSA Calls for Academic Transcript Changes in Light of COVID-19

ELLA MORGAN

The Auckland University Students' Association (AUSA) has called for further changes to the university's COVID-19 policies in a letter to a number of the university's senior staff members.

The letter, addressed to Vice-Chancellor Dawn Freshwater and Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic) Professor John Morrow, asks for the university to consider implementing a policy in which students who receive a grade lower than their GPA at the start of the semester can have this grade removed from their academic transcript and replace with a 'PASS' grade. This would have no effect on a student's GPA, meaning in theory that no student's existing GPA could be negatively affected by their grades this semester.

The university's current response to COVID-19 allows for students who receive grades between C- and C+ to receive a 'PASS' grade. The AUSA argue that this approach may already incentivise students to perform worse than they potentially could in order for their GPA to remain unchanged, and that adopting their recommendation would allow students to do their best given the circumstances without the stress of maintaining their GPA.

"At a time when students are at home, often alone or in Flats with others, studying is a positive force and something that can help maintain wellbeing over this time," the letter reads. "We believe that students will be much more inclined to participate fully in their studies, and



perhaps more creatively too, if they can go into this Semester knowing that at least they won't be discounted if their academic performance suffers due to the unprecedented situation we find ourselves in."

The recommendation is endorsed by the AUSA student council; this includes presidents of each faculty and school association, Ngā Tauira Māori and Auckland University Pacific Islands' Student Association.

The AUSA highlights that during the COVID-19 pandemic, multiple universities around the world have adopted similar policies. These include high ranking universities such as Stanford University, Massachusetts Institute of Technology and the University of Melbourne.

The AUSA's proposal has so far proven popular with students, with their Facebook post amassing 1,300 reactions and over a hundred comments; the vast majority of which are in support of the policy. As of the time of publication, the university has not yet taken any action to implement the AUSA's recommendations.

New Zealand University Students Strike in Rent Payment Retaliation

CHARLOTTE PARKER

University students nationwide are currently preparing to strike against the expectation to continue paying rent for their halls of residence, despite not living in their rooms during Level 3 and 4.

Over the lockdown period, university students previously residing in halls of residence were expected to supply rental payments for rooms they were required to leave. Victoria University of Wellington student accommodation residents have been required to pay \$150 per week in rent until the end of Level 3, unless opting-out of their rental contracts and effectively losing their accommodation for the rest of the academic year. The University of Auckland has been reducing fees for those who have returned home from accommodation between \$60 and \$130 per week, while AUT has only given a utility reduction of \$60.

Eve McDonald, residing at AUT's city campus, said of the talks of strike "I don't think I would be joining because the rate seems fair to me. I understand they can't get the money to pay for it from someone else at this time, and we're technically still renting these rooms". However, many students are severely dissatisfied with their universities' actions, and are beginning to retaliate with support from some politicians.

The Facebook group 'VUW Halls of Residence Rent Strike' has gained significant publicity following its recent emergence, accumulating over 1,400 supporters across New Zealand. The group is currently in the process of forming a signed pledge in retaliation to the fees imposed on them, with the number of supporters of this still unconfirmed. The students involved in the movement are working alongside Wellington Council member Tamantha Paul, who has previously been involved in citizens' rental issues, as well as Green MP Chlöe Swarbrick

who has stated "what we're seeking to get is the fairest possible outcome that makes sense for students".

Swarbrick is not the only politician to have supported the students, with Nikki Kaye of the National Party and the Young ACT Party speaking out against universities' actions. Paul has also been working in association with New Zealand Union of Students' Associations (NZUSA), hosting a zoom conference where students could raise their concerns.

One of the participants of the strike and a resident of Boulcott Hall,, Kieran Gordon-McKee, claims that "Victoria University is using this pandemic to take advantage of students", as originally the students were informed they would not be charged for their rooms. Not only has the university backtracked on this, they are now seemingly profiting further off of accommodation. Weir House is currently being used as a collective space for all those who need residence on campus in which residents are still paying rent, whilst previous Weir residents whose rooms are being used are still being charged despite not being there.

Waikato, Massey and Lincoln universities have lifted the charges for residents who have left accommodation until they are able to return at Level 2, in line with comments from Education Minister Chris Hipkins who "wouldn't expect" halls that are receiving the government wage subsidy to be charging students for empty rooms. Additionally, NZUSA have published a letter of complaint template, creating an easy and accessible way for students to inform University Vice-Chancellors across New Zealand of their disdain. Support for the strike is still growing significantly, and Gordon-McKee says "we are refusing to pay this outrageous charge until it is dropped by the University".



WHAKARONGO MAI!: LISTEN UP!

What Do You Think of the First Year Fees-Free Policy?

COMPILED BY BRYONY AMMONDS-SMITH

Introduced for the start of the 2018 tertiary year, the government's Fees Free policy removed up to \$12,000 worth of first year debt. Three years on, it is still a subject of discussion. Craccum interviews four students on their thoughts about the policy.

Female, 20, Arts.

"Fees-free for the first year was a total blessing."

"I was so crushed [at] not getting that first year scholarship after working so hard, [because] my family has no money to pay for university, the prospect of taking

on student loans at seventeen was terrifying."

"Even if it was only for a year, it felt like a total weight off my shoulders, and that I could focus on doing well in university instead of worrying how I was going to pay for it."

Female, 22, Law/Arts Conjoint.

"I support fees-free learning for tertiary study, however I do think it might not be the right call to make regarding education policy at the moment."

"A great many young people are prevented from considering tertiary study due to issues in primary and secondary schools, perhaps because they come from low socio-economic areas and/or rural areas."

"I worry that those facing these obstacles are slipping through the cracks."

"I'm not sure what the answer is, but I do feel that the money that went into fees free from the government could have been used to pay teachers more, or something, to improve the quality of learning across the board."

Male, 22, Law/Arts Conjoint.

"As someone who supports the idea of free fees, something I find particularly frustrating is those who argue that student loans fulfill the same function."

"While for many people the idea that one can just get a student loan and pay it back after they graduate is viable, it isn't for everyone."

"For those without financial support or family backing, the idea of being saddled with tens of thousands of dollars of debt could easily seem (and in fact be) a significant impediment on pursuing higher education."

"By making tertiary education fees free, you would widen the scope of those who consider tertiary education as an option and remove a financial barrier that disproportionately affects those who are least supported in the education system."

Female, 20, Science.

"I think first year fees-free is a great incentive to get young people interested in gaining a degree, however I do feel many people have abused the idea of why this was introduced."

"I know students that have taken their first year of university to explore their options but forgot this is at the cost of taxpayer dollars."

"If students were trying to figure out what they like at their own cost, they would be a little more cautious about what they choose, instead of deciding to do something off a little hunch they have had."

"I think a way around this would be to introduce fees-free during the final year of tertiary study, this way valuable taxpayer money is going towards an individual that is actually going to help further New Zealand society rather than those dropping out after their first year."

HEARSAY!

Donald Trump Prescribes *Tiger King* as Coronavirus Cure

Excitement is brimming in the Oval Office as President Trump claims he has conceived a new cure for the coronavirus infection.

The President proposed the idea impromptu during a press conference last Saturday, with his Chief of Staff alleging that his recent viewing of Netflix's *Tiger King* docuseries may have inspired the idea. Trump was quoted as asking members of his Coronavirus Task Force, "if we can hit the body with enough counts of animal abuse, would that be enough to cure the virus?"

He proceeded to denounce Carole Baskin's claims she did not kill her husband as "fake news" and alleged that Big Cat Rescue was only a shell corporation established by CNN's Jim Acosta.

Though his colleagues refrained from providing an immediate response, the President refused to be discouraged, and dropped news startling to his staffers and journalists alike. "I just got off the phone with Joe Exotic," said Trump to a shocked audience. "I have recruited him for the council to reopen America."

Trump further reported that Exotic's campaign manager, Doc Antle, Doc Antle wife 1, Doc Antle wife 2, Doc Antle wife 3 and Jeff Lowe would all be simultaneously added to the same council. Carole Baskin believed she had been added too, but was infuriated to learn she had actually just become a part of the 'council to reopen the

septic tank and find Don Lewis' body'.

"It was tough to get this negotiated but I'm glad we managed to pull this through," President Trump was quoted as saying. "We had to get Doc Antle to sign a legally-binding contract saying he could not go near Jeff Lowe's nanny."

Trump claimed that the new members of his council would be based primarily along Carole Baskin's bike path. "We're going to build a zoo and get the Mexicans to pay for it," declared Trump excitedly. "Nobody is better at building zoos than me."

Joe Exotic, who currently remains imprisoned and is serving a lengthy sentence, is elated by the news claims close sources. "Joe has some brilliant ideas on how we can reopen America," his spokesperson said. "His ideas include a country music video and a second campaign for governor."

Ashley Bloomfield was reached for comment on whether New Zealand should adopt similar medical practices to cure COVID-19. He is said to still be blinking at our reporter at this time.



LIVE

Wellness

PRESS TO PLAY ON SPOTIFY



Angel of the Modem: Remembering the Internet's Past

LACHLAN MITCHELL

This week, Lachlan Mitchell laments for an age of the internet that is increasingly being deleted out of memory.

The definitive closure & content wipe of Yahoo Groups at the beginning of the year was a bigger moment than you might realise. Rather than merely shuttering a broken-down content hub from a bygone era, it was like watching the felling of the final colossi from Shadow of the Colossus; it existed for so long, wandered about in an increasingly isolated and depopulated landscape, it served to be a pillar of a forgotten time, and yet it fell victim to the callous advancement of an internet that seems ever so smaller nowadays. It got me thinking about where the internet is heading, and I have not really been able to forget about it.

The internet, as something we cannot physically observe, unlike Munchy Mart or Peaches & Cream or your local pandemic profiteers AKA Countdown, has the illusion of being static and slow to change, even when we're fully aware of how frenetic and ever-changing it actually is. We are aware of the pace of digital content – the turnover period for a meme in 2020 is now days if not hours, compared to the seemingly ageless pre-2010 era of rage comics and the troll face. We're aware of how far we've come – within the last decade, we finally dropped the act of referring to the internet with a capital I, the last grammatical relic of the days of the Information Superhighway and Bill Clinton voice clips on Limewire. Despite our obvious acknowledge-

ment of now living under the power of the social media shogunate, and all the changes that has brought to our once lawless lands, we still subscribe to the illusion of perpetuity for content of Internet Past. We still tend to believe that once something exists on the landscape, it exists forever – in part because that's the lesson driven into our heads each time someone's nudes are leaked, or there's a political scandal, or someone's tweets of them calling Beyoncé racial slurs in 2014 pops up on the Twitter Shadowlands. It is important to remember that many things are still logged. But the illusion comes from the belief of the internet's omnipotence, its ability to remember everything and all that existed under its sun, entirely separate from human hands.

“But the illusion comes from the belief of the internet’s omnipotence, its ability to remember everything and all that existed under its sun, entirely separate from human hands.”

feature.

The other big thing to note before I get into my main point is how the increased participation of humanity on the internet's content hubs is focused onto an ever-dwindling number of sources, bolstered by their Smaug-level capital bases, able to flex their muscles and pick up the world's media in a single grasp of their hands. Google/Alphabet as lumbering Behemoth, chained to the perpetually loathed YouTube; Facebook (FB/WhatsApp/Instagram) as untouchable Leviathan, one that periodically enables genocide in South Asian countries when it returns from its trawl across the ocean's depths for intellectual property krill to swallow up and add to its gelatinous mass; Twitter as Ziz, sitting in the Jurassic Park aviary, screeching and pecking at all who dare to venture into its realm; the wrinkled, bearded LinkedIn quietly demanding the blood and compliance of all who hope to labour under his realm; the mad god TikTok and that diminished, desiccated former deity Snapchat snapping up what's left of the youth demographic, and so on. And we are more and more aware of how exiled members from these big platforms are increasingly picked up by the far-right conversion machines that exist elsewhere.

While we are indeed more interconnected than ever before, it comes at a loss of variety in what you can interact on; unless you are willing to get on your knees and lather Google AdSense and Facebook's lying algorithm with your saliva, your venture will die. Unless you are willing to be injected with the mercury cash infusion of a venture capitalist firm, you cannot hope to maintain any notable presence for long. I should be clear that while I am critical, I am not saying 'social media bad.' I personally love the nightmarescape of Twitter, but I am very much aware of the paradox facing us. With mass

“With mass online participation has come a mass corporatisation of the internet and the exodus of previously viable platforms...”

online participation has come a mass corporatisation of the internet and the exodus of previously viable platforms, and their closure and subsequent content deletion has the effect of rewriting internet history to make it seem like this was the only way it ever was. With practically everyone from 12 year olds to war criminals on TikTok, for example, this level of mass participation makes the social media era of the internet seem like its first true incarnation, like that fucking ugly ass drawing of the *tiktaalik* leaving the water, with its arrow-shaped shit-skull leading evolution towards a terrestrial future. But what of the years in the water? What remains of the time before?

Rather than seeing a physical storefront close, like United Video being turned into a pharmacy or whatever, the content tends to simply disappear; unless there is a movement dedicated towards archiving content, it is unlikely that it will remain. The Ozymandias statue of the internet, the Space Jam website from 1996, is an outlier; for whatever reason, Warner decided that site would leap out of the sands and be one of the final

feature.

extant examples of an era long since out of the memory for the average internet user today. And while it is a perpetually heavenly anomaly, the Space Jam website has a purpose beyond letting the reader know about all the beautiful Space Jam content one could ever desire; it is an example of the dangers of not archiving what came before. It is one of the few survivors of the Geocities era, that primordial goop of DNA and tar from which all manner of Lovecraftian website design crawled out of. Does the Space Jam website experience survivor's guilt? Does it feel shame for having lived when so much else of its kind died? Oh, if only those planetary basketballs could talk; I'd bring in Amy Adams to try to communicate with this unknowable being.

In the time before social media as an extension of propaganda departments, if you had a hobby or a question relating to that hobby, you joined a hyper-specialised forum board made with mybb or Proboards software, and exclusively interacted with others in that realm, like Hank Hill talking about his dark love for propane and propane accessories. If you had a question that would be lost to anyone outside of that particular field, one that needed the steady hand of a figure with probable decades of love towards their craft, these areas were where you went. While the average user was thicker than the walls of the Hoover Dam, you were guaranteed to be amongst the companies of professionals and well-learned individuals within that particular field, no matter what. Gamers know this well; Neoseeker has been the answer to every specialised gaming problem for almost two decades, with it being a day for the ages if you are unable to find a discussion thread from 2004 about the exact mission for the exact game you are playing. These boards, ranging from autism discussion

boards to highly niche fishing communities or some mystical boomer shit, remain an invaluable resource – both because of the fact of their existence and the seeming lack of interest in ensuring or replicating their existence in the future.

You will note that many of these sites seem to lose prominence after 2010, some becoming total wastelands or kept from collapsing by the fervent dedication of bored housewives. Much of the forum creation technology, and associated communities, were bought up by the gangly, multi-armed monstrosity known as Tapatalk; uniting hundreds of thousands of these boards under one owner may prove to save them for the meanwhile, but Tapatalk is renowned for not being user friendly, and it is subject to the same pressures of survival as everyone else. If it falls, it will drag much more with it than an independent forum creation software would. These boards are old, they are totally reliant on the minuscule income from Google AdSense or the benevolence of a long-time owner that cannot

“It is one of the few survivors of the Geocities era, that primordial goop of DNA and tar from which all manner of Lovecraftian website design crawled out of.”

feature.

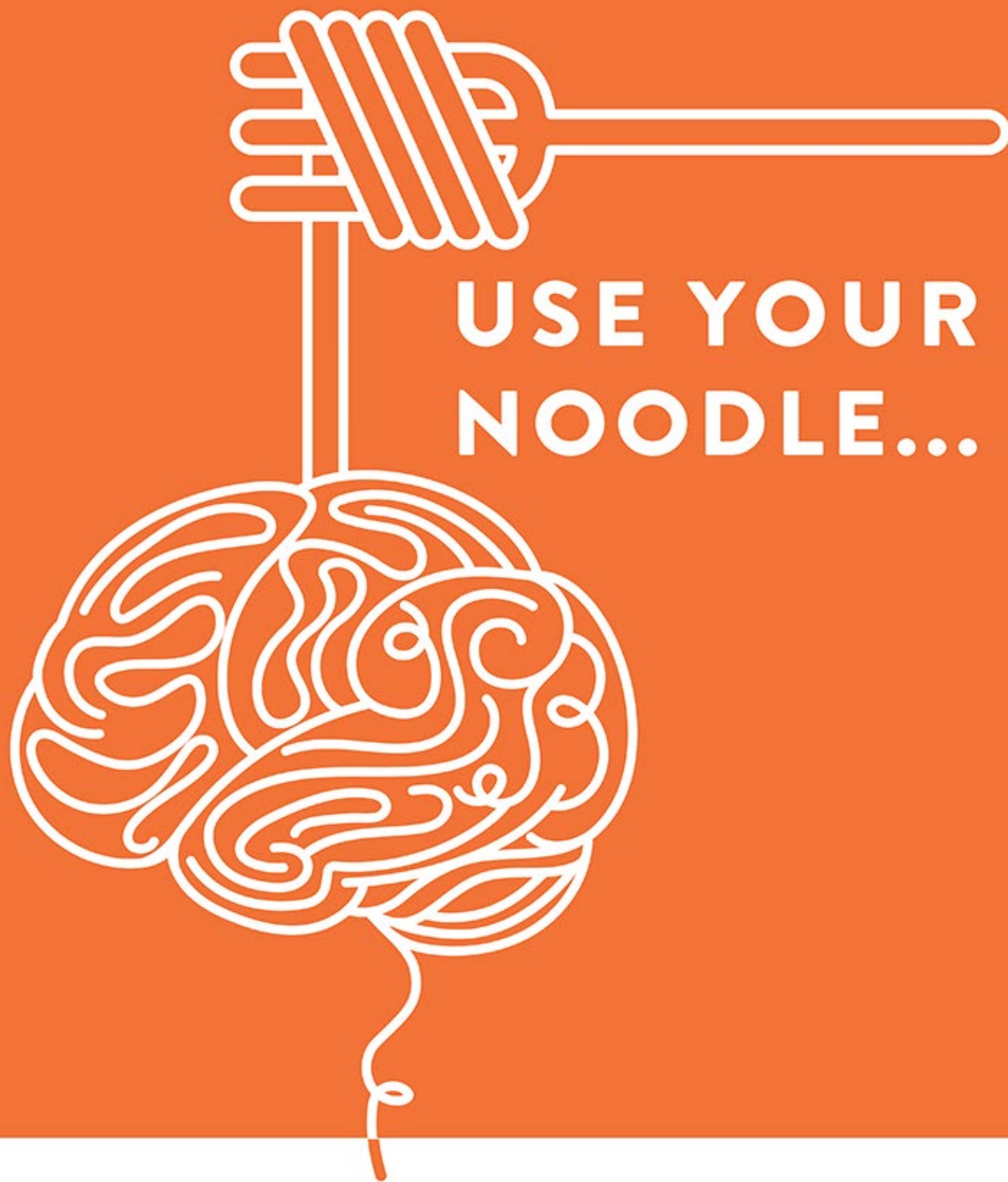
bear to let the site fall; but as individual Libraries of Alexandria, these forum boards have yet to be replaced. Social media as an information archive is ill-suited to the purpose, despite the reality that this is where many of these users went - well, to social media, or the physical grave. Social media is not meant to hold on to information, it is meant to aggregate, and to then disseminate and sell for profit. They are designed to foster communication for the sake of it - and while that is not explicitly a bad thing, they are ill-equipped as the supposed successors of the internet, especially when you factor in just how easy it is for a user to delete their past entirely, or for the owners to consider entire realms unprofitable and therefore designated for deletion. Furthermore, the style of discussion exemplified by these boards of old is unprofitable by nature; there is no interest in replicating them, and so when they die, it is unlikely they will be revived.

Perhaps the most dramatic loss of history in recent years was the collapse of Photobucket - while it is still alive, yes, its pivot towards charging exorbitant prices in order to so much as see or link the photos hosted on them quite literally obliterated countless memories. Family album books were paywalled. The hobby boards, naively assuming that these photos would last forever, found themselves in a position where they had to pay thousands of dollars, across many many members, to get access to what only existed there and nowhere else. Many didn't even bother - if you take a glance at various 'yummy mummy' communities, you'll see decades of photos replaced with the Photobucket watermark and little more. Photobucket's decision to claw back the unsalvageable \$\$\$ left entire landscapes of the internet with little vegetation.

“Furthermore, the style of discussion exemplified by these boards of old is unprofitable by nature; there is no interest in replicating them, and so when they die, it is unlikely they will be revived.”

I suppose my overall point is to not take anything on the internet for granted - well-funded archival efforts are saving the essentials, but there is so much to be lost that we simply don't yet appreciate. Film historians lament the destruction of nitrate-based silent film reels, and while some Stephen King or BDSM discussion board - or Stephen King BDSM fantasies - may be entirely worthless to you, to some fascinating individual out there, their information treasure troves are equivalent to *Metropolis*, or the ageless comedy of a Buster Keaton film.

Most of you will miss Neoseeker when it goes. I guarantee you that.



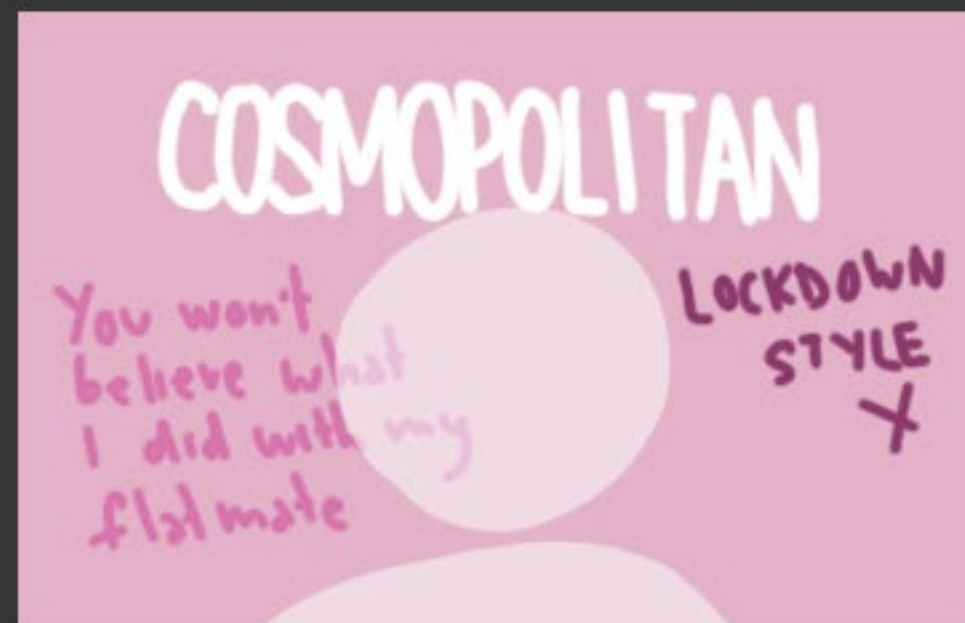
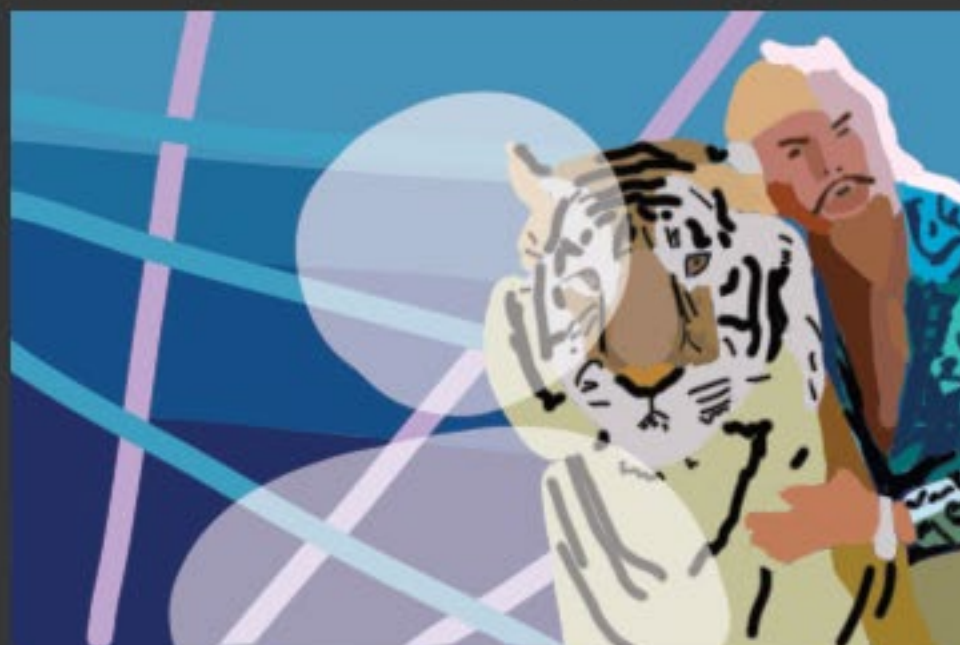
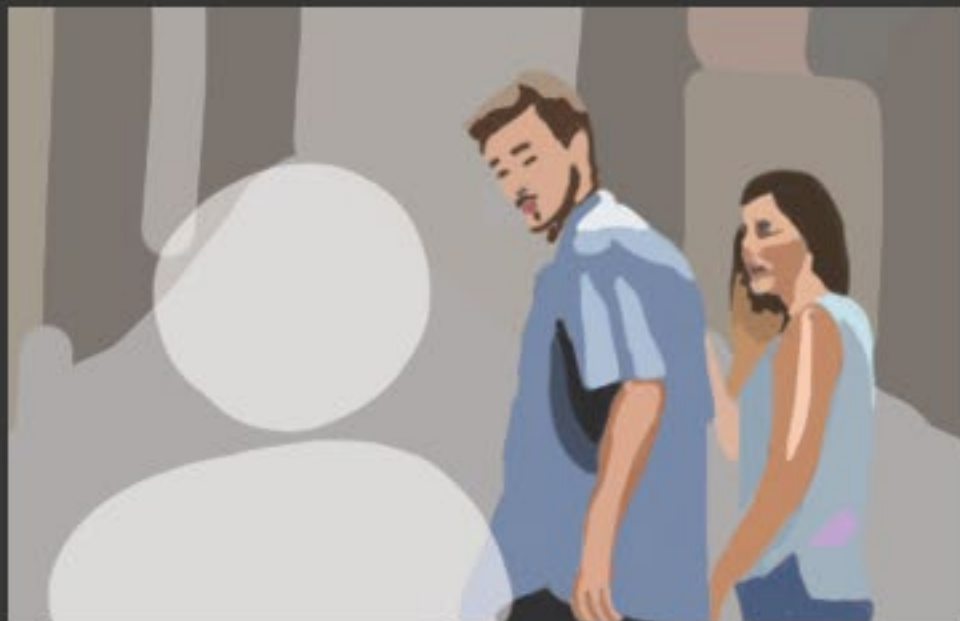
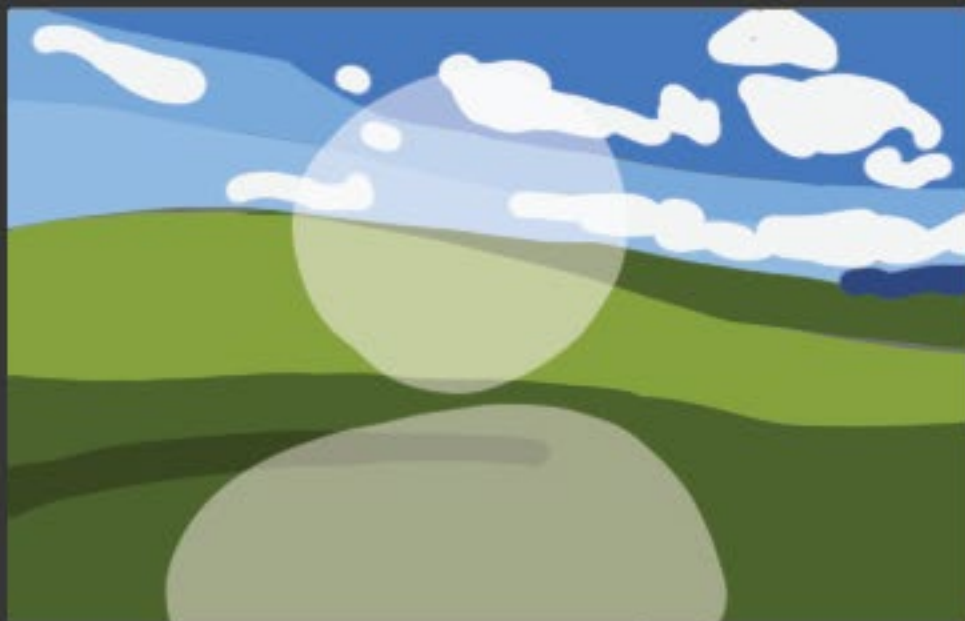
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Participants



Show



Chat



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Reactions

ILLUSTRATION BY EDA TANG

Leave Meeting

debate.

Is it Appropriate to Use Zoom Backgrounds in Class?

Affirmative

AISHA O'MALLEY, WOMEN'S AND MINORITIES OFFICER

A day in the life of my lockdown looks a little bit like this: eat, uni work, sleep, repeat. I'm sure this is what lockdown looks like for a lot of us, stuck in a monotonous, Groundhog Day routine. In a life where the four walls around me don't change, and I haven't left my property since lockdown started, I really need some sort of creative outlet. This is where Zoom backgrounds truly shine.

Let's face it; coronavirus has got us all down in the dumps. Instead of heading to lectures on campus with all my friends, I'm stumbling to my Zoom classes bleary-eyed, finishing my last slice of toast as I say hello, only just changed out of my pyjamas (on the top half). Then, I log on to see a bunch of similarly tired students scrolling through their phones. However, the one thing that gives me a burst of hope is when I see a bright flash of colour pop up. I ask myself, "Is she really going to class on the beach?" Then I realise: no, she's just doing a funky Zoom background. Not only is this a fun and fresh change of pace from my own four familiar walls, but it reminds me of the exciting world out there that we are waiting to get back to.

No longer do I have to dream about going to New York; suddenly, I'm in the middle of Times Square while I learn about how to apply GST in Accounting. My Spanish classes take place in Barcelona; my Latin American

studies are in Mexico. While the pandemic may have stolen our chances to travel, it cannot take our imagination or excitement.

As much as Zoom backgrounds brighten my day, not seeing them is also a truly depressing sight. House stalking is truly not very exciting. I get it: we all have vaguely white walls and sit in the part of our house, which isn't embarrassing. However, viewing the Zoom backgrounds everyone has chosen for the day is a much better distraction for anyone who zones out.

Choose excitement and fun - choose Zoom backgrounds.

"Not only is this a fun and fresh change of pace from my own four familiar walls, but it reminds me of the exciting world out there that we are waiting to get back to."

feature.

Negating

CELINE GOH, FIRST-YEAR REPRESENTATIVE

After four weeks of quarantine, my room looks pretty atrocious. There is hair scattered across my table from when I tried to cut myself a fringe, and dozens of abandoned crochet projects lie limply around the place. Although it may be tempting to hide all this mess with an aesthetic Zoom background come class time, I'm going to prove why doing so does a disservice to not only yourself but also to society as a whole.

Firstly, showing lecturers your room instead of a generic Zoom background can actually boost your GPA. Yes, it seems like a bit of a stretch but let's look at it from the lecturer's perspective: pre-COVID, students are just nameless data-points amongst hundreds of other disappointing results. Zooms however, humanises students by giving lecturers a glimpse into your personal life. They see family portraits, high school trophies, and wishful crochet attempts in the background. Humanisation results in lecturers looking at you more favourably- perhaps when it comes time to mark Spanish assignments they may even ignore the fact that you pronounced "hola" as "hole-lay" and give you a pass out of pity.

But let's say your professor is heartless and doesn't give sympathy grades? You need to start preparing straight away, and the best way to do so is strategic lecture-watching locations.

Step 1: Find the dirtiest, mouldiest part of your house.

Step 2: Watch all lectures from this spot, making sure to turn up the contrast so the suspicious blue patch above your head is clearly noticeable.

Step 3: Right before exams, send your lecturer an aegrotat application citing "lung-infection caused by fungus."

Step 4: Get the automatic pass.

Once again, not using the Zoom golden-gate-bridge background has become your GPA saviour.

Lastly, being open about the fact that you're not doing well during quarantine is precisely what society needs right now. Our Facebooks are constantly inundated by posts from yo-pros boasting about the six new start-ups they've founded in the past four weeks and fitness bloggers announcing that anyone who isn't 10kg lighter by the end of quarantine is a lazy disappointment. Social media has built up this myth that anyone who is struggling amidst this global pandemic is a failure. Refusing to hide the evidence of your midnight stress-eat using a zoom façade is the first step towards tearing down this harmful narrative.



LIVE

Home

PRESS TO PLAY ON SPOTIFY

feature.

The Pressures of Productivity

Madeleine Crutchley and Brian Gu try to talk about productivity while consistently getting sidetracked on a Zoom call.

Brian: Before we start, I'm really impressed that we've both managed to start work before 11am, without completely falling apart at the seams.

Maddy: Sorry to break it to you Brian, but I have been starting work at 9am AND falling apart at the seams. I didn't expect week six to kick off so intensely. The deadlines are hitting hard. I've been seeing endless posts about self-care and taking it easy during lockdown, without concerns for productivity, but it doesn't seem like uni structure quite allows for that.

Brian: My apologies, I hope for your continued strength. I've got to agree with you on the stress though - one of our lecturers has been firing non-consensual lecture recordings at us over the mid-semester break, taking advantage of our semi-conscious lockdown state. As a result, I'm starting to wonder where my break even went.

Maddy: Yeah, it does feel like our twelve-week semester has been transformed into a fifteen-week assignment nightmare. Even when I tried to sit down and chill during the break, I wasn't able to get out of my work ethic mindset. Usually, my friends and I try to escape Auckland for a bit when we aren't at uni, and that distance helps to break the productivity spell. There's something about being confined to the same room as your workspace that doesn't give you the same room to breathe.

Brian: The word productivity is one that I hear being thrown around these lockdown times, almost as much as baking, stress and hydroxychloroquine. Unfortunately, this isn't a problem that can be solved by one massive bleach injection, so it really does beg the question of how we can remain productive during lockdown with KFC. I guess as much as we link productivity to that 'head down study hard' mentality, our ability to remain productive decays naturally over time, and therefore self-care is important to restore our mind and body to being productive.

Maddy: Productivity is definitely a buzzword right now. Everyone on Instagram seems to be either pushing away from it or embracing with vigour to smash through work or learn a new skill. It honestly makes me a little uncomfortable, just because the term is so closely linked to work and maximising profits. It's a quality demanded of us because it increases our value economically, with little to no interest in individual and community based social wellbeing. Self-care, working on your mental health and learning to cope with the pressures of COVID-19 are productive acts (ew, that word is so icky).

Brian: Putting aside my lack of self-control not to craft a punchline for a second, I definitely empathise and relate to what you're saying Maddy! I feel guilty, during semester especially, when I take time off to watch a movie, exercise or even cook (I promise, I do). In my

feature.

mind, I'm not operating how I imagine I should be when 'productive', however, I also forget to appreciate that I'm feeling more stress and anxiety than usual because of social isolation. I guess what I'm saying is we shouldn't feel terrible for not hitting our normal standards of productivity.

Maddy: For sure, that guilty feeling is the worst! I feel like my shoulders are hunched and tense every time I try to watch something on Netflix, with my brain still frantically scrolling through my emails. To feel guilty about not smashing work out of the park during an emergency lockdown is just ridiculous. However, I also totally understand how uni work can be a release or method for channelling nervous energy for some. I feel like if you're studying something you actually enjoy, that's an especially good time to focus on something that isn't crisis-related.

Hopefully, everyone's lecturers and supervisors are understanding of that pressure at the moment. Mine are super encouraging and understanding, it's more the uni structures that stress me out. Have you noticed lecturers cracking down a bit more on students, or are they keeping it chill?

Brian: I feel like this is a time where lecturers have to be sympathetic of students else there'd be no plain way to put it - they're assholes. Thankfully, across the board, teaching staff have shown courtesy with dialling it back, and if they haven't, it's probably an unconscious resistance.

During a difficult time like this, we have to assume the best of people, not the worst, and I think the uni has

done a reasonably good job towards executing that mantra. Keeping in mind they have an academic reputation to protect, so compromise is difficult, I think 24-hour tests and a C+ to C- pass on our transcripts are a step in the right direction. Granted, there's a lot else they aren't doing so well at the moment, and there's a long way more to go here. Still, considering academic pressure solely, I feel reasonably comfortable continuing my studies.

Maddy: That adjustment to the academic transcripts is going to be a game-changer, especially for undergrads just starting. I remember being so intimidated by the essay criteria and relying heavily on my tutors to get through the very new pressures. To you young folk, please don't be too hard on yourselves and take the pass option if you need it! No one in the future will demand to know why you weren't achieving A-pluses during a national emergency. If grades are something you have an unhealthy relationship with then push that guilt away, don't let it squirm its way into your brain. Don't be apologising for your situation of living at the

“That adjustment to the academic transcripts is going to be a game-changer, especially for undergrads just starting.”

feature.

moment, everything is SO weird, and people should understand that.

Brian: I love that message Maddy! We definitely should assume the best in ourselves during times like this, and not to beat ourselves up over our shortcomings. If I could be Karen for a second and complain about something...

Karen: I've been having patchy connection to Zoom calls recently, which has been a pain in group meetings, one-on-ones with lecturers and pretty much any social interaction in my life right now. And I guess I feel guilty when I ask people to repeat what they said or leave people waiting while I frantically rejoin the call. Don't worry, I'm not fishing for your GoFundMe donation for better internet here; point is, I realised after a while that it was stupid for me to feel guilty or embarrassed – it was out of my control for my internet to be cutting down.

It's a small-scale reminder that we need to be realistic about what we expect from ourselves during these crisis times. Because whether it's shitty internet, the mental stress of isolation, or perhaps most worryingly financial or medical issues, we need to recognise we're not at blame for things in life being harder right now. For lack of a better term, it's just unproductive. If there was ever a time to assume the best in ourselves, it's now.

Brian: Anyways, that was a lot of talking from me, and I'm pretty sure my internet cut out at least twice throughout it. Are you still awake Maddy?

Maddy: I may have been dozing off, but I'm here! No, Karen is totally right, as cliché as it might sound, giving

“Because whether it’s shitty internet, the mental stress of isolation, or perhaps most worryingly financial or medical issues, we need to recognise we’re not at blame for things in life being harder right now.”

yourself the benefit of the doubt will take so much of the pressure off. Reach out to your family, friends and lecturers, let them know if you need help (seriously get an extension!). Everyone deserves to have some time to relax and switch off, so don't let that productivity bug creep in to bite you.

???: Kay Aura, I'm Soimon Bridges, and I approve this message.

Brian: Goddammit not this again. Are we password protecting these Zoom calls?



LIVE

Music

PRESS TO PLAY ON SPOTIFY

feature



ILLUSTRATION BY JULIA ZHU

@juliaaazhu

HEALTH BITES

Sweet Dreams

PATRICK MACASKILL-WEBB

Try to lose your alarm clock with all its obnoxious buzzing, lights, and sounds to wake you up. In lockdown I bet the use of alarms to get up in the morning has already massively fallen. And for good reason... what do you have to wake up for that can't wait 'til after brunch? You've been given sweet, sweet freedom from the usual 8 am lectures. For better, or for worse, the body gets a new sleep groove.

For the better...

There's REM sleep. You likely know about REM sleep already, you may also know that's where the best dreams come from. Putting the alarm clock away means there are more minutes of REM to enjoy as you wake in your own time. This is seriously the best protective factor for mental health. The positive power of creative association with REM has even been independently used in awake trauma treatments where lucid rapid eye movement heals sick brains. The eye movements help generate creative associations and start to unblock frightful memories. How awesome is that? It's like the mind can actively heal itself with the free association present in the later hours of sleep! Without a rude alarm clock interruption, you can capture more of these dreams - some of you may have noticed this during lockdown already. Things might be getting crazy up in your brain.

For the worse...

Could it be those guilty pleasure TV binges that carry you into the small hours of the night? These leave you husked, emptied of narrative desire, but in desperate

need of a half-made couch cocoon. There's no doubting this screws with an early sleep. Really, it shits on the sacredness of any childlike bedtime routine. But you actually can lose the "guilty" in guilty pleasure binge. Lean in - it's normal to want long-lasting stories to be satisfied. Again, what could you possibly need to do before brunch the next day, anyway?

For these two examples above, maybe we shouldn't assume that only problems come from going to sleep late and that all the solutions come from how to wake up early. Two lessons we can take out of lockdown is that alarm clocks may not be the solution for healthy sleep, and binge-watching may not be the evil it's often portrayed in popular culture. There could be some good in the way we'd genuinely rather go to sleep and some unhealthy parts in the wakeup our busy schedules usually demand.

Now, you friggin' panic because there are Zoom tutorials set for 9 am. It's not quite as bad as an 8 am lecture - but your tutor has passively-aggressively created a no PJs policy (boooooo), and you need to be feeling and looking fresh. The alarm clock comes back! It rams

column.

an obstructive accent onto your blissful dreams and knocks the fun visuals out of your eyes. For better or for worse, your body obliges to another sleep regime.

For the worse...

You've missed out on REM, sure, but there's a sick road ahead with heart problems, metabolic problems, infection susceptibility, etc. I'm sure you get the drill. It's a bad vibe. Like, a really bad vibe. Sleep cut short is never cool, and it didn't get any cooler when Tim Cook or any other CEO told the world they should get up before 4 am for a productive morning.

For the better...

There's a higher proportion of deep sleep the following night after that dreadfully early start. You have exhausted yourself and relaxing becomes necessarily easier. You don't need to "actively relax your eye muscles" or use a new method to fall asleep because you can passively let go - you literally have less energy. With less REM sleep, the body's focus is on repairing and relaxing. It doesn't even really matter if there's another alarm set because frankly, you're too exhausted from waking up

early to give a shit. Worrisome thoughts are left by the wayside so the natural stresses of breathing and heart rate in the body sync up together. This resting state "sync up" is how the heart and nerves throughout the body become chemically in tune with each other. This is literally a protective factor against overwhelming stress the next day (the technical concept is called heart rate variability).

All together, there are consequences to our sleep/wake cycle. The way that some science can either inform a sleep habit as negative for your health or positive for your health shows me that there's hope in trying something different. The best thing is to be honest with yourself about sleep. There are good reasons not to play into any early riser stereotypes just as there are good reasons to accept some later bedtimes. If after 40 minutes of trying to have a "healthy" early night, it's just not happening for ya, listen to that body of yours. Get up, enjoy your own wakefulness and rest when it feels right for you. Sweet dreams...



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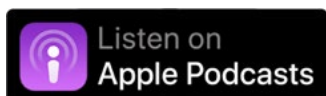




THE DARKEST TIMELINE

BRIAN GU

5/10: Avoiding Joel McHale just got even harder



What happens when two out-of-work B-list actors from Hollywood band together during these lockdown times and start a podcast?

The Darkest Timeline with Ken Jeong and Joel McHale answers this question which a total of three people have been asking. It's kind of like the *Tiger King* aftershow; the world didn't really need it, it was alright when we did get it, and it didn't leave us wanting much more (of an aftershow, at least). Coincidentally, that was also hosted by Joel McHale – the poor guy's just struggling to get meaningful roles right now.

Jumping hoops around societal, political and even medical conversation (mostly spearheaded by Ken, who is also a physician) strangely seems to be what the guys are most interested in doing. It almost seems to burden the two that *Community* made them famous, and it takes the arrival of a guest half an hour in to force the transition towards the last forty minutes of mandated *Community* conversation.

If I could describe it succinctly, this mess of a podcast seems to be an excuse for the two to catch up with old Hollywood friends and for Ken to play doctor. However, it might just be littered with enough *Community* anecdotes and meaningful conversation to push you through it all.

Also Abed does come on occasionally. Any episode he does appear is for sure worth my time.



SAVED!, DIR. BRIAN DANNELLY

DAYANG JUSTICE

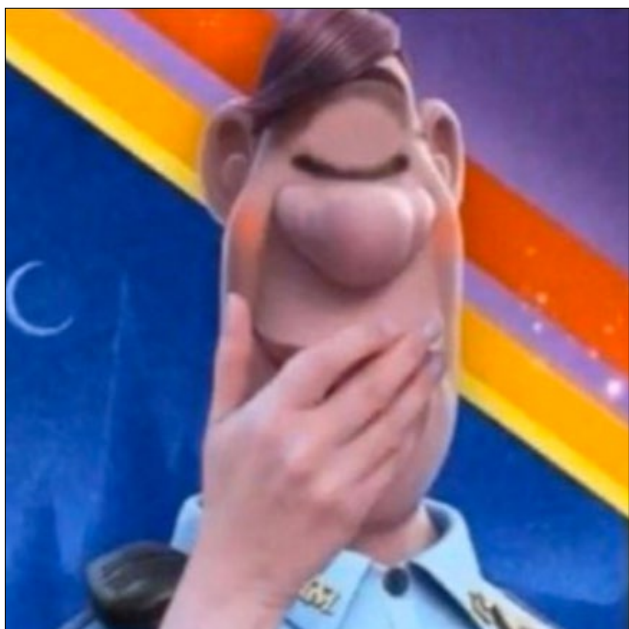
History is riddled with complicated relationships, but none more fraught for recent generations than Evangelical Christianity and adolescent freedom. I was first introduced to 'Saved!' through seeing a gif of Mandy Moore throwing a bible as she is saying "I am FILLED with Christ's love!". And with that, I was transported back to my final summer of high school, when I was outed, faced fundamentalist Christians and had my own crisis of faith. Raucous and funny quarantine viewing? Or a forgotten 2000s flick?

'Saved!' follows Mary, a high school student in an evangelical Christian school who ends up pregnant after believing she could 'cure' her boyfriend for being gay. After she questions her faith, she is viciously shunned by her classmates, but finds company in an unlikely group of outsiders in her school.

Right down to the music choice and clever dialogue, you are in for a delicious slice of dark comedy. 'Saved!' is dotted with well-meaning criticism of Christianity's association with power, nationalism and violence. It is a fitting commentary of an Americanised idea of a 'White' Jesus, a culture of 'saving' and moral superiority as well as the hypocrisy of exclusion.

Issues such conversion therapy, however, were dismissed lightly, like a joke. This I found to be troublesome as these issues are more traumatic as a real reality of many LGBTQ+ individuals.

Overall, 'Saved!' makes for witty lockdown viewing, though, view this with a heap of salt and as a product of its time.



ONWARD, DIR. DAN SCANLON

MADELEINE CRUTCHLEY

7/10: What if elves had feelings?



Pixar's brand new animation *Onward* was recently released straight onto Disney+ in NZ, never reaching the cinemas in many countries outside the US due to the pandemic. Over the last ten years the studio has taken advantage of the good will and legacy built from their earlier work. Although there have been inspired originals like *Inside Out* and *Coco*, they've also pumped out many prequels and sequels, some great (*Toy Story 4*), some so-so (*Incredibles 2*). Whenever it is announced that the studio is working on something new, I get very excited to explore whatever new world they present to me.

Like I expected going in, *Onward* made me cry. I'm a sucker for family stuff, and this film pulls at those heartstrings with the expert precision one would want from Pixar. There are some surprising plot choices, especially in the resolution of the film, where the heart of the filmmakers clearly shines through. As usual, the animation is beautiful and the funniest moments of the film definitely come from the visual gags. However, the lead characters are extremely familiar and the voice acting and dialogue feels pretty well-worn. I mean, Tom Holland's character, Ian, looks like a blue version of his character in *Spies In Disguise*.

As much as I love the fantasy realm aesthetic, I also feel like I've seen similar, more creative, interpretations by artists on Tumblr and Twitter. These issues don't make the movie bad, but they stop the film from joining the list of top tier Pixar classics. Unfortunately, the studio has set the bar pretty high for themselves.



COMMUNITY

LACHLAN MITCHELL

7/10: It kinda Britta'd itself



I've kinda just left sitcoms behind me as I get further into my 20s than I care to divulge. Not out of some sense of superiority or whatever, but because they're just so much *work* - the American production schedule is hellish, typically requiring 22 or 24 episodes of any hit comedy show, at least before the introduction of mass streaming and the slow death of broadcast television finally convinced the big networks to adopt something closer to the British model of brevity. *Community* getting cut clean in half Solomon-style from the end of Season 3 onwards, getting just 13 episodes per season until the end of the series, actually got me interested in watching Netflix's latest sitcom acquisition.

I'm surprised that it is over 10 years old, it usually felt pretty relevant or up to date, probably because of how it jumped right into meta jokes via obviously planned breakout character Abed from the very first episode. There's a lot to say about the trajectory of the show that I simply cannot fit into a review, so I'll summarise: Jeff & Annie was a fucked up subplot, the Dean was their only good (and great!) recurring character, Ken Jeong is fucking awful, Abed carried the show, Britta deserved much better writing, the G.I Joe episode is my favourite one, Chevy Chase being a cunt IRL made the show better than it would have been otherwise, and Paget Brewster should have been brought in much earlier as she was perfectly casted.



THE MIDNIGHT GOSPEL

MAX LIM

7/10: *Adventure Time*, but with a podcast and a sprinkle of Mpreg



This show is something alright. It's gonna be one of those shows that you really love it or hate it, because of the experimental structure of the show and the woozy graphic design they have chosen. While there is an overarching storyline throughout this season, each episode consists of a segment of a real-life podcast by Duncan Trussell inserted as the characters' dialogue. I guess it's fitting, since the main character is trying to go big in the space-cast scene by interviewing various characters in the simulated galaxy.

The dialogue is very entertaining to listen to, especially given that the characters usually discuss existential topics that are rarely delivered well through adult animation as a medium. Honestly, I generally had a good time listening to the characters talking about forgiveness or why meditation works, while the colourful animations acted as an ever-changing background to the conversations. The animation could range from cute cat pirates to a scene of space creatures mass slaughtered in the meat factory by clown people. There's Mpreg as well, so... there's that. Sometimes the visuals almost contradict the relaxed and engaging conversation with the hyper violent dreamscapes.

Once you get adjusted to the first couple episodes, the chances are that you would get hold of the structure of the show and not regret it.



TRADE ME

DANIEL MEECH

Not a sponsored advertisement, I think

Up until 2014, I was a Trade Me fiend. I lived second-hand deals: every lunch time was spent scouring the website for good deals, every weekend was spent searching around the house for forgotten items I could flip through the site for a small profit. But then I got a job, and I kind of forgot Trade Me even existed. Until now.

Turns out Trade Me is still around. And, so long as the country stays at or below level 3, it's open for business.

I spent this weekend clearing out my bedroom (just my bedroom! I have so much more shit scattered around the house) and found an absolutely heinous amount of other man's treasure (otherwise known as "junk shit I'm never gonna use again"). Old, unplayed copies of video games. Rusty instruments. A couple of dusty shelving units and a crappy old windows desktop. It's all gone on Trademe, and I've already sold about half of it.

So have a look around your house this weekend. Spend an afternoon sorting through the boxes shoved under your bed. Clear out a shelf or two. And chuck it all on Trademe. If you're strapped for cash, it'll get you a few bucks. If you're already loaded, it'll free up space.

What have you got to lose?

(Pro tip: People often complain that Trade Me takes a cut of every sale. It does. And it sucks. But it's important to note: Trade Me only takes a cut if your goods are actually sold through the site. If you're smart - and I'm not saying I sometimes do this - you can put an item up and leave a couple hints in the bio that you're open to selling the item person-to-person. Doesn't work all the time, but it sometimes saves you a little moolah.)

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ILLUSTRATION BY KAYE KENNEDY

Film Violence Done Right

ROBBIE DELANY

Robbie Delany explores the depictions of violence with great expertise, a master of all things bloody and mutilated.

My parents, along with war vets and religious nuts, are likely to detest film violence. The tropes of people dying, bleeding and breaking on-screen. This is, of course, understandable. However, I need to make the distinction that film violence is as old as the cinema itself. *The Lion King* has more on-screen deaths than *Once Upon a Time in... Hollywood*, as does *Aladdin* and *The Wizard of Oz*. Yet, you would never label these pictures as violent

films. That is because the bloodshed is off-camera and implied. In other words, it is not graphic. Graphic violence is arguably the most condemned aspect of cinema. It focuses on a character trespassing into death, unashamedly exploring the manner in which they died. This could range from showing the impact of a bullet into the skin, to the body remains left after an explosion. Graphic violence, over M-rated violence is more

devastating to both the characters and audience. By devastating, I mean has character and plot-changing consequences. Violence in Hollywood tentpole film franchises such as *Transformers*, *Fast and Furious* and *Mission: Impossible* are awash with car crashes, explosions and gun fights. Superhero films, especially Marvel, have mastered a brute force-type violence depicted in hand-to-hand combat scenes. However, the violence in all of these films is non-consequential. The protagonists are not threatened by guns to their heads, nor will they die if thrown under a bus. The violence in these films is used for intermediate purposes, to spice up a scene transition. Why drive into town when you can jump out of an exploding plane? The story does not necessarily depend on the violence. The violence is fun in these films, but it is not all it can do. This is where graphic violence comes in.

In the opening scene of Shane Black's *The Nice Guys*, Holland (Ryan Gosling) slits his wrist while trying to break into a house. Upon realising his mistake, he stumbles and the scene cuts to him in an ambulance. This use of violence in this scene is very awkward and reverses the momentum of the story, yet it also introduces Ryan Gosling's character as a clumsy, semi-professional private detective. The violence is messy and improvised, because that's what violence is like in real life. Subsequently, Holland wears a wrist guard throughout the duration of the film, providing a constant source of humour for the audience as those around him continuously comment on his lack of two functioning arms. Violence is thus used to animate and justify the characters, expressing their personalities, who they are or who they aspire to be. The effect would be less impactful if the cut was hidden outside the frame. To under-

stand the character, we need to feel as he feels.

Quentin Tarantino is a director synonymous with graphic violence. Like the effect used in *The Nice Guys*, he serves violence for the expression of character. In *Pulp Fiction*, Vincent (John Travolta) accidentally shot Marvin in the face while driving on the freeway, exploding his head over the back windshield. Vincent responds dryly, annoyed as if he spilled a cup of coffee. However, his partner Jules (Samuel L. Jackson) yells in anger and disdain towards Vincent's actions. This violence cleverly echoes the characters' personality. Vincent is heavy-handed and desensitized to killing, reflecting a life of "shoot first, think second". Jules is juxtaposed as being conscientious and deliberate. Every action he commits has purpose. Tarantino also uses violence like sex, with tension acting as foreplay until erupting like an orgasm. Catharsis for the audience. When tautness builds to excruciating levels, something needs to give, like a spring in a gun. In *Inglourious Basterds*, pressure

"The violence in these films is used for intermediate purposes, to spice up a scene transition. Why drive into town when you can jump out of an exploding plane?"

builds for twenty minutes in a bar scene between a Nazi and a British spy. Upon discovering his identity, calm will not do. The balls of the audience are too blue for that shit. Only an explosion will satisfy. Not an off-camera or comical flash of violence, but an outburst of blood. This is deserved violence, culminating as the bomb at the end of a very long fuse. Further dialogue will not satisfy.

A lesser known facet of film violence is body horror. In the late 70s to 80s, controversial issues such as the HIV/AIDS epidemic and genetic engineering gave birth to new societal fears. Body horror, the sub-genre of intentionally showcasing graphic imagery of body mutilation, reflected these fears. Fears of what was inside us and could mutilate us. David Cronenberg is the undisputed master of this genre (weird flex), playing to audiences' societal fears to extreme limits. His most famous film, 1986's *The Fly*, follows Seth (Jeff Goldblum), a scientist who accidentally mixes his own DNA with that of a fly's when attempting to teleport himself. As a result, his human body starts to grotesquely waste away and transform during the course of the film into a humanoid fly. Filmmakers return to body horror because it alludes to existential values, primarily the loss of one's identity. Seth and his girlfriend's (Geena Davis) relationship progresses with the story, from their first conversation to Seth's death. As his body erodes, so too does their relationship. Like the HIV/AIDS epidemic, Seth's body is failing and beyond his control, affecting loved ones who want to help but are powerless. The true horror lies in the knowledge that one will lose themselves, first body then mind. Not the mutilation of one's body. We share the cycle of entropy, our mind will fade, body degrade. Our only hope is that those after us will remember our

names. But that's what makes us human.

The final category of violence is torture porn, body horror's unlikable cousin. Porn is the genre where sex is the point. Everything else, whether character or plot, is irrelevant. It portrays sex for the sake of sex, which is why audiences watch it. Torture porn is violence, gore and murder for its own sake. This is the *Saw* franchise, *Hostel* and *Evil Dead*. To say these films are violent is a complete misfire in using the English language, because a word has yet to be invented to describe their imagery. They are antagonistic and destructive, existing in a world where humans have been reduced to their animalistic instincts. Tragically, there is no purpose to the violence. The first *Saw* was effective for its labyrinthine, side-stepping plot. Yet, as it stretched to the 8th installment, the series lost appeal and purpose. Audiences cannot sympathize with a man tied down with no context, being sawn in half. Emotional investment is needed. Characters need dilemmas, caught in a whirlwind mystery where they need to battle elements. After discovering their goals and motivations, then the protagonist can get shot in the face. The objective of a film cannot be to simply escape a trap without human moments, like the relationship strain visible in *The Fly*. To my relief, torture porn is a dying medium. Each *Saw* release is less frequent, with fewer box-office receipts. These are directionless and belong in unmarked graves.

Graphic violence is designed to evoke or relieve emotion that M-rated violence does not satisfy. You need to see the blood to feel the character's pain, worry or perspective that off-camera imagery cannot imitate. Though, it demands purpose and careful consideration.



ILLUSTRATIONS BY GABBIE DE BARON

In Sickness and in Health: How do the past's virus movies stack up?

SANJANA KHUSAL

Sanjana Khusal dons a hazmat suit and proceeds into the pandemic scenarios of old.

It may sound counterintuitive, but watching pandemic films has been incredibly comforting. It's lovely knowing that we aren't being chased by zombies, having to go back in time to convince people the world is going to end or be in a world without any electricity. I'm not sure about you but I don't even know how to use a radio, much less own one. If we didn't have the internet, I'm

pretty sure we would all be going insane. Luckily, we are in a very healthy environment for watching films about the world going to shit. Time to lock your doors, put your teddy out to guard all exits, cuddle a roll of toilet paper, and get ready to [re]experience the iconic, unreal pandemics.

arts.

Night of the Living Dead (1968)

We're starting this list with an oldie but a goodie. George A. Romero's debut film, *Night of the Living Dead*, has since become a cult classic. It can be traced back as the original zombie film and has offered a template for many slasher flicks like *Halloween* and *Nightmare on Elm Street*. I'm sure you can guess the plot: a woman is attacked by a dead guy, screams really loudly (RIP head-phone users) and runs into an abandoned house, other people show up, they argue, a child zombie eats dad and kills mom and then there's one person. Plot twist: the red necks mistake him for a zombie and shoot him. With equal chances of getting eaten, it was the man with common sense who lived the longest. The best way to defeat the virus is social distancing. In other words, stay the fuck away from me.

[• REC] (2007)

An eerily similar but more complex is the 2007 Spanish film, *[•REC]*. You may be familiar with the 2008 American remake, *Quarantine*, starring *Dexter's* sister. This found footage film follows a reporter, policemen, and residents in an apartment building. The film follows reporter, Angela Vidal, and her cameraman as they accompany emergency workers to an apartment building. All the residents and workers get locked in the building after an infected old woman attacks a policeman. The co-directors, Paco Plaza and Jaume Balagueró were determined to make a realistic film. Tv presenter and actress, Manuela Velasco was cast as the late-night reporter.

I guarantee this film will have you at the edge of your

"The best way to defeat the virus is social distancing. In other words, stay the fuck away from me."

seat. The moment that stands out to me is the discussion on where the virus came from. One of the residents, Cesar, is eager to blame the Japanese and Chinese residents for bringing a virus. The underlying racism is bleak and darkly accurate. Many of us who have been following America's news will know that Donald Trump has been calling the coronavirus, "the Chinese virus." In this particular case, the medicals confirm that this cluster originates from a dog, one of the residences pets, who spontaneously became violent. With three sequels, this franchise could make for a good midnight marathon.

World War Z (2013)

Many of the films on this list will feature zombies. Many of us are familiar with the tower of zombies, clambering over one another to get over the wall. Whether they are fast or slow, they make for an excellent challenge for humanity. In this case, these zombies are fast, like 'Edward Cullen running to protect Bella Swan' fast. If the Coronavirus gave us an inhumane desire to feast on one another, I pray for all those couch potatoes. The most exercise we did was the "chewing" chin up while thinking about doing exercise with Chris Hemsworth later.

arts.

Gerry travels the world and eventually ends up in Jerusalem, which is considered the safe zone. We're fortunate to have such a forthright, organised leader like Auntie Jacinda. Who knows what New Zealand would've ended up without her. Our way of beating the virus hasn't been through acts of violence but good old fashion lazing around the house and doing nothing. Who knew I'd be praised for sitting at home and watching movies all day.

Warm Bodies (2013)

Yes, it's another zombie film. It is for a very good reason. This movie is about love. I'm sure every girl has dreamt of dating a zombie. Or maybe that's just Tina Belcher. Too bad Covid-19 didn't give us all a hot undead boyfriend. That's probably a good thing considering he'll eat your current boyfriend's brains. I wouldn't suggest kissing any lovesick puppies at the moment; they could be actually sick. Instead, the most intimate thing we can do is "accidentally" text an ex out of guilt he could be having a shitty time in isolation. I'm weak, don't judge me.

Contagion (2011)

Finally, we have the film I'm sure you've been waiting for: *Contagion* (2011). In a flicks.co.nz user review written in 2012, the viewer "found the bat and pig mutant virus a little hard to swallow (pardon the pun)." Who knew that would be one of the most accurate aspects of this fictional pandemic. Rather than create a fantastical work violated by monsters and ghouls, this film takes a global situation and attempts to foreshadow the world which could come. With a virus that can live on the

surface for months, so many little actions like preparing food, shaking hands, touching glasses, wiping your face are highlighted as deadly.

Alan Krumwiede, played by Jude Law, acts as the face for fake news. He runs a blog and falsifies a cure for the virus as a way to gain media publicity. It's not hard to find many real-life analogues here, far too many in the seats of power. The Columbia University Mailman School of Public Health asked the cast of *Contagion* to narrate a few PSA's about Covid-19. Matt Damon who plays the man immune to the virus, says, "that was a movie. This is real life. I have no reason to believe I am immune to COVID-19 and neither do you." No one is immune. The announcements were vetted by public health officials and scientists.

These films are no biographies, they're fantasy. Films are meant to be learned from, not recreated.

"Our way of beating the virus hasn't been through acts of violence but good old fashion lazing around the house and doing nothing. Who knew I'd be praised for sitting at home and watching movies all day."



AUSA's

Daily Challenge

Brought to you by AUSA



Six Reasons My Quarantine Workspace Rules

TARA MOK. ILLUSTRATIONS BY GABBIE DE BARON.

With many people working from home and all of us at university studying remotely, your study space can make a huge difference in your productivity. I'm here to share why my quarantine study space is the optimal space to ensure your comfort, health, and high GPA and why I haven't missed studying at university at all.

The best thing is most of the materials I've used to set up my home workspace are easily accessible and things you probably already have in your home so you can have an amazing workspace too.

1. I have a height adjustable desk.

Most height adjustable desks can be pretty pricey. However I realised that my legs made a perfect desk for my laptop. I can balance my laptop on my knees and adjust the height of my knees to suit my eye level and reduce neck strain. I can also rest it on my thighs. And it's completely free!

2. I have a versatile sitting apparatus.

My bed is the perfect piece of furniture for me to work on. The mattress is the right balance between soft and firm to ensure maximum comfort for my backside. The wall is a firm backrest and I can adjust its angle by leaning on pillows (I have four pillows so there are four different options there) and changing their angle to the wall. Never worry about back aches!

I can rest my feet and legs on the bed because I have



ample room or I can choose to work with my feet planted on the floor by the side of the bed. I can even work lying down if I choose (and take a power nap for optimal productivity). Talk about versatility!

3. It is proofed for all types of weather

With two blankets specifically designed with different levels of insulation and plenty of space on the workspace to pile a heap of pajamas, this workspace is

lifestyle.

suitable for four seasons. No need to waste money on air conditioning!

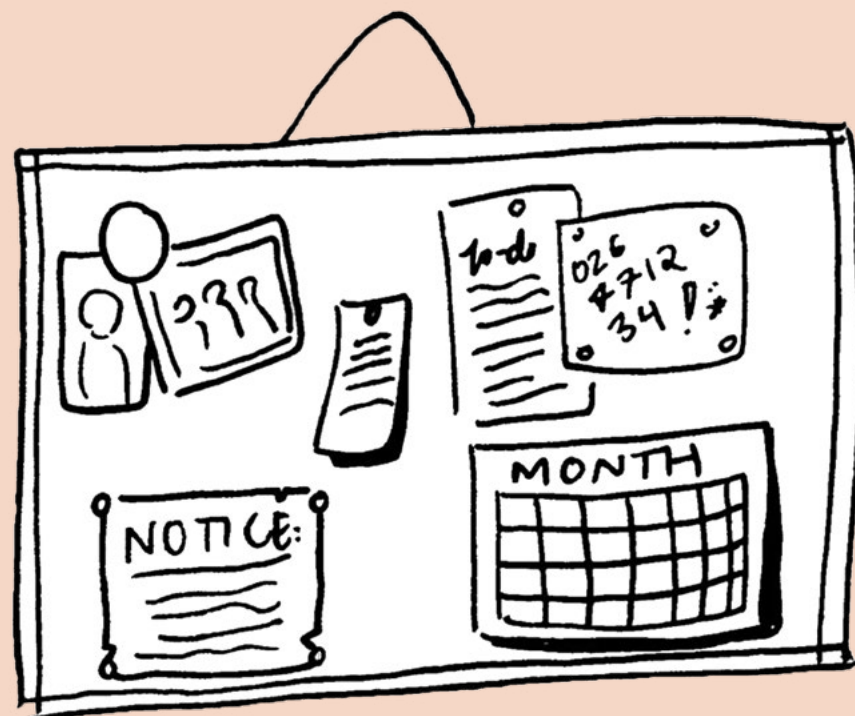
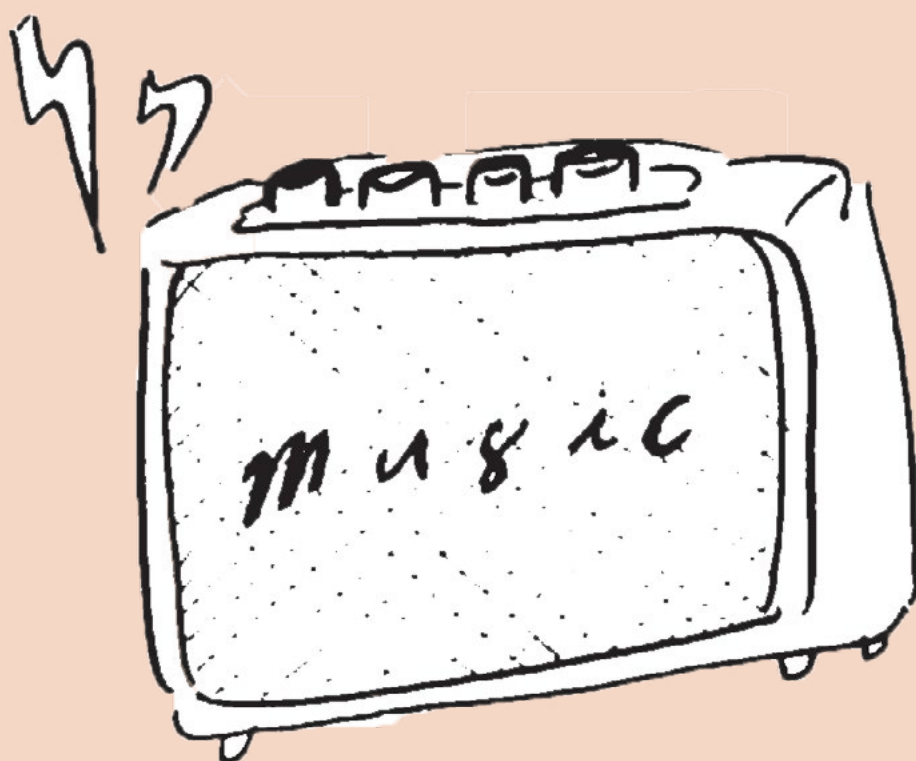
4. There is plenty of storage space.

The duvet covers and pillow cases make great places for me to store my snacks, pens, and papers. I can even keep my stationery organised because I have four pillows.

5. It is easy to transform the decor of the study space to look fresh and new.

All I have to do is change my sheets and blankets and it feels like a brand new workspace. Research has shown that colors can greatly affect your mood. This workspace makes it easy to control the color scheme to make for a more relaxed and inspired you.

6. Blankets have many uses.



I find that eliminating distractions helps me to be more productive. Having a tidy study space also puts me in the zone to work. However, sometimes I'm just too tired or lazy to tidy.

Luckily, I can use my blankets to hide all the mess and make my workspace look good as new.

Blankets also double up as ergonomic wristpads. Protect yourself from RSI, folks!

Finally, when the going gets tough, you can use the blankets to dry up your tears.

...

I hope that has been enough to convince you that my quarantine workspace is THE workspace you need. It will transform your life.

FaceTime Photoshoot

FLORA XIE

Adjusting my lifestyle during this past month for this pandemic has included shifting the way I created. Doing photoshoots through FaceTime has proven to be no easy feat – especially for the models, as must also do the job of angling and positioning their devices in the way I ask them to, in order for me to take the picture. The editing has also proven to be more work as the images are significantly lower-quality. Ultimately though, the work is worth it as I'm still able to do what I love.

@floraescent



~~YOUR BIG CIG GUIDE~~

FOR 4TH-9TH (FOR UOA & BEYOND)

HOT LOCAL TRACKS

CHARLIE WINN

This week's self-isolation tunes are brought to you by 95bFM's Charlie Winn! You can listen to more of Charlie's selections on 'The two to Four with Adel & Charlie' every Friday. Bundle up warm in your no-insulation shitty student flats, use the oven as a heater after frying up some mini mince pies, and wear 3 socks. It's better for the environment anyways. These songs will keep your heart warm (or at least give it a workout).

***Don't you know who I am* by Reb Fountain**

Every year around this time, as we descend into winter I always go through an intense alt-folk/singer-songwriter phase. I think it's because the sounds are just comforting. Reb Fountain's one of Aotearoa's most loved songwriters and this is the new single from her self titled album that's coming out soon. I just really like the rolling instrumental of this track. It sets a pace and doesn't deviate from it, the looping chord progression is simple and hypnotic. It provides a stable foundation for a lyric like 'don't you know who I am' that could, in another context, be quite confronting.

***Luv* by Lord Dixon**

Another comforting one! Lion Dixon's one of the original members of the growroom collective from Auckland. He got four other people to help produce the record this track is from, 'TodayIsMine2020,' which he says is "not a radio album by any means but some songs that helped me through the last year or so." But I think it's a great radio album. It's lo-fi with blissed out gentle guitar and synths, and his bars are just really playful to listen to. This is his fourth and final album as Lion Dixon, and was released in collaboration with the growroom.

***Dying to believe* by the Beths**

I can't really say much more about this other than it's just everything I love about NZ indie rock. Lol. I won't try and analyse it because when I listen to it I kind of just feel good. Their new album 'jump rope gazers,' is out in July and this was the first single from it.

***Najaf* by Meer**

I find this song incredibly moving. MEER is one of NZ's best MCs in my opinion. In this song she reflects on her

arts.

early experiences as a child migrating from the Middle East to New Zealand and the pain and confusion that has caused her. It feels like she’s almost ‘re-remembering’ various things about her past in the song, digging up stuff she may have buried long ago in order to not have to confront relentless burning in her mind. I suppose that’s what trauma does, we have to protect ourselves in some way. And then in true hip hop fashion she tells her mum that she’s got her back, she can provide for her. The different layers of percussion in this track are also very intricate.

Cops and Robbers by Miss Chastity Ranch

Miss Chastity Ranch is the moniker of an unknown/ mystery Auckland project. *Cops and Robbers* is like a 70s jangly pop tune which humorously calls out the police for being violent shits. With amazing lyrics like, “All the boys at school who wanted to hurt me/ they’re all policemen now they’re working for her majesty,” and “if you are queer then he’ll hurt you just for being alive/ if you are brown he’ll haunt you till the day you die.”



Top Ten

1	Chop! Dick Move (NZ)
2	Pull Up Hit That Shit [Acid Mix] Jerry Tompkins (NZ)
3	Manuka Money Wiri Donna (NZ)
4	Rosa Venus gg.mothra (NZ)
5	Stunt 151 Totems (NZ)
6	Heavy Balloon Fiona Apple
7	Used to Be Womb (NZ)
8	Dying To Believe The Beths (NZ)
9	In Heaven We Are Vanessa Worm (NZ)
10	WASHED feat. lui tui christoph el' truento (NZ)



ILLUSTRATION BY JULIA ZHU.

EROTICA

Test-icle

ANONYMOUS

“Hey, I’m a little nervous to be honest. It’s the first time I’ve been on a date like this. I mean, I don’t mind, it’s just a bit different to a coffee at Strata you feel? I love trying new things! Don’t knock it till you try it right? I mean I’m keen to try anal at some point just not on the first date? Sorry I’m rambling.”

Static crackles through the air, reminding me of a familiar crack of leather. God I miss my ex, but the best way to get over someone is to get under someone else. Urgh he really is trying too hard, his animated hands moving all across the screen. I mutter, “Sorry could you turn your mic on again? I think you’ve muted yourself.”

“Oh sorry? Oh my Mic isn’t turned on? Sorry, Sorry! Is that better? Okay, what was I saying? Yeah, basically thank you so much for giving me a shot. Honestly I thought you weren’t going to show up. Not that I’m insecure, it’s just I got stood up last week. I mean it wasn’t serious, to be honest I wasn’t sure if it was a date. It was just a tutorial session—”

I zone out slightly from his ramblings. I had heard about it. Some small politics Zoom tutorial class, and no one had shown up. A bit sad really. But this lockdown has made me horny and frustrated. I’m just a generic University of Auckland student. I’m a little hopeful and na-

ive, after all we just won the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals awards. And I want to celebrate this with some hot steamy fucking.

God I miss my ex. She’d fuck me up so good. I really took her for granted, there is something about being with someone for a few years. You get to know the bell curves of their body, the rhythm of questions start to become predictable. Sure she was a little fiesty, enough to keep fucking me up every other semester. But after a while, you learn how to find the perfect pressure points to sweat. If you were ever lost, there were examples and notebooks online. Not quite the kama sutra, but we make do. Me and the old girl.

I smile thinking about her. Not going to lie, she was a steep learning curve from my High school sweetheart NCEA. Sometimes I’d try to speak back, but UoA Exams always threatened me with academic misconduct if I wasn’t silent. Accuse me of cheating, or something ludicrous. Check my pockets before and after I went to the loo. But it was all part of the role-play. There’s something incredible in being able to sub to someone like UoA Exams. The power in being submissive, is that I was letting her fuck me up so good. The best grades arose when she was trying to Dom me, throwing me the gnarliest questions, and then I was suddenly on top of

her, riding her till she cummed everywhere.

I never understood why she hated watches. I understand turning off cellphones, that's just polite in any time of love-making. But she'd threaten me to pay \$500 or something if I forgot to take my watch before. But we always manage to calm down during the 10 minute reading time.

"So what do you think about the proposed changes to the grading system? So it's just a pass or fail."

I snap back to reality, oh shit. I'm on a date. With UoA Online exams. He smiles at me, trying his best, but he's glitching all over the place. I frown, "Honestly, thank god. It's not that I don't trust you, it's just... well this is all new isn't it. And I'm really not sure how I'm going to perform... How you are going to perform."

He blushes, brighter than the Canvas logo.

"Yeah I know. Sorry about that, but there isn't really anyone else there. Not saying you should give me a shot just because there is no one else. I just want you to know I'm all clear, I just got tested for STI's the othe--"

I sigh. God is this going to be the whole night? I just wanted to get thrashed around hard, but how is he going to do it without the sharp paper cuts of the orange exam booklet, beady eye exam supervisors and a trusty student ID card to cut some Ritalin beforehand.

At least I'm not like my mate down at Mayoral drive. She got fucked up so bad when AUT Exams decided he didn't want to see her like that anymore. Wanted to try a new relationship structure... but in block sections only. I mean, I understand shifting relationships when there are extenuating external circumstances, but ethical non-monogamy/ polyamory is about consent and communication. It's allowing yourself to be taken to emotional extremes and fucked by different papers at the same time. Sure that has its difficulties... but suddenly wanting to be monogamous and asking to only be able

to be fucked by one paper intensely for a few weeks in block sections without checking with all parties involved... Urgh red flags? And AUT Exams wanted a fresh start as well, so tried to wipe clean all their history before that point. Pretty heartless in my opinion to take away all that hard work. Anyways they are back together again, trying to figure out balancing time and energies between their different courses.

"Hi! Sorry am I boring you? Like it's fine you are zoning out, It's just the 24 hour block is starting soon and I want to check if you are ready."

24 hours? I snap back into my desk chair in my damp cold student flat. Well this is a first. I'm going to be fucked in my own bedroom... UoA exams always insisted I go over to hers. And she'd always kick me out after 3 hours. I look at UoA online exams' blinking eyes. 24 hours... Who does this guy think he is?

"If it's alright with you, I've brought my own toy. It's shitty wi-fi. If you are okay with it, I'm going to use this periodically to make your heart rate go up. It'll lag things, and build up the pressure inside you. Is that okay?"

I nod. Well, this is something new. I've heard of it before, but never used it like this. I thought it was just for fore-play during study preparation. He zaps the electrical modem, sending shivers down my spin.

I paused as he gripped onto my thigh, asking softly, "Do you want me to change into something nice? UoA Exams usually--"

"I'm not her. You can stay in your pajamas." he grumbles.

Oh. I was surprised by the gentle authority in his voice.

"Are you ready, UoA student? I'm going to fuck you so hard and good for the next 24 hours."

TBC

**MAY THE FOURTH
BE WITH YOU**

**STAR
WARS**
PUB QUIZ

04.05.12 - YOUR PLACE



column.

WHO ASKED YOU

*Welcome to Craccum, where we put the “agony” in “agony aunt.”
We’re not qualified to deal with your problems, but neither are you.*

Why is university so full of drama...thought that was supposed to be high school?

Have you checked your major? Maybe you accidentally picked theatre...*

For once, the solution to this is actually really easy! Don’t hang out with dramatic people. As you astutely observed, we’re not in high school anymore. You’re not obligated to be friends with anyone. If someone is draining and dramatic and you don’t like being around them, then *don’t fuckin be around them*. Wow, I can’t believe I just gave actual advice in this stupid column; truly these are the strangest of times.

*Craccum formally apologises to Ellen DeGeneres, Bo Burnham, and the other gods of comedy for desecrating their religion with this heinous wordplay.

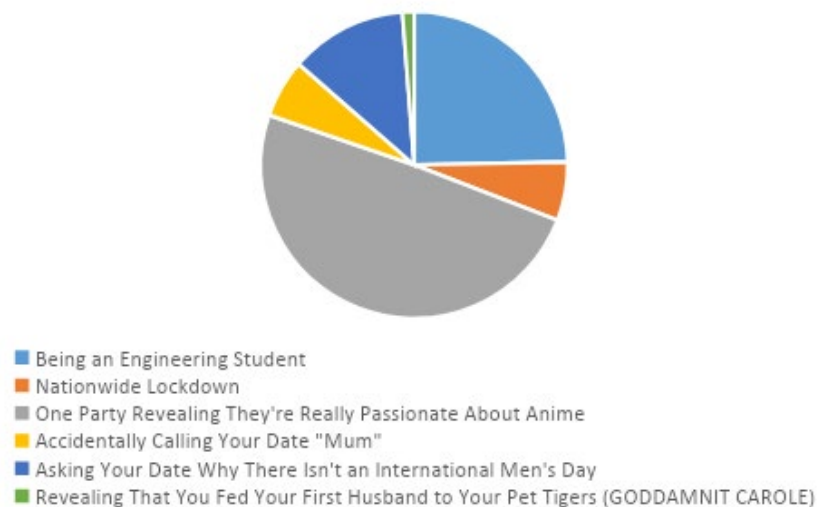
One of my flatmates keeps eating my food without asking me. How do I get back at her? Please keep in mind I'm not a very confrontational person, so the more passive aggressive the revenge, the better.

Stab her while she sleeps Have an honest, frank and respectful discussion about boundaries in relationships (poison the food and leave it for her as bait).

(EDIT: Craccum has informed me that we legally cannot advocate for murder. Despite my assertions that we do so illegally, they insist that this is ‘immoral.’)

I’ve slid into a stranger’s DMs during lockdown, but we’re running in circles in conversation because we can’t meet up. What should I do?

Things That Will Kill Relationships Before They Really Even Get Off The Ground



As you can see, your situation is on the list. Therefore, you have to just wait it out until all this is over. No way can you get to know someone via DM in the middle of a pandemic. Patience, padawan.

What local Auckland takeaway should you eat this week?

Because UberEats's 30-35% cut on restaurants is a robbery! Small businesses are struggling hard enough as it is, so order through the phone or have a look at the restaurant's own website. There are also some local NZ ordering apps popping up, such as Ordriñ'. Not going to lie, your psychic this week lives in Sandringham, so if that's not your area: flip the yellow pages/interwebs 4 your local YOM to support! This is the time to give some aroha to your local eateries!

Aries: You need something that is spicy, strong, and kicks you around a bit in the gut. Reminds you why you are ALIVE! Knock the emotions back into you. Thai hut does a really good penang curry, otherwise Sri Pinang for Malaysian food to warm you right up. God I want a flaky roti right now.



Taurus: Phone up your local Liquor Store, and have a yarn. Is alcohol a full meal? Some might say so. If your palette is extended beyond a first year's Cactus Black green, you could enquire as to what Sav would best suit your assorted selection of seafood. Cook Catch Kill: but stay safe. Also not sure really how much fish you could catch in central Auckland but I'm a psychic, not a fishing tide chart.



Gemini: You've got a sweet tooth and Duck Island might be the solution. Is this one of the best Ice Cream to ever exist in NZ? It's almost on par with a classic \$1 Mr Whippy. The only downfall is that the minimum order is 4 pints, which is a lot? IDK it's all relative depending on if it's breakup season. (Are you self-isolating with your partner lol). But it does come up to something around \$50. Which is a lot. Especially if you are already sad. If they don't deliver to you, pop to the diary and get a choc bar. You're a winner.



Cancer: I know you want a Maccas Apple pie. It's fried and warm and sweet. Kinda like sex on the beach with a stranger. Which is something we've all missed the last month. But swap it out for a pastry from your local bakery/cafe! Every time my crystal ball shows a vision of the post-apocalyptic future, the bright M is always glowing bright but the cafe down the road is going to need a lil extra lovin'!



Leo: You need to learn how to build a compliment sandwich/burger, especially as tensions run high in the bubble. Criticism can be helpful but It's all about how you deliver it, especially when you are stuck with the same people for over a month. Most takeaway shops also do a mean burger, so if you need some space, go for a walk and pick up some Kai. Limiting meat consumption is also good, and Lord of Fries and Wiseboys have some mint as vege/vegan alternatives.



Virgo: Fuck all that xenophobic Chinese racism bullshit that's arisen this pandemic. Chinese migrants have always been the backbone of some of NZ's favourite takeaway shops since the beginning of time. Sort yourself out to some dumplings, fried noodles, salty fish eggplant casserole, or peas and roast pork. That's right, even the white foods are sussed. Check in on Eden Noodles, or your local Chinese takeaway. Xie xie motherfucker.



Libra: You are ready to start streaming your own Mukbang. You aren't like the others, you've probably been making your own themed murder-mystery dinner parties for your bubble. Unless your moon sign has strong magnetism this month with Uranus, which actually means you've been eating cup noodles in your underwear. Regardless of what kind of Libra you are, it's okay to take a break from your habits and order in. Suggestion: spot of Japanese? A bowl of yakisoba never hurt.



Sagittarius: Fish and Chips is a classic, and you are a classic. So ring up to see if your local will keep wrapping it up in oily newspapers. How else are you going to get your daily dose of news? That and Ashley Bloomfield at 1pm. Mum keeps fucking up, she keeps trying to recreate a classic by putting it on a plate. Does she not understand? You need it soaking through The Herald.



Aquarius: You aren't wrong, the \$5 Domino's pizza is a pretty good suss. But if you've found a few more coins behind the couch, splurge a little, and wine and dine yourself. Mamma Mia Restaurant 1972 is a favourite, and while I'm not sure if a hot delivery man (or 3) comes with the order (we are still ALERT LVL 3 after all) I've been assured that the lasagna, penne pavarotti and Salmon Fettuccine is the absolute shit.



Scorpio: Unless your mum/dad has a secret spice mix, and you're self-isolating at home, then a bowl of Indian curry and rice will taste like liquid gold. It's cold out there, so don't just get mild, and treat yourself to extra naan. Also Aloo Mutter is one of the most underrated curries. Visit your local Indian takeaway, or Paradise Takeaway is a good place to start.



Capricorn: I'm not here to rag on corporations. I just always view chain stores with slight hostility. I'm the child of first generation migrants who own a cafe that's always been bullied by the Coffee Club/ Starbucks. I'm sure you understand my hate of the big man Capricorn. So you'll get me when I say, START A REVOLUTION. I mean, check up on your favourite hole in the wall coffee shop.



Pisces: The queues outside KFC are longer than your post-lockdown to-do list. And with that kind of zeal for life, you don't have time to waste on chain fast food. You are too good for that. You deserve fancy fried chicken burgers. Electric Chicken has some of the best fries and gravy, while Sneaky Snacky has fried chicken donut burgers that will make your arteries sing!



the people to blame.

EDITORS

EDITORS IN CHIEF

CAMERON LEAKEY AND DANIEL MEECH

SUBEDITOR

BRIAN GU

DESIGNER

NICK WITHERS

NEWS EDITOR

ELLA MORGAN

FEATURES EDITOR

MADELEINE CRUTCHLEY

ARTS EDITOR

LACHLAN MITCHELL

LIFESTYLE EDITOR

SHERRY ZHANG

VISUAL ARTS EDITOR

EDA TANG

STAFF WRITER

JUSTIN WONG

CONTRIBUTORS

Justin Wong, Ella Morgan, Brian Gu, Madeleine Crutchley, Hazel Oh, Sherry Zhang, Cameron Leakey, Daniel Meech, Patrick Macaskill-Webb, Lachlan Mitchell, Kate, Seth Adamson, Eda Tang, Robbie Delany, Callia Drinkwater, Tara Mok, Hugo Middeldorp, Talia Parker, Gabrielle McCulloch

COVER ARTIST

Joy Godwin

ILLUSTRATORS

Julia Zhu, Flora, Xie, Sophie Sun, Kaye Kennedy, Gabbie De Baron, Joy Godwin, Nirvana Haldar, Eda Tang

EDITORIAL OFFICE

4 Alfred Street,
Private Bag 92019
Auckland

ADVERTISING

Aaron Haugh
marketing@ausa.org.nz

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