

CRACCU M

THE UNIVERSITY OF AUCKLAND STUDENT MAGAZINE

ISSUE 09, 10 MAY 2021



We Should All Become Tradies

Seriously, why are you still here? Ella Morgan interviews five tradies about their career choice over University after leaving high school.

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Forget Bumble, Try These Love Potions

If you feel weirdly horny this week, it's probably because Naomii Seah has been stirring up recipes provided by Ancient Greek Love Magic.

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Flexing Outfits of Dead Ponsonby Home Owners

Actually, they're not dead; they just couldn't be seen wearing the same dress twice. Nancy Guo writes why she thinks thrifting culture is becoming gentrified.

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The People to Blame

EDITORS IN CHIEF **EDA TANG & BRIAN GU**
editor@craccum.co.nz

NEWS EDITOR **ELLA MORGAN**
news@craccum.co.nz

CHIEF REPORTER **JESSICA HOPKINS**
chiefreporter@craccum.co.nz

TE AO MĀORI EDITOR **MAIRĀTEA MOHI**
maori@craccum.co.nz

FEATURES EDITOR **NAOMII SEAH**
features@craccum.co.nz

ARTS EDITOR **MADELEINE CRUTCHLEY**
arts@craccum.co.nz

LIFESTYLE EDITOR **LACHLAN MITCHELL**
lifestyle@craccum.co.nz

VISUAL ARTS EDITOR **SOPHIE SUN**
visualarts@craccum.co.nz




SUBEDITOR **FLORA XIE**
subeditor@craccum.co.nz

COVER **TAI NIMO**

DESIGNER **NICK WITHERS**
design@ausa.org.nz

ADVERTISING **AARON HAUGH**
marketing@ausa.org.nz

EDITORIAL OFFICE
TOP LEVEL
STUDENT UNION BUILDING
34 PRINCES STREET

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CONTRIBUTOR OF THE WEEK

NANCY GUO

PAGE 31

WINNER OF \$50 SHADS VOUCHER

TE AO MĀORI EDITOR
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A Notice of Judith-Correction

This week, *Brian and Eda* are out of their depth in a discussion about politics.

The National Party is stuck on a rollercoaster, and Judith Collins is the one trying to yank the lever to get it going again. I'd say they're top of the log flume, bracing for a big splash. Yet whatever Judith does, it seems that they just inch closer.

While it's entertaining to picture Chris Bishop's face bracing for impact, the sad reality is that the politics of the party these days seem quite destructive. While we're not exactly political junkies, it's hard for us to look at Judith Collins, flanked by Chris Bishop and Nicola Willis, and think 'that represents us'. But if you shop at *Farro Fresh*, it's probably your type of crowd.

While admittedly it isn't everything, diversity is one factor to point to, and it's an important one too. For instance, the National Party has more caucus members named Chris than Māori. To forgo the representation of minority communities is one thing, but lacking indigenous representation, who we have a treaty commitment to, is worrying.

Our News editor Ella Morgan and political scientist Dr Lara Greaves, co-writing for *The Spinoff*, describe how National leader Judith Collins is using Māori to drive a separatism tactic among voters, and warns of the dangers of polarising voters to our democracy*. This seems to have come to a head, when Collins

recently used the term 'segregation' to describe the Māori Health Authority, throwing out the severe and oppressive connotations of racial segregation.

It begs the question of why the complex, long-standing race relations in New Zealand, and our treaty commitment to Māori, is being reduced like National is attempting to do. While the wider topic continues to be discussed by those far more eloquent and knowledgeable than us (check out Ella's article on *Spinoff* if you're interested in learning more), on a smaller scale, we want to reassure our commitment in *Craccum* to voices marginalised in media, particularly to tangata whenua.

Historically, the newsroom has typically not been a space welcome to racial and gender minorities and even at *Craccum* we can testify to that, considering our name is actually a scrambled acronym for Auckland University College Men's Common Room Committee. We can say that at least for the last three years that we've both been involved in *Craccum*, there hasn't been a structured effort to make space for kaupapa Māori journalism. We recognise this takes time and funding that our student associations don't have to systematically change the way we produce news.

And we're working on it. Any newsroom and publication house holds the immense power and responsibility of shaping opinions and influencing our behaviours and we can't call ourselves a student magazine until we can be accessed by all students and reflect a representative variety of experiences.

A project that we have for Semester 2 as part of this kaupapa is an issue put together completely by Māori and Pasifika writers and artists, and we are handing over editorial direction to guest editors Mairātea Mohi and Aria Toilolo-Ite. We personally welcome any student who is Māori or Pasifika to write or create art for this issue whether or not you have been involved in *Craccum* before. We're here to help you get your voice and your work out - just get in touch with any of us!

Nau mai, haere mai, or if your husband is Samoan, talofa.

Brian Gu (he/him) and Eda Tang (she/her)
Co-Editors of *Craccum* 2021

**This week's editorial was inspired by 'National won't find its brighter future through divisive Ōrewa-style rhetoric', co-written by our News editor Ella Morgan and Dr Lara Greaves for the Spinoff.*



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UoA Student Turns Her Baking Passion Into a Business



JESSICA HOPKINS

Hester Acharya, a Fine Arts and History student at the University of Auckland, has always been obsessed with baking. She has now turned her passion into a business selling custom cakes on Instagram and Facebook @NotJustPurpleCakes.

Acharya was first introduced to baking by her mother. "The first thing she taught me was a recipe for Easy Fudge Brownies when I was nine." Ever since then, she has been obsessed with baking. "I just love to bake and make desserts, and I do it all the time." Even when she's not baking, Acharya spends her free time watching cake videos and the Great British Bake Off. She says she even takes down notes and implements the tips from the show into her baking.

While working at a popular dessert chain, Acharya realised there is a significant demand for custom cakes. "You can only imagine how many people are having birthdays in a city of 1.2 million." Inspired by friends starting small businesses and selling vintage, up-cycled clothing through Instagram, Acharya decided to turn her baking passion into a business by selling custom cakes. "They didn't go to school or anything for it, which made me realise I could do it too."

She started off volunteering to make birthday cakes for friends to build up a portfolio and see if she enjoyed making custom cakes. She ended up loving it and decided to offer her custom cakes to the public. Acharya says her partner Java Grant came up with the name Not Just

Purple Cakes because of her obsession with the colour purple. Grant told me he figured she would want to make a lot of purple cakes. "But it's not just purple cakes."

Acharya makes all the cakes in her kitchen at home. The flat she shares with two roommates, including her partner, has now been taken over by cake pans, sprinkles, and piping equipment. While Acharya makes all her orders by herself, Grant helps her take photos of the finished product. She says although she offered to pay him, he instead asks for Nippy's Chocolate Milk. What she likes most about running her own business is flexibility, and being able to work on her own schedule. "I don't have to do it at a specific time of the day. I can make a cake at 3 am if I feel like it."

Because she is a small business, Acharya says she can spend a lot more time on individual orders. She encourages customers to share pictures of cakes they've seen online and their favourite flavours and colours. Acharya says she wants to "produce the ultimate cake that matches what they want, the theme of their event. Recently I did a frog and flowers cake for a themed party." Accommodating all dietary requirements is also particularly important for Acharya as her brother has a severe nut allergy. "It taught me how to clean everything properly to ensure there is no cross-contamination."

Acharya uses her own Red Velvet recipe, which she made up with her mother when she was younger and other recipes she has tried and tested. She hopes one day she can develop more of her own. Currently, she spends roughly 9 hours a week making and researching cakes. She says cakes are an expensive business. "It's the learning process that costs the most; trying out new combinations and experimenting with flavours and ingredients." But she says the enjoyment she gets from baking makes the cost worth it. Eventually, she hopes to expand from just birthday cakes. "I'm happy to make a small cake for 10 or 20 people, but my favourite cakes are the big, extravagant ones. I would love to make a wedding cake."



Inspired by friends starting small businesses and selling vintage, up-cycled clothing through Instagram, Acharya decided to turn her baking passion into a business by selling custom cakes.

Disproportionate Stigma and Stress Experienced by LGBTQ+ Students



CHARLIE PARKER

The most recent Youth19 survey has shown that LGBTQ+ students in New Zealand experience significant stress and stigma regardless of positive overall findings. Currently, half of the 7,721 students involved in the most recent survey reported that they have had many positive experiences, and that they are coping well in their environments. Despite this, there has been an increased amount of discrimination against rainbow youth, particularly for those who are transgender and gender diverse.

Home, school, general community and healthcare settings were all environments where students reported they had been mistreated or not supported, with 55% stating that when they needed healthcare there was none that was accessible for them. This was identified as the most urgent issue, especially within the mental health sector, as over half of the surveyed students reported significant depressive symptoms. Dr John Fenaughty, senior lecturer at the University of Auckland and co-investigator for the study, said that the discrimination rainbow youth experience "are known drivers that underpin the increased rates [of] mental health challenges we are seeing".

Volunteering opportunities were the only exception to this where higher levels of discrimination were not reported, with Dr John Fenaughty further stating that "willingness to support others is an important strength to celebrate and nurture, and we need to ensure that rainbow young people are supported". Younger LGBTQ+ students have shown to match the level of volunteering within their communities to those of cisgender students, however there is not enough being given back to them as only 32% of students reported they "always felt safe" in their own neighbourhoods.

Croi O'Sullivan, a Victoria University of Wellington student, told *Craccum* "for me personally, it feels like recently there's been a rise in animosity

Dr John Fenaughty, senior lecturer at the University of Auckland and co-investigator for the study, said that the discrimination rainbow youth experience "are known drivers that underpin the increased rates [of] mental health challenges we are seeing".

"It feels as though the more visibly queer you are, the more at risk you are of being harassed, which just makes me, and many of my friends, feel like we have to play down our queerness in public because we just want to be left alone."

towards queer people. As a drag performer, walking down a busy street to a gig can be pretty terrifying because of the constant cat-calls and slurs yelled out. It feels as though the more visibly queer you are, the more at risk you are of being harassed, which just makes me, and many of my friends, feel like we have to play down our queerness in public because we just want to be left alone."

Recent action occurred on the 2nd May, when Karangahape Road was home to a peaceful protest to support people who identify as transgender and non-binary, and raise funds for their safe space. Logan Collins, co-protest organiser and University of Auckland student, said that the protest was held to raise awareness for those marginalised groups, and they hope to gain investors for their funding page to facilitate a safer queer nightclub space within Auckland Central. This will allow an authentic space for those who currently experience harassment and discrimination within the city's nightlife, and will provide a safe environment for LGBTQ+ students.

Just last week, residents of a University of Auckland hall were issued a reminder that discrimination is not tolerated in residences after a slew of transphobic comments were posted anonymously on a confessions Facebook page. The University has a zero tolerance policy for bullying, harassment and discrimination of any kind.

University of Auckland students in need of mental health support are encouraged to contact the University Health and Counselling team on 0800 698 427.

If you are in need of crisis support, call or text 1737 for 24/7 support from trained counsellors. Other numbers include Youthline's free call line at 0800-376-633, or free-texting 234.

If you would like to donate to help create a safe space for the queer community, you can visit their Givealittle page.

University of Auckland to Host New Zealand's First Space Mission

ELLA MORGAN NGĀTI RAUKAWA KI TE TONGA

The University of Auckland's Te Pūnaha Ātea-Auckland Space Institute has been announced as the site of mission control for New Zealand's first government funded space mission.

The mission involves launching a satellite that will "detect global methane emissions with unprecedented accuracy," according to the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE) website.

The mission is a joint venture between the government and American non-profit organisation the Environmental Defense fund. The satellite will be built by MethaneSAT, a subsidiary of the Environmental Defense fund.

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MBIE says the data will be used by the Environmental Defense fund "to catalyse a reduction in methane emissions from oil and gas infrastructure by at least 45 percent by 2025. In addition to oil and gas, MethaneSAT also has the potential to assess emissions from a range of anthropogenic methane sources, including agriculture."

The mission has been in the works for a while, with MBIE signing an agreement with MethaneSAT LLC and the Environmental Defense Fund to collaborate in 2019. The government has invested \$26 million into the mission, and much of it has been used to construct the mission's control centre.

Rocket Lab will be managing the operation for the first year before this is handed over to Te Pūnaha Ātea-Auckland Space Institute. The launch is estimated to take place in 2022.



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SCAN ME

Trades vs University?

Five Tradies Share Their Side of the Debate



ELLA MORGAN NGĀTI RAUKAWA KI TE TONGA

It's a well-established fact that tradies get the ladies, but do they get the same long-term economic benefit that a university degree supposedly gives you? *Craccum* investigates.

It's been the topic of many Facebook debates over the years whether tradies are better off than university students by working in high-demand industries and earning money soon after leaving school. In 2018, Auckland consultancy *Scarlatti* found that before the age of 30, many tradies made more on average than university graduates. On the other side of the coin, they found that past the age of 30, the university graduates began to earn more, supporting the theory that getting a degree is a long-term investment in your money-making capacity.

Right now, record numbers of people are signing up for apprenticeships. As of December last year, 16,000 people were training for a trade. The numbers of women and older people joining the trades has also increased since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic. At the same time, university enrolments are also increasing. Figures from the Tertiary Education Commission show a 17.6% increase in

enrolments into both tertiary education and vocational study between December 2019 and December 2020. At the University of Auckland, Domestic EFTS (Equivalent Full-Time Students) have grown 4.6% from 2020, as of the 12th of March.

The increase in tradies in training is a good sign for key industries. Overwhelming evidence demonstrates that there is a severe shortage of skilled trade workers, and the problem is likely to worsen without enough people getting into training. Immigration New Zealand currently considers there to be a long-term shortage in the construction and trades areas. These shortages have real and serious implications for all of Aotearoa — we are currently in the midst of a housing crisis, and some commentators have

argued that the shortage of skilled trade workers was a factor in the failure of the Kiwibuild policy.

When people say tradies are the backbone of society, they really aren't joking.

Reforms by the current Labour government have meant that many apprenticeships have become free for groups beyond school leavers, with the increase in on-school leavers

Overwhelming evidence demonstrates that there is a severe shortage of skilled trade workers, and the problem is likely to worsen without enough people getting into training.



entering apprenticeships suggesting that these changes have made pathways into trades more accessible. Last September, the government announced targeted funding for trades and apprenticeships, and at the same time announced it would abandon extending the fees-free university policy past the first year. Ultimately, it's looking like a good time to get into a trade apprenticeship.

Craccum chatted to a bunch of tradies about how they chose their career path, and

found out that while money is a big drawcard, there are many more benefits to doing a trade that aren't economic. Thomas, a building apprentice, told *Craccum* he decided to leave his study in environmental planning to start his apprenticeship. "I decided to drop out as it wasn't as interesting as I thought [it would be] and I didn't really enjoy it," he says. "I would recommend [building] if being in a classroom isn't for you. It keeps you physically fit and after work you can just relax, and not have to worry about assignments or anything."

James, a builder, says that he finds it rewarding to see a piece of land turn into a house for a lifetime. "School wasn't for me. Too many people coming and going, and no one [was] really helping me," says James. "I'm [now] in a crew of eight. The foreman and the rest of the gang are super helpful, [and] the boss is so chill too, for someone with the stress of the job."

Sebastian, a plumber and drainlayer, highlighted economic opportunities as a key benefit of the job. He chose to enter the trade "because it seemed like there was good income potential, and I'll get to work in a different area every day."

He didn't consider university study due to the lack of guaranteed job opportunities after finishing study.

Some who chose to complete tertiary study also end up in the trades. Amy previously studied

"I would recommend [building] if being in a classroom isn't for you. It keeps you physically fit and after work you can just relax..."

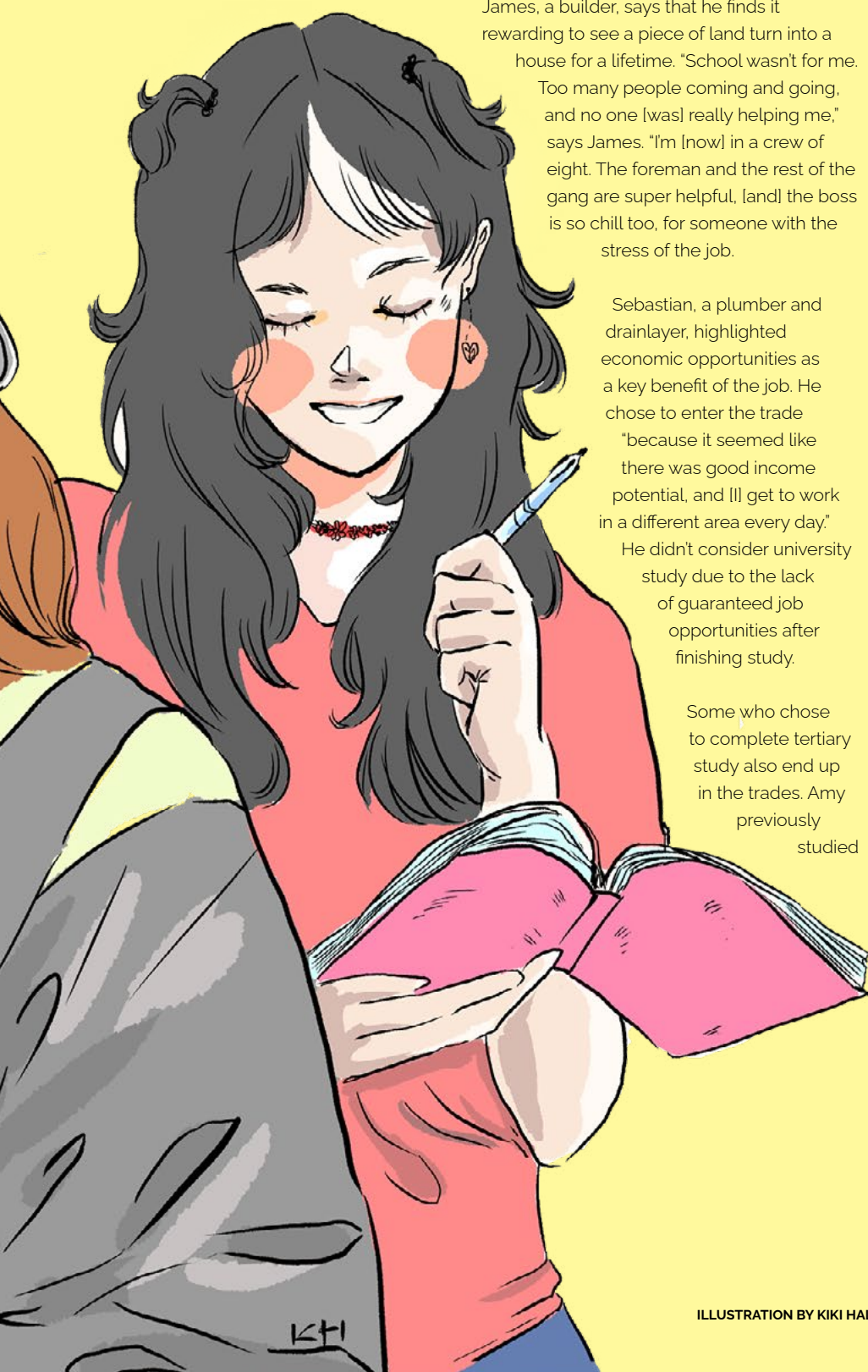
for two years and landed a job in animation. She has now changed paths and is working as a labourer. "I feel like I was cheated over with pay and the amount of work I did, including the years of study I put towards it," she says. Like Sebastian, she enjoys the high pay rate she receives for her work.

Jarrad, who has completed undergraduate study, is currently having a gap year to earn money and is working in road construction. "There's just so much infrastructure whether it be commercial, public works or private trades, Aotearoa is such a new developed country so there's always work to be done in trades," says Jarrad. He says that his work provides great opportunities to upskill and learn things it is not possible to learn in a classroom.

"It feels good to do some actual work. To quote one of my sociologist lecturers, 'to not be alienated from my means of labour', to be connected to my work, seeing the finished product and especially in road construction knowing that I'm actually helping with the Auckland infrastructure."

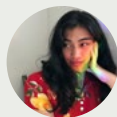
All of the tradies *Craccum* spoke to said they would recommend school leavers looking into doing a trade over going to university, but many stressed that career choice should be based on what an individual is interested in and what type of working environment they'd enjoy.

While the verdict is still out about the income earning potential of trades as opposed to going through university study, it is clear that from the experience of the tradies we talked to that entering the industry is a good option for those who are looking for ample job opportunities, a hands-on working environment and work that makes a difference.



Māori Student Leaders Underfunded and Overworked

Te Akatoki Tumuaki resignation from UCSA reveals “underpaid” and “undervalued” Māori student representatives nationwide.



MAIRĀTEA MOHI

TE ARAWA & TE WHANAU-Ā-APANUI



TAYLOR-ROSE TEREKIA

TE AITANGA A MĀHAKI, NGATI POROU & KĀI TAHU

The Tumuaki of Te Akatoki Māori Students Association, Rosa Hibbert-Schooner, has resigned from her ex-officio position on the University of Canterbury Student Associations (UCSA).

In an open letter published on social media on April 27th, Rosa points to the lack of remuneration and institutionalised racism as the reasons for resigning. No other Te Akatoki representative will fill the ex-officio role on UCSA until action is taken to remunerate the role equally to the other roles.

According to Te Akatoki, undervaluing Māori student voices and honouring Te Tiriti o Waitangi is a “national issue”. A challenge is put out to student associations across Aotearoa, to reevaluate their partnerships with Māori student associations and treaty obligations.

The letter draws attention to Māori student leaders across the country who are asked to do extra work for their general student association, support Māori students as well as hold the full mantle of the Tumuaki role for far less pay than their general association counterpart. According to Rosa, the value of Māori in these academic institutions are constantly tokenised.

“We are the ones asked to correct cultural practices and asked for last minute ‘cultural performances’. We are the poster children for the apparent ‘biculturalism’ of your institution.”

As reported by Salient, the UCSA acknowledged their Tiriti o Waitangi obligations and at the request of Te Akatoki, immediately raised the pay for the ex-officio role. UCSA President Kim Fowler said their association “have contacted Kaiarahi for help in setting out a treaty honouring process to understand where the role should be going forward.”

Rosa’s letter garnered widespread social media attention by other Māori students and associations across Aotearoa echoing their support. Some are initiating their own enquiries into equal remuneration.

Te Mana Ākonga (TMĀ), the national Māori student association, believe that general

students’ associations “do not understand how hard our tumuaki work.” Tumuaki Takirua (Co-Presidents) Renata White and Nkhaya Paulsen-More recognise that Māori student leaders work tirelessly.

“Tumuaki work holistically after hours, supporting the hauora of our tauira Māori, kanohi kitea, listening to individual issues and providing āwhina when the tertiary sector is not supporting Māori tauira well. They are in positions of equal importance and workload to general association presidents.”

The current funding models undervalue Māori students and fail to support executive members who as a result, provide extensive support to their peers themselves. TMĀ suggested that some Māori student associations only get 4% the funding that larger associations get. The national representatives will be launching a national review into the pay and funding received by Māori student associations. As a part of their campaign, they are currently visiting rōpū in person to gather stories about institutional racism.

“We recognise racism and funding are intertwined, and look to be releasing our collated data around those issues within the next few months.”

Groups like Te Roopu Māori (TRM) at the University of Otago have heeded the change and have successfully managed to lobby for equal pay for their ex-officio position on the Otago University Student Association. In solidarity with Te Akatoki, TRM Tumuaki Karamea Pewhairangi expressed that she was “100% behind Rosa Hibbert-Schooner and her bravery”. Speaking to Te Pararē, Karamea said that the issue with Te Akatoki “highlights how undervalued everything that Māori students and Maori in general bring to the table.”

TMĀ recognise the shift in support by general associations in response to issues raised by their Māori student associations and treaty partners, but would like to see these relationships continue to grow.

Turning to Tāmaki Makaurau, Auckland University’s Ngā Tauira Māori (NTM) echoed

the struggles that Māori student associations go through. Tumuaki Mihiterina Williams shared her support for Te Akatoki and Te Roopū Māori.

“We are in awe of the courage and kaha displayed by our whānau and friends down South. We share the same struggles and they are definitely leading and inspiring movements at other tertiary institutions.”

However, not all Māori student associations face this same problem. At the University of Waikato, the model of representation for Māori on the Waikato Students’ Union (WSU) is different, with a Vice-president Māori role who is an elected member of the WSU and not an ex-officio member.

Current WSU Vice-President Māori, Areta Ranginui Charlton, says the role itself was something Waikato students fought hard for, which has worked well for Māori representation on WSU. The clear benefit of this system is that the Māori representative can dedicate to the one role “rather than pulling from our already overworked rōpū execs for governance roles.”

The Vice-President Māori of WSU receives an honoraria equivalent to the Vice-President. They are elected onto committees within the University of Waikato structure and chair a forum with all the rōpū tumuaki. This forum includes seven faculty affiliated rōpū and one non-affiliated rōpū which is Te Waiora - the Waikato Māori students association.

While the spotlight is on Māori student representation, TMĀ encourages tauira to speak up on inequality they see within their institutions.

“If you feel that your tumuaki deserves to be paid better--voice it. Share your whakaaro on social media, make a fuss at your institutions, hold hui and wānanga with your members, and hold your general students’ associations and institutions accountable for their failures.”

The Tumuaki Takirua have support systems in place and extend their support to legislative change. “We will tautoko you all the way to parliament if that’s what it comes to.”

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Up In A PUFF OF SMOKE



MAIRĀTEA MOHI TE ARAWA

A sea of smoke and haze filled Albert Park last Saturday, a smog so thick you could hardly see a foot in front of you. Was Skycity on fire again? Did the University mysteriously catch ablaze? No, unfortunately. It was just J-Day!

J-Day is a free annual community event bringing attention to Aotearoa's cannabis culture and protesting against the prohibition of marijuana. This passive protest was cancelled last year and saw a great influx of people trying to catch up for the missed opportunity on May 1st.

From "high noon" to "four-twenty," hundreds gathered to smoke up and protest the criminalisation of cannabis. With food and merchandise stalls people came to demonstrate, hang out with friends and enjoy a very relaxing day in the park.

In speaking to protest goers, all were very disappointed in the referendum results but believed in the precedence of once believed to be radical laws of the time.

The anti smacking legislation was used as a frequent example, just like the cannabis referendum, it was initially met with a lot of criticism. In its first poll 88% voted no to the question, "Should a smack as part of good parental correction be a criminal offence in New Zealand?" A now passed law, it is unreasonable to believe smacking is a justified use of discipline.

Taking the time to talk to some protestors we heard a range of stories, from cautionary synthetic cannabis stories to friends who have been smoking for 20+ years. Though the stories ranged and differentiated from one another, there was a shared thought throughout. The imminent need for cannabis decriminalisation. The high rate of colour coded incarceration was the number one reason protestors believed that the legislation on cannabis needed to be reformed now. Māori have similar smoking stats to other communities in New Zealand but are persecuted much more severely tainting not only the

person's mana but their future also.

We have heard miracle stories of cannabis used as a rongoā to alleviate menstrual cramps, used in balms to cure eczema and in its purest form to relax. Drug offences and traffic offending figures are four times higher for Māori than for Pākehā, a figure that remained unchanged from 1991 to 2007. Events like J-Day are here to not only protest prohibition but institutionalised racism also in New Zealand.

There's always hope for change but in the meantime here's some crack up green out stories.

Es-STONEY-an Couple

Code Word for Weed: "Umbrohi" which is an Estonian word for weed"

Side-splitting Stoner Stories: "Since becoming adults me and my partner have been travelling the world in our van. While travelling the desert roads of Australia we would often spark up on the long empty highway. One time we were smoking and it was just us, the road, and a pack of kangaroos following our scent of weed. It was pretty freaky."

Cannabis referendum:

"We couldn't vote and are disappointed in the results. Cannabis has been decriminalised in Estonia since 2002 so it would be awesome to see the same happen in New Zealand."



Synthetic Sins

Code word for weed: "Mull, Chop, Spin"

Side-Splitting Stoner Stories: "Once I tried smoking synthetic weed when it was legal and I had a full on breakdown. I don't remember much but I was told I was talking everyone's heads off, ran all over the place and tried to ram my way, head first, through a group of people. I even tried to matrix slide under the garage door. I don't even know how they managed to legalise that shit first but it was deadly. I haven't had a similar experience since smoking straight weed."

Cannabis referendum: I'm really annoyed about the referendum results. But looking on the bright side...Weed is still cheap.

Spinning Sam

Code word for weed: "Cones, Bowls"

Side-Splitting Stoner Stories: "Gave my friend his first ever cone and he was algood. Then he smoked a few more and things took a turn. Dude said he was falling through circles and had the worst case of the spins. He was drooling everywhere and looked greener than the indoor strains we were smoking. We had to put him to bed soon after. Teach him for trying to mix weed and baccy his first time."

Cannabis referendum: "Voted yes! Annoyed at the result but seeing that the referendum was a near 50/50 split there's hope that this initial verdict could change."



Fallen Angel:

Code word for weed: "Huff"

Side-Splitting Stoner Stories: "While meeting my partner's cool, older brother for the first time he offered me a joint. And then another. And then another. I staggered my way into the house to try catch a break and I ended up forward rolling onto the couch and passing out. Apparently I flipped onto the couch really gracefully and fell asleep in a swooning pose. Real smooth.."

Cannabis referendum: Voted yes. I'm dissapointed but if we're taking the anti-smacking laws as precedent then I have hope we can turn it around."



Ancient Greek Love Magic

I'm a witch now, don't mess with me



NAOMI SEAH

My love life right now is dismal. If you want to know exactly how it's going, I tried to open Bumble today and I got the COVID-19 Tracer app instead. To take my mind off my woes, I went up to the sixth floor of the Gen Lib with my laptop and notebooks, all ready to settle in for some study.

After sitting for an hour, I decided to take a break and do some browsing. There were plenty of interesting books, but one in particular caught my eye.

The particular tome was called *Ancient Greek Love Magic*. Was it a sign? Was divine intervention telling me to get laid already? Or was I just itching to slack off my uni work? Either way, the little book came home with me, and I eagerly cracked open its pages.

Sadly for me, there was no literal book of spells awaiting me, but after an hour's perusing (learning some very cool concepts about love and gender roles in Greek society), I had some real Ancient Greek spells to try.

Binding

Ok, so this one isn't technically applicable to me. Women in Ancient Greece would use these to prevent their husbands from having affairs with others. I'm not gonna lie, this reeks of toxic heterosexual culture, but luckily, I didn't actually have an S.O to do this on. I figured I would substitute a target this time.

But who? It struck me: I've recently slept with a serial cheater, and I have many regrets. In that spirit, I decided to do the binding spell for his girlfriend. So here's to you, and sorry for sleeping with your partner (lol).

This spell involved carving the "victim's" name into a wax tablet, rolling it, piercing it with a nail, and then burying it underground. I did not have a wax tablet lying around, but I did

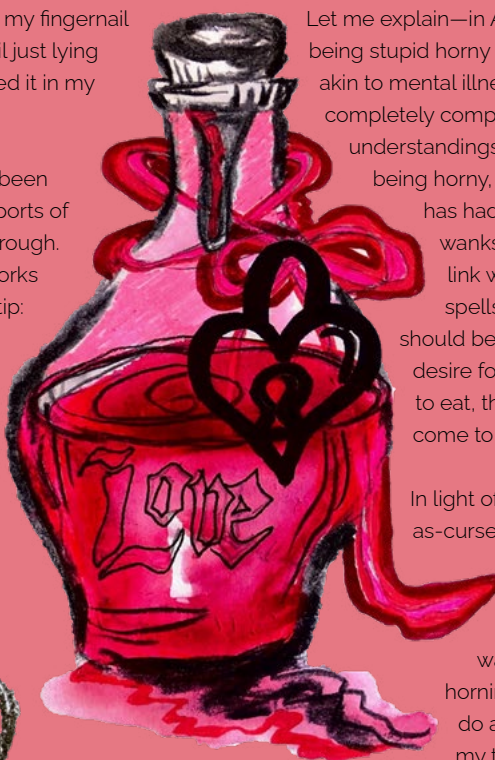
have the sad end of a candle I was using. So I dug it out of the pot, carved their names into it, rolled it up (but really just crumbled it... oops) punctured it with my fingernail (because who has a nail just lying around?) and then buried it in my garden.

Godspeed to them. It's been a week, and no new reports of cheating have come through. I can't say if this spell works or not, but here's a hot tip: if you have to use a binding spell, you should probably just dump them

I don't usually pray for someone to stop eating out of an overwhelming desire to bone.

Let me explain—in Ancient Greece, being stupid horny was considered akin to mental illness. This isn't completely compatible with modern understandings of mental illness or being horny, but as someone who has had many depressive wanks, I can see where the link was made. Once these spells are cast, your victim should be overwhelmed with desire for you, and not be able to eat, think or sleep until they come to you.

In light of this love-spell-as-curse idea, I completely pivoted my targets. Wouldn't it be great if someone was so distracted by horniness that they couldn't do anything? I decided my target would be Judith Collins.



Fire Spells

These ones are kind of mental. They are related to Greek curses, and the idea is to make your victim incredibly horny for you—to the point where they can't achieve anything else, and will destroy their lives for you. These spells involve burning some herbs, spices, household objects or incense so that your target will "burn with passion."

Not all these spells were user-friendly, and many of them involved torturing animals, which I did not want to do, for obvious reasons. However, the simplest and most achievable form of these spells was burning incense and saying an incantation. It's kind of like praying—the only difference being

A 4th or 5th century tablet revealed one of these spells. It reads:

"Aye, lord demon, attract, inflame, destroy, burn, cause her to swoon from love as she is being burnt, inflamed. Goad the tortured soul, the heart of ____, whom ____ bore, until she leaps forth and comes to ____, whom ____ bore, out of passion and love..."

It goes on like this for another paragraph, and I read the whole thing, substituting the respective names over some burning myrrh incense in my backyard. Try drafting more racist speeches now, Jude.

Crusher Collins? Crushed by my incense. Until we sleep together, I guess.



Apples

In Ancient Greece, this "spell" was more like a courtship ritual. Instead of today's version of "courting" where a sweaty dude corners you in the mosh at a gig, Ancient Greeks made the sweaty dude in question stand at a respectful distance and throw an apple at you instead.

The apple would be carved with some symbol or words, and then an incantation would be said over it three times: something like "my crush *will* love me" or "oh God I'm so alone". Then, the apple would be thrown at your target. If they caught it—or better yet, ate it—that implied consent from the other party. Women would usually catch the apples that men had thrown.

However, it's not Ancient Greece anymore, it's 2021 baby! I can throw my own apples, thanks, and we now all (hopefully) have a more nuanced understanding of consent.

Sadly due to my lack of dates I was unable to throw an apple at anyone I was actually interested in. However, I did throw an apple at my friend while going to... *collect* something from his house. Can't say if he's in love with me, but we'll just say I got what I wanted ;).

Knotted Cord Charm

Probably one of the more simple charms around, this spell involves knotting three strands of blue thread together, chanting as you make each knot. Then, you tie it around your waist, and let the magic happen. This one is more general, and makes "whoever looks upon you... glad to see you."

As a rural NZ 10/10 and an Auckland 7.5/10 with too much confidence, I didn't notice much difference with this one. As with most people, my friends and family are usually glad to see me, so this one is probably a placebo effect at best. Still, knotting some thread for half an hour while screaming "I am hot as fuck" probably won't *hurt* your self-confidence, so I say go for it.

Straight-up Poison

Listen, the Ancient Greeks weren't as onto it as us, ok. *Ancient Greek Love Magic* notes that most of the love potions used back then probably included mandrake, oleander or cyclamen—all of which are toxic plants. They were also super gung-ho about spiking drinks, which is how these "love potions" were usually administered. There's even records of women who were acquitted of murder based on the argument that they were actually trying to poison their husbands into loving them again. Aw, romantic, right?

However, as someone who definitely doesn't advocate spiking drinks or poisoning people, I gave this one a pass. Luckily, the Ancient Greeks considered wine to be the simplest love potion around. I didn't even need to test this one. Maybe it's just me, but a couple glasses of red wine is definitely enough to get my fanny-a-fluttering.

So if anyone wants to take me on a date, bring some Shiraz by the Craccum office... and maybe throw an apple at me.



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Celebrating Kiwi Podcasts

Connecting New Zealanders



AMY CRAWFORD

Despite every indication, the podcast format has prevailed. Though initially conceived as a way to entertain professionals during commutes or in their otherwise busy life, it has surpassed this expectation. It rose to its highest prominence in the unprecedented climate of the last year—the COVID-19 lockdowns.

Amongst our isolation, the unique personal connection that can be forged between podcaster and listener came to the rescue. Discussions of finances, mental health, and self-discovery were all pertinent themes for the uncertainty of the lockdown period. They were able to be explored in real time, with the complexity of such issues complimented by the long-form format podcasting allows.

New Zealand was no exception to this increased interest in podcasting, local production and consumption rising alongside global trends. Though flourishing, we can always do more to support independent New Zealand creatives. 'Supporting local' can be as

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easy as listening to a NZ podcast on the way to Uni, and thankfully there is no shortage of options for listeners.

The Podcasts

Only 64 episodes into its projected 100 episode run, Qiane Qiane Matata-Sipu, founder and creator of *Nuku*, has created an invaluable podcast. Using interview style conversations and accompanying photography, *Nuku* explores the lives of indigenous women. *Nuku's* scope of stories is incredibly impressive, such as Episode //035's Terangi Roimata Kutia-Tataurangi, a Māori nail art specialist, or Episode //20's Lynell Tuffery Huria, a lawyer on the frontlines of Māori intellectual property rights.

Though the women of their respective episodes share incredibly unique stories, *Nuku* always situates their experiences in the greater collective wisdom and Māori worldview of the podcast.

Qiane's mission statement in the podcast's introductory episode asks us to "see how the world can be shaped by indigenous women's voices, the unique culture we see. Let us show who we are, and not who we have been told to be." This mission was undoubtedly fulfilled in *Nuku*. By amplifying the voice of indigenous women, *Nuku* reminds us of the potential for media to empower us, and create social change.

Creative Curiosity tackles universal questions related to the artistic process through the personal outlook of its host, Te Haunui Tuna. Exploring his life as a visual artist and aspiring filmmaker, Te Haunui provides practical guidance to those aspiring to pursue work in a creative industry. Reminding us to create everyday, to allow ourselves to fail, and to set boundaries for our work, *Creative Curiosity* is abundant with positive affirmations for established artists and amateurs alike.

The podcast, however, does not shy from the complications of creating art: lack of motivation,

the free labour expected of rising artists, struggling to find a style—all of these issues are tackled by Te Haunui and his guests. This complete image of the artistic experience is complimented by the range of mediums Te Haunui explores, discussing with his peers in visual arts, as well as filmmakers and musicians. This wealth of knowledge and experience makes *Creative Curiosity* an essential listen to those uncertain with their own journey as a creative.

Sarah Kelsey's *The One Up Project* is an independent NZ based podcast following self-development and financial literacy, advising us on "everything we weren't taught but should've been." Though self-help podcasts run the risk of talking down to its audience, *The One Up Project* carefully balances expert advice and the admitted imperfections of Sarah and her guests. Whilst each episode covers different aspects of self-improvement or finance, it is this vulnerable relatability that ultimately threads the show together and asks us to return back every week.

Most successfully, *The One Up Project* never attempts to isolate finance in our lives. This holistic approach sets it apart from other financial podcasts, acknowledging the intersections between our personal finances with our mental wellbeing. In contextualising financial literacy in this way, *The One Up Project* not only provides practical advice, especially useful to a student audience, but allows us to understand our relationship with money in a more comprehensive way.



Interview With Sarah Kelsey

How would you describe The One Up Project?

The One Up Project is essentially a financial literacy and self development podcast. The general scope of what we focus on is everything you were never taught in school but should have been. So that started with my main passion, which is financial literacy, but now we are broadening out into general self development, physical and mental health topics as well, and hoping to get more broad as we go along, whilst keeping the main focus on financial literacy.

Why did you choose the podcast format to deliver your message?

I love that question. It is a very specific reason as to why. With a podcast, you can multitask. You can be listening to a podcast and cleaning your room, or listening to a podcast and

walking, shopping, or doing anything. Whereas I felt with a Youtube video, for example, you had to be zoned in on that video; though there is a lot of entertainment value in a video, you want to be watching it and engaged the whole time. Whereas a podcast, you can have it as a background noise, where you are picking up little bits of information as you are listening.

I was pleasantly surprised how you integrated your personal experiences with your advice. Was this something you deliberately planned to explore when creating the show?

It was definitely my intention from the start. Another big part of what the podcast is trying to do is to explain those topics in an easy to understand, non-intimidating way. I really wanted it to be a safe space, where people felt they could talk about money and it wouldn't be taboo, but also where people could actually enjoy listening to money related topics. Talking about budgeting and mortgages can be extremely tiring and draining. It's why so many people procrastinate dealing with their own finances. I really wanted this platform to be entertaining in a way where we could joke around and explain things in a casual way. I wanted to lighten up those topics as much as possible.

How has producing over the lockdown periods changed your content and outlook to podcasting?

I feel like I started at a perfect time. I didn't know what was going to happen but in a way the lockdown definitely grew my audience. People had more time and wanted to use it to upskill and improve in different areas in their lives and change their personal situation. I was able to focus a lot more on my content as I was also working at home, so I was able to do the podcast a lot more. It did become harder doing interviews, obviously, having to do them online, as I prefer doing the episodes in person so you can really sense the authentic connection of the two people talking.

Where do you see The One Up Project going in the future?

Everytime I get asked this I'm like "I have no idea"... I do know, but I get scared of saying my own goals. Where do I see it going? ... I see it growing into a huge popular resource for young people in New Zealand and Australia to learn from and to feel empowered to take control of their own lives. Practically I see that extending into more webinars, and events, and hopefully a bigger stronger platform where people can get personalised content for their situation. Ultimately just growing it to reach as many people as possible to feel in control of their own life, to stop living week to week, paycheck to paycheck, and actually start living for what they enjoy, love, and want to do.

For University students looking for a creative outlet, podcasting seems like a low-cost medium for them to share their ideas. What advice would you give to anyone who wanted to start a podcast?

Definitely. It is so low cost, and definitely start a podcast if you have an idea that you feel like others would benefit from or resonate with. My main advice would be: don't get caught up in feeling like you have the best gear. My mics were \$300 for 2, and you can get ones for even cheaper, just as good as the thousands dollar sets people use. Just get started, start with your message and purpose of what you want to get across and roll with it.

People definitely think that there are too many podcasts out there already and think it is too saturated... but it's definitely not. Though many are starting podcasts, not that many people are staying consistent. If you are someone who can stay consistent with your content and have a real passion for what you're talking about, you'll be successful. In saying that, if you just want to start a podcast with your mates and have a laugh and chat about what you did on the weekend and make that your passion project, I would say 100% go ahead. It's so much fun and a great way to chat through your thoughts.

Check Sarah out on instagram @ [theoneupproject](#) and on Spotify or Apple Podcasts.

Accessing Abortion

A run-down of the new Safe Areas Bill

BRONWYN WILDE

CW: MENTIONS ABORTION, SEXUAL ASSAULT.

The Equal Justice Project is a Pro Bono charity at the University of Auckland Law School that applies law students' legal training and knowledge to promote social equality, inclusivity and access to justice in the local and wider community. Bronwyn Wilde, Co-Manager of the EJP Communications Team writes about the Contraception, Sterilisation, and Abortion (Safe Areas) Amendment Bill which the charity recently submitted in favour of.

Whether it be outside the hospital or the Countdown on Dominion Road, you've no doubt seen pro-life protestors before. Their confronting signboards' graphic photographs are distressing to behold, even for the general public. Now imagine how it must feel for those who are the direct targets of these guilt-based tactics.

Currently the only available response to these protestors has been to hold counter-protests.

Their confronting signboards' graphic photographs are distressing to behold, even for the general public. Now imagine how it must feel for those who are the direct targets of these guilt-based tactics.

A recent example on TikTok included people filming pro-life protestors with comedic commentary such as rating their outfits.¹ While entertaining, such strategies are probably not effective long-term solutions. Fortunately, a Bill is currently going through Parliament which would create safe areas around abortion facilities.

Let me be abundantly clear: abortion is legal in New Zealand. It is no longer up for debate whether these women should be able to exercise their right to choose. Parliament has affirmed that this is a legal and human right.² However, the presence of pro-life protestors outside clinics is obstructing some women's ability to exercise that right. This Bill is important to ensure that accessing an abortion is possible not only in theory, but in practice.

This Bill would create safe areas of up to 150 metres around abortion facilities. Within these areas it would be illegal to "intimidate, obstruct, visually record, or interfere or communicate with" a protected person in a way that would reasonably cause them emotional distress. A "protected person" includes anyone accessing or providing abortion services. Breach these provisions, and you could be subject to a fine of \$1,000.

Craccum spoke to Violet, a young woman who has had an abortion—making her part of the estimated one in four Kiwi women who have had an abortion. Violet spoke to us about how relieved and emotional the Bill made her. "Put simply, a woman does not deserve to be harassed or discriminated against for making an informed medical decision that is best for her body, her mind and her future."*

Protestors target already vulnerable

"Put simply, a woman does not deserve to be harassed or discriminated against for making an informed medical decision that is best for her body, her mind and her future."

individuals with guilt, manipulation or bullying tactics which impinge on the right to choose, medical autonomy, and accessibility. What's more: it's not even effective. Few women regret their abortions, and patients rarely change their minds.³ All these tactics achieve is creating unnecessary mental and emotional distress for individuals who are already in a fragile state of mind.

Some protestors defend their actions, saying it is important that these individuals have the opportunity to hear about the alternatives to abortion. Firstly, for some individuals, such as survivors of sexual assault, there are no real alternatives. As for others trying to access abortion, do you seriously think someone considering abortion has not already painstakingly weighed up the alternatives over and over in their own head?

Also, individuals would have the opportunity to hear an unbiased account of all these alternatives from the trained medical staff, if

¹ @loveurmother and #christok on TikTok.

² Abortion Legislation Bill 2019.

³ Ariana Eunjung Cha "Five years on, most women don't regret their abortions – study" New Zealand Herald (New Zealand, 14 Jan 2020).

This is not a revolutionary concept. Safe areas are actually common in other parts of the world, like Canada and Australia. New Zealand is not going out on a limb, we are merely following the status quo of similar jurisdictions.

only they could *get in the door of the facility*.

Having spoken to some of these protestors, Violet notes that they aren't necessarily interested in the health of the mother and child. They know little about abortion and are often spreading blatant misinformation about termination timelines and biology. These tactics are not genuinely aimed at informing, they are aimed at scaring women out of even making it out of their car.

Violet spoke about how she once spent a day occupying the space in front of the hospital where pro-life protestors would usually stand, holding signs. She said "multiple people approached my friends and I and thanked us... it became clear that these 'protesters' had done well at intimidating and traumatising multiple people in the wider community over an extended period of time."

"Abortion already is both [intimidating and traumatising], without it being exacerbated by people who don't know you, your story, your circumstances or your body."

So maybe you're thinking, hold up, but don't we already have a bunch of offences for harassment that could cover this behaviour? What makes this offence different is it pays particular attention to the effect of the behaviour on a vulnerable "protected person". Also, by naming this explicitly as an

offence, Parliament is actively denouncing this behaviour and showing its support for women, further destigmatising abortion in New Zealand.

This is not a revolutionary concept. Safe areas are actually common in other parts of the world, like Canada and Australia. New Zealand is not going out on a limb, we are merely following the status quo of similar jurisdictions.

Interestingly, safe areas were actually included in the original version of the Abortion Legislation Act which was passed in 2019. However, due to some behind-the-scenes action by David Seymour and a confusing procedural mix up at the final vote in Parliament, safe areas were removed. That's right, because of a mere technicality, women have had to continue to endure these protests for the past two years.

But wait a minute, why is David "I-love-freedom" Seymour opposed to women exercising their freedom to choose? As is often the case, two rights are at conflict here—the right to choose, and the right to freedom of expression.

The concerns around limiting freedom of expression mainly stem from the inclusion of the word "communicating" in the Bill. Some are worried that this wording is too broad, and sets a dangerous precedent going forward about the Government limiting what people can and can't say. Pretty much, in Seymour's view, this is a slippery slope to an Orwellian dystopia. But is that really true? Similar laws in Australia were found to not be a breach of freedom of expression by the country's highest court.

The point of freedom of expression is to protect individuals from having their political views censored by the state. Pro-life protestors are still more than able to express their views outside the 150m boundary of a safe area, in public places, or on the steps of Parliament. They can lobby Parliament, write petitions and submit on Bills.

Freedom of expression is not intended to protect someone's ability to harass and block vulnerable individuals from accessing their healthcare. Or, as Violet says, "their right to harass people based on their beliefs does not trump my right to bodily autonomy".

The Bill is now before the Justice Select Committee, where we will see if any changes are made to the wording. Regardless, with 100 MPs voting in Favour of the Bill at its first reading, and only 15 against, it is likely that safe areas will soon be part of New Zealand law.

Violet hopes this will make a lot of women "feel braver, safer, and carry less guilt about a decision they're ultimately making for themselves".

**name changed for anonymity*

Freedom of expression is not intended to protect someone's ability to harass and block vulnerable individuals from accessing their healthcare. Or, as Violet says, "their right to harass people based on their beliefs does not trump my right to bodily autonomy".





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Health and Safety at UoA

Are you working safe?



BRIAN GU

The University isn't a very pleasant place to work.

Between the significant construction, busy main roads, and lack of table spaces, navigating the University is a hassle, and one we don't really question enough as students. Why is it easier to complete the *Puzzling World* maze in Wanaka than it is to find the University's accessibility route? Or why is it that Engineering have a new quarter-billion-dollar building, yet they couldn't fork out a few more grand to put in some fucking tables?

This is an issue that was keenly dissected by our team in a recent editorial meeting in the AUSA boardroom. Why weren't we in our regular office, you ask? Good question. We found ourselves barely hearing each other over the constant jackhammering in the nearby construction, which—frighteningly—manages to actually shake the Student Union building. Another nuisance to add to the list.

Having recently been unanimously voted in as *Craccum's* official Health and Safety Representative (because no-one else wanted the role), I have taken it upon myself to conduct totally illegitimate enquiries into whether the University is a safe workplace for all.

TLDR: I'm gonna have a 1000-word bitch about things the University could improve about the campus.

Road Safety

I'd feel safer using power tools unsupervised than I would crossing the new set of traffic lights on upper Grafton Road, outside OGB.

Now that statement could be interpreted in one of two ways. The first is that after four years of a professional Engineering degree, I'm still too incompetent to use power tools. Let's put it this way: the other day, I managed to drill in 8 screws with a power screwdriver—the sad part is it took me half an hour.

Perhaps it's that same lack of intelligence that has led to me nearly being hit three times crossing that road. However, it's hardly my fault that cars zoom through the red light like it's not even there. Perhaps it's the steep incline of the road, the fact that the lights were recently installed, or maybe the late Prince Phillip is piloting every vehicle that passes through. Whatever it is, some people look like

they need their license revoked.

Elsewhere, it's the same story. With our campus being centred around a busy city road, it is prone to many of the hazards that arise from traffic. It's like live-action *Crossy Road* on upper Symonds Street, while meanwhile at the Princes St lights, more students seem to cross on red than green. It surely can't get any better being a cyclist, where poor driving must be more frustrating than the lack of plot progression on *Shortland Street*.

Ultimately, the lack of concentration in pedestrians and motorists doesn't spell good news. Perhaps the underpass network should be expanded. This one gets rated a 'not safe' from me.

Noise

Tagline: "when all you wanted was a pool, but what you got was a headache..."

The massive new rec centre construction site really seems to be the bane of our existence. With the amount of noise-to-work ratio, you'd think they were reshooting "Work from Home" by **Fifth Harmony ft. Ty Dolla \$ign** or something. In fact, that's where you should be instead of heading to Kate Edger as a result of the noise.

Meanwhile, across the University, the Māori and Pasifika schools are disrupted by HSB being torn down mere metres away. The fact they persist with the noise, as well as dust and constant worker traffic is commendable. It's quite ridiculous that someone decided it was a good idea to break ground on half the University at once.

With our central student spaces already being old and decrepit, surely it wouldn't do good for construction noise to further disincentivise hanging around the quad, for instance. But more worryingly, if noise pollution is reducing the number of spaces available that are suitable for quiet study, better facilities should be provided to current students.

Craccum have requested a response from the University about whether noise pollution has been tested and complies with *Worksafe* recommended levels. As of print, we have yet to receive a response. In the meantime, the noise pollution gets a 'not safe' rating from me.

Dodgy Spaces

Now, this is quite a curious phenomenon I've noticed because of the increasing

construction. The University has opted for a rudimentary fix to accessibility issues, which has led to a lot of dodgy spaces popping up around campus.

Most notably, a long and windy container alley has been erected that circumnavigates the Science building. I honestly shudder to think what happens in there at night-time, but if I were conducting illicit activity, that's where I'd go. Obviously, that's not something that would happen in my capacity as Health and Safety representative though, definitely.

Another similar installation is the curious Kate Edger walkway, where you used to be able to peer in on the Campus Life team. I'm glad to see they've had screens installed though for some privacy.

This one gets a 'dodgy' and 'avoid if you can' rating from me.

Suitable Workspaces

Searching for a free table around the Engineering building is like waiting for Marvel to release *Black Widow*, or waiting for the University to replace Maidment theatre - okay, perhaps not *that* futile.

Surely though, if you're going to advertise your new building as providing three hectares of new City Campus floor space, you'd at least tap the ball in and provide some chairs and tables to render it usable.

If you're really in a struggle, there are stairs you can sit on in the atrium end of the building. Kindly, some cushions have been provided to apologise in advance for the back pain caused.

While it is not a pressing concern for health and safety, it is nice for productivity and encouraging healthy working habits, so I'd give this one a 'could be better'.

Conclusion

Like anyone, students should be provided a safe and suitable work environment. Hopefully, this article sheds some light on areas where the University leaves questions unanswered when it comes to workplace safety.

Otherwise, I've probably just let the title of Health and Safety representative get to my head a little.

Yeah, it'll be that actually.

Reviews.



LIVE FIREBIRD

BLAKE SCANLEN

The NZSO's *FIREBIRD* programme finally made its way to Auckland on Friday the 24th of April having toured the North Island. The concert featured three fantastic works led by Conductor Hamish McKeich.

New Zealand-Canadian composer **Juliet Palmer's** *Buzzard* was a welcome introduction. Written for a concert including **Stravinsky's** *The Firebird* and **Tchaikovsky's** *Swan Lake*, the piece took elements from each by extrapolating and subverting them. Palmer used the Tchaikovsky waltz swing and the driving rhythms of Stravinsky to create jolty yet fluid orchestral textures with a modern twist.

Next, Mozart's *Piano Concerto No. 23* was played by pianist **Diedre Irons**. Playing quick runs with ease, Irons was complemented fittingly by orchestral interludes from the diminished ensemble. The sublime cadenza gave Irons a chance to display virtuosic skill and understanding of the repertoire which impressed an appreciative audience. Whilst Mozart isn't my cup of tea, one must appreciate the craftsmanship put into this performance taking care of historical practice considerations.

Following the interval was the highlight, Stravinsky's *The Firebird*. Written for the ballet in 1910, this was his first major commission so musically it's less adventurous than its predecessors such as *The Rite of Spring*. This luscious piece was played brilliantly by the orchestra whose harmonies and rhythms were elegant and rich. The solos, particularly the famous bassoon solo, were divine and treated to a well-earned applause. The forte moments were tremendous and filled the town hall to great effect.

An eclectic programme enjoyed by a lively Auckland audience.



MUSIC DEJA VU OLIVIA RODRIGO

GABBIE DE BARON

This sophomore single of **Olivia Rodrigo** is very much a sequel to *driver's license*, the heartbreak anthem that shocked all the radios and malls last January (lol). The 18 year-old got her rising-role as the lead in Disney+'s *High School Musical: The Musical: The Series*. Not that I have no life or anything, but I was digging through Twitter and apparently/ allegedly/interestingly... *driver's license* is about Rodrigo's HSM co-star **Joshua Bassett**. He traded her in for another Disney star... but we won't drop any names here, Sabri- just kidding, mates!

In comparison to *driver's license's* eager yearning, *deja vu* takes a turn to the anger stage of grief. It discusses the post-relationship blues of seeing your 'once-was' living your same relationship but with another person. Hence, "do you get déjà vu when she's with you?". The most striking thing about the song is how much Rodrigo's logic and intent in her practice has evolved, considering it's only the second song. Her writing style is inseparable from her production! It's a disguised daydream; it starts off with a gentle piano looped in the background and Rodrigo's clean voice at the center. As the heavy drops accompany a ringing electric guitar, the vivid bleakness grows apparent. There are several backing vocals that come from all directions. They blare and scream, and the sounds are linear to the pain that surrounds the words. There's so much manipulation and madness in the poetry, and it just makes you go "damn who hurt her?" (she's a pisces) but honestly, well fucking played, Olivia.

"10/10 go you Olivia! Leave that useless J'shua behind!"



FILM MORTAL KOMBAT DIR. SIMON MCQUOID

JAY ALEXANDER

Bloody, but not brutal, the new release *Mortal Kombat* is far from a flawless victory. Video game movies are rarely worth your time, but the tale of an MMA fighter being thrown into the mystical fighting competition was met with much anticipation. It would've been the dream to see the violent and fun characters dish it out, yet this film tells you to just keep dreaming. This is a rushed and messy movie that is not worthy of the original source, nor your precious two hours of free time. The movie's action is sparse and full of super quick cuts that are annoying and headache-inducing. None of the style matches the hyper-violence on screen, let alone make the characters feel dimensional. We are shown bland, overly quippy renditions of fan-favourite characters and, strangely, adapt a super boring new character as the hero. There's a real confusion in whether the movie wants to play with the fan's expectations or introduce a new take on the source material, which is the movie's biggest flaw. It's sad to see yet another limp attempt to start a universe of movies. *Mortal Kombat* feels so rushed and tensionless and merely becomes an extended trailer for its sequel. We're left in a limbo of what the point for this new movie is and with the exasperating action and characters, there's really no fight worth seeing in this unfortunate movie.

"Two out of ten, at least Scorpion rules."



Single Asian Female



FLORA XIE

If you're not laughing, you're crying.

That's what Pearl (**Kat Tsz Hung**) said in the second half of *Single Asian Female*, a play directed by **Cassandra Tse**, and she was pretty spot-on.

From the bright decorative lighting, to the sound of Chinese songs being played in the background, the set of the play draws you in like a warm and welcoming Chinese restaurant that's bustling on a cold Autumn evening. For me, hearing the Chinese songs took me back to my childhood, when that was all that my parents would listen to.

Single Asian Female is a show that centres on a single mother and her two daughters. It tells an immensely witty yet touching tale of romance, cultural identity, and the importance of family. It's a tale that is all too familiar, but just not one that has often been depicted in various forms of art.

As a Chinese female, it's a strange feeling to see main characters who not only look like me, but also tell a story similar to my own, on

stage. It felt like someone cracked me open and started reading me out loud to a crowd of several hundreds. To watch a play like this felt like a breath of fresh air in a muggy room.

In Western media, there is no shortage of depictions of Asian women as submissive characters, which is why this play felt all the more important. Pearl constantly reaffirms herself as a strong woman, and Kat Tsz Hung's portrayal of her as a single mother reminds me of my own immigrant mother and her unfaltering strength. These stories hit different when they're told by Chinese women because they understand us, all of the Chinese women in the audience. **Michelle Law**, the playwright, does a brilliant job of capturing the often strained relationship between a mother and her daughter, and the hopeless desire to be more 'white,' in her script. But it's really the phenomenal performances of Kat Tsz Hung, **Xana Tang**, and **Bridget Wong** as the three leading women that brings this to life.

What I love about this piece is that it doesn't focus solely on the fact that all three of these women are single, nor does it spend

the majority of its time trying to find them a romantic interest. It embraces sexuality and freedom in singlehood, and also depicts the trials and tribulations of the dating world that are particular to Asian women. However, through all that, the relationship that is emphasised is the familial one between the three women, and that's so refreshing to see. Despite the screaming matches between them and Pearl's controlling tendencies, they're there for each other. Zoe (Xana Tang) and Mei (Bridget Wong), much like myself and perhaps many other Chinese daughters, come to realise that everything that their mother does is ultimately done out of love, even if it doesn't appear to be that way on the surface.

I now understand why this show got such glowing reviews. Not only does it keep you entertained for its entire run, but this is also a play that leaves you feeling simultaneously more empowered and more vulnerable than ever. It left me proud to call myself a single Asian female, because none of those three words should ever be made out to be deficits.

A Panorama of Spring

Interview with the creators of *A Clear Dawn: New Asian Voices from Aotearoa New Zealand*



HANNA LU

Some books read like confrontation. Others caress with familiarity. The experience of *A Clear Dawn*—the first-ever anthology of Asian New Zealand creative writing, published this week—feels like walking through a door bracing for a harsh spotlight on a cold stage and seeing, instead, an already-bustling room full of welcoming faces with no expectations of performance.

To call this a 'landmark' anthology, as reviewer and poet Chris Price writes, is no overstatement. Wide-ranging in genre, subject matter, and contributor demographic, the book is remarkable not only because of its quality but also because of the shift it reflects. Alison Wong, co-editor, says "Until now, many of our writers have often been writing and being published 'on the margins'. It's wonderful for them to get a bigger mainstream readership." Hoping for a reconfiguration of the place of Asian New Zealand writers in the national literature: "I don't mean assimilation. We all have our unique voices. But I hope we will no longer be 'other'."

Readers are ready for the anthology. The literary world is constructed in negotiation with the physical one—both are changing—and despite the very real risk of misinterpretation, I see an audience more capable of understanding, hungry for something substantial. No more exoticism! No more revelations about Asian complexity, which should be a given.

I grew up with secrecy, shame and silence, coming from an unconventional family—my dad is polygamous; he's got three wives.

In this interview, writers Sherry Zhang, Anuja Mitra and Aiwa Pooamorn talk more about the topics of their anthology contributions and how they see and navigate community—insights into the landscape of the anthology's release. To read their poems and prose, as well as that of the 72 other contributors, pick the book up on Thursday.

Sherry—I love the part near the end of your poem on your Grandmother's old acting troupe. Tell me about your conversations with (or observations of) those of their generation.

SZ: I recently just came off tour producing a documentary theatre show on Chinese identity in Dunedin, where I translated and discussed questions around belonging and home with a group of old Chinese aunties and uncles. They are some of the wittiest, spiciest, most perceptive, and most intelligent group of people you'll ever meet.

But they were also very nervous to understand where we got our funding, who we work for, and if we have a political agenda. I don't blame them; they've grown up in a political system where saying the wrong thing can be distressing. They shared stories of political unrest in their hometowns, frustrations with gender roles, experiences of racism in New Zealand. But the concept of face is extremely important, and they were uncomfortable with sharing this publicly. Many are very careful of never wanting to appear ungrateful or like they're complaining.

Relatedly, on the concept of face: in Aiwa's third poem she writes "I air out my dirty laundry poetry". Aiwa and Sherry—what are your own relationships to secrecy, shame and silence? How do you decide what to say and what to hold back?

AP: I reveal very intimate details of my personal life in my poems—I am something of an exhibitionist, I don't hold back. Though, maybe I should. I grew up with secrecy, shame and silence, coming from

On one hand, I get mouthy and will pick fights with racist uncles at the dinner table without a second thought. But I've also hid my struggles with mental health for years from my family.

an unconventional family—my dad is polygamous; he's got three wives.

SZ: I'm well versed in the performance of face. On one hand, I get mouthy and will pick fights with racist uncles at the dinner table without a second thought. But I've also hid my struggles with mental health for years from my family. We've started to have more open conversations around this in the last few years, and they've become a lot more understanding. But it's taken a lot of teeth pulling, tears, bitten angry words, time and distance.

There are some things I still struggle to come to terms with: the shame, secrecy and silence that comes with being queer in a conservative/homophobic family. It is what it is. And I'm still on my journey. I don't see it as a weakness to picking your battles, and to hold back who you share to for personal safety. I'll send the articles I get published on The Herald to the family Wechat. My poetry isn't making an appearance.

Has your approach to political disagreement with family you love changed over the years?

You can try your best to educate your folks. They also exist in an ecosystem of the media they consume, and the opinions of friends and family.

SZ: I think I'm less aggressive in my approach and have an appreciation of how long and tiring it can be to change someone's opinion. Especially if they've grown up in a system so different to your own.

You can try your best to educate your folks. They also exist in an ecosystem of the media they consume, and the opinions of friends and family. My mother listens to a lot of Chinese-New Zealand radio, and it's not the most sophisticated when it comes to understanding of colonisation and te Tiriti. But I guess that's the same for any talk-back radio station. And they are trying to learn! I see that they're trying to read more, my mother's always borrowing books and magazines from the library. My father's doing his thing on WeChat... I don't know how great the fact-checking is on that platform. Next stop: taking my parents to an Asians Supporting Tino Rangatiratanga meeting?

Anuja—You're the co-founder of *Oscen*, a theatre reviewer and one of the “new mavens” described by the editors in the book's introduction. Now, in your busy schedule, what drives you to keep finding the time to write?

AM: I'm a big fan of 'The New Mavens' as a potential band name (despite my profound lack of musical ability). To answer your question, though, it's definitely something I'm still puzzling over now I'm working full-time. Many creatives I know are natural hard-workers and perfectionists, which manifests in a lot of productivity-pressure and guilt when they're unable to find the time or headspace to write. Though I often lament that writing is in fact a deeply unrelaxing 'hobby', I couldn't really imagine ceasing to scribble in my notebook or not littering my iPhone notes app with lousy metaphors while I'm on the bus. As

someone who loves words, it's satisfying to create something with them for myself, and it's nice when it gets read or heard by others too! Poetry readings have been a great way to remind myself to keep writing and sharing work. Having friends who write, whether it be poems or fiction or play scripts, is also motivating and I'm grateful for the inspiring conversations I can have with those friends.

The beginning of 'The Ivory House' (a house that “has forgotten to be a home”) reminds me of the hostile, consuming environments of Shirley Jackson's writing. I know you've read her work too and I hope you don't mind the comparison, but I am interested in how rather than the horror of her endings, your story moves towards a kind of tentative warmth. Could you speak to that?

AM: Since I do love 19th and 20th century Gothic literature and especially the elements of psychology, character study and atmosphere in Gothic fiction, I wouldn't be surprised if that influence crept into 'The Ivory House'. One of the things I was experimenting with was the blurring of boundaries and mingling of opposites, so within the 'house' the narrator feels both unsettled and comforted by its walls; isolated from others, and yet tied to them through these unspoken relationships. I would say there is a sense of both warmth and distance running throughout the story, though at the end it definitely does move from exile to the possibility of connection, the possibility of community.

Aiwa and Sherry—You're both also thinking about and fostering community in your respective fields: Aiwa (and Gemishka Chetty)'s *Creative Creatures* arts collective, theatre and workshops; Sherry's journalism, newly-created *The Agenda Zine* and the aforementioned tour with documentary theatre show *OTHER [chinese]*. What's important to you about creating these communities, and what has the experience been like?

AP: The experience has been challenging at times—we've had to change who we let in to join our discussions—but it's important to us to create a space to unpack collective trauma and build solidarity.

SZ: It's been a learning curve of separating the topics I want us to focus on and what the community needs. And to remove myself and ego. We can shape and shift the discussion in these workshops, but ultimately, it's an act

of co-creation, [and] the people we meet shaping the themes we explore. These participants aren't actors. Many of them have never been on stage. We've really just pulled them from the community through word-of-mouth, flyer drops in yum-cha restaurants, community group outreach and 'yes, please bring your cousin along!'

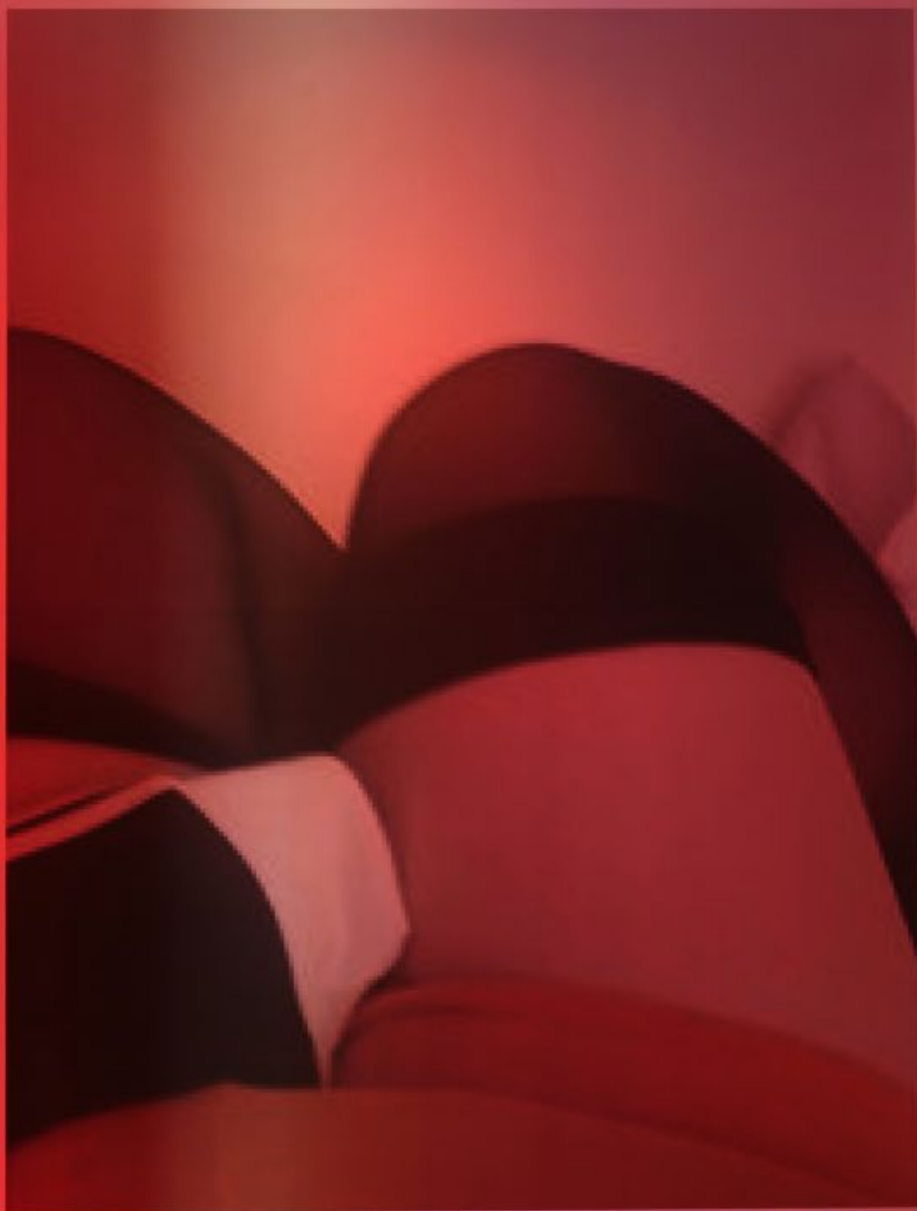
There have been tensions because being Chinese isn't a singular thing. There is disagreement and there are differences, and it's important for us to ensure one perspective isn't overpowering another.

***A Clear Dawn: New Asian Voices from Aotearoa New Zealand*, edited by Alison Wong and Paula Morris, is released on Thursday the 13th of May 2021 by Auckland University Press.**

Attend the free launch event as part of the Auckland Writers Festival on Saturday the 15th of May, 5:00pm-6:00pm at the Balcony Bar, Level Five, Aotea Centre, with selected readings and a complimentary glass of wine.

Article title from 'A Clear Dawn' by Li Po/Li Bai (李白), a Tang-dynasty poem from which the anthology takes its name, translated by Ya-Wen Ho.

One of the things I was experimenting with was the blurring of boundaries and mingling of opposites, so within the 'house' the narrator feels both unsettled and comforted by its walls: isolated from others, and yet tied to them through these unspoken relationships.



Love in the Time of Social Media

Exhibition Review: I Think You Like Me, But I've Been Wrong About These Things Before



FLORENCE WU

The meta-installation *I Think You Like Me, But I've Been Wrong About These Things Before* at Artspace Aotearoa on Karangahape Road is the first major solo exhibition of Tāmaki Makaurau-based artist Natasha Matila-Smith (Ngāti Kahungunu, Ngāti Hine, Samoan, and Pākehā).

Tucked away from the constant buzz of Karangahape Road, visitors are gently greeted by two half-transparent, red plastic curtains at the entrance of the gallery. Peeling them apart, you enter a modest space flooded with pink and blue lights. The objects and images are comfortably spaced out, with plenty of negative space for the viewers to roam or stand and ponder.

I Think You Like Me explores body image, validation, and sex in the context of social media. By emulating her bedroom space, the installation is a literal and metaphysical realisation of Matila-Smith's most personal insecurities. According to her artist statement,

Through the installation, Matila-Smith shares her own experiences of loneliness, body shaming, and social-media anxieties as a WOC and an indigenous artist, giving insight into how the cultural and social dispossession of ethnic minorities in real life is reiterated in their digital lives.

the show is inspired by her "monotonous hours scrolling through the internet while laying in bed." Through the installation, Matila-Smith shares her own experiences of loneliness, body shaming, and social-media anxieties as a WOC and an indigenous artist, giving insight into how the cultural and social dispossession of ethnic minorities in real life is reiterated in their digital lives.

Matila-Smith graduated from Elam School of Fine Arts in 2014 and now lives and works in Tāmaki Makaurau. Her work fuses text and imagery. Apart from her works of art, she has also written extensively on the issues of online interconnectivity, gender, indigenous identity, and body positivity.

"As a title, *I Think You Like Me, But I've Been Wrong About These Things Before* perfectly encapsulates this contemporary condition of second-guessing oneself whilst acknowledging the wider societal influences that cause us to doubt our own decision making," said Matila-Smith.

Inside the gallery space, poster-like selfies of her feminine body parts are supplemented by a series of apologetic, or timid texts. A gentle pastel tone is echoed throughout the installation with its lighting, photography, and text, creating intimacy and sensuality that are immediately disarming.

"Tell me I'm pretty," is written across a part of the exhibition.

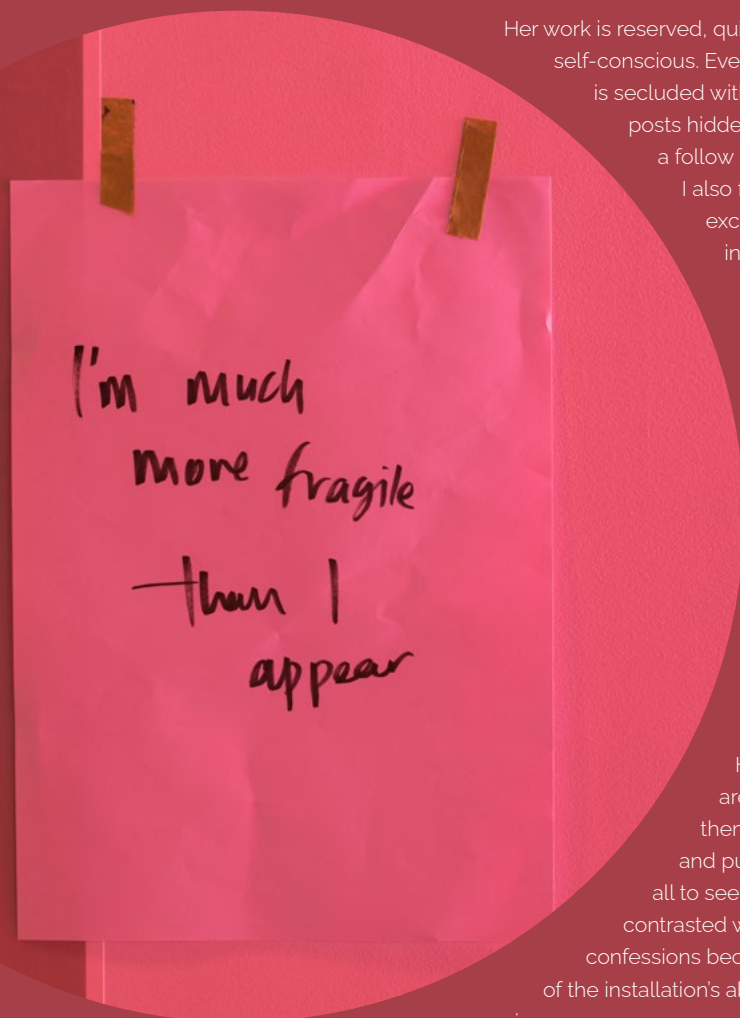
The words are printed onto the wall in a muted grey, such that one has to move real close to distinguish them. This muteness further contributes to the reserved and almost-apologetic tone of the exhibition.

As we fall deeper into the comfort of her



installation, placed in the centre of the space is a heart-shaped bed draped in blue microfleece blankets. On the bed lies an open MacBook, linking to a projected slideshow that rotates through a series of sentences. It is a classic teenage-bedroom setup that is, at the same time, reminiscent of an infant's crib or a mother's womb due to the warm hues.

The exhibition space is filled with curves - the curves of her body, the curves of the heart-shaped bed, the flows of crumpled fabric sheets. All the softness and shapelessness hug you from all sides in an almost-motherly embrace. "It's OK. I am vulnerable here. You can be vulnerable here too," promises the installation. Through her honest presentation of her own insecurities and the formal comfort of blankets and soft lights, Matila-Smith creates a safe space for the viewers to have self-examinations and confessions.



Her work is reserved, quiet, and consistently self-conscious. Even her online presence is secluded with her Instagram posts hidden behind the wall of a follow request. However, I also find Matila-Smith exceedingly courageous in her honesty. Set on one of the busiest streets of Auckland in a public gallery, *I Think You Like Me* extends a universal welcome to all. The more I contemplate the exhibition, the more I admire her bravery in displaying her insecurities to a most diverse public. Here is my heart, here are my feelings, I wear them bare on my sleeves and put them on display for all to see — the plain honesty contrasted with the fragility of her confessions become the essence of the installation's ability to move its viewers.

"Sorry I'm like this," another text, printed on the wall space between two large prints of Matila-Smith's thighs in black stockings, whispers.

Those soft words and bedroom selfies feel like snapshots of thoughts left unsaid between the hurried and hedonistic pursuit for validation on social media. By framing her insecurity alongside what could conventionally be seen as "Insta/Tinder sexting selfies" in an exhibition space, Matila-Smith gives solidity to these desires for connection and validation. The work captures a collective sense of disembodiment that characterises the digital life of a generation.

"As a shy person, my work arises from a sincere desire to connect with people and a frustration that I often can't achieve this using whatever 'social' tools I already possess," said Matila-Smith. "Through art, I am able to communicate this with an audience and have found that many people share my feelings of inadequacy and failure."

At first glance, I did find Matila-Smith shy.

"I'm much more fragile than I appear," confessed a scribbled note taped against a mirror selfie. In the selfie, Matila-Smith is pulling up a corner of her black dress to reveal a sneaky peek of her left thigh.

As personal as it is, Matila-Smith's experience of dispossession points to the social-political challenges that WOCs and indigenous populations face within the contemporary digital landscape. Online, discrimination and cultural hegemony are often conglomerated as people can type bullets while hiding behind a mask of anonymity. Matila-Smith's work informs us of disconnected WOC youths who struggle to navigate a digital world saturated with unrealistic expectations and over-glamourised personalities that are mostly White and Western. As a result, they end up stuck in the liminal loop of neglect and the hunt for validation.

I can't help but wonder: despite all the inclusivity tag-lines and body-positivity campaigns launched by popular brands and corporations, how much of that movement translated to concrete change for the ordinary WOC?

"I wanted people to understand what it's like from a personal level to be a fat WOC with everyday issues not relating to feelings of displacement. Of course, those feelings are there but I'm more than racial oppression..I'm also bodily and gender-related oppression," said Matila-Smith.

"Sometimes I find eating so tedious," echoed a string of blue-colored words under a slightly lighter blue background of the same hue.

Matila-Smith's works' honest, confessionalist quality directly juxtaposes the lack of it on social media platforms. Her honesty is contagious: the show invites us to ponder our own relationship with body shaming and cultural hegemony, as perpetrators, as victims, or both.

Yet, her work is not a head-on critic of social media.

"I'm having such a nice time I don't wanna ruin it," a final line of text stated quietly on the wall.

In an equally cautious manner, her installation also directs hope for social media to become a venue for earnest self-expression and human relationships. It reminds me of a quote from the TV show *BoJack Horseman*: "In this terrifying world, all we have are the connections that we make."

If social media as a medium does have the capacity for sincere connections, perhaps it can only be achieved through a deliberate soul searching, one confession at a time.

In an equally cautious manner, her installation also directs hope for social media to become a venue for earnest self-expression and human relationships.

What Has Thrifting Turned Into?

Lamenting the decline of a once-glorious time in poverty shopping.



NANCY GUO

SHADOWS
BAR & EATERY
CONTRIBUTOR OF THE WEEK

Can we all agree that the reply of "This? Oh I thrifted it" in response to an outfit compliment cannot be physically spoken without coming across as obnoxiously pretentious. This is also coming from someone that at one point in time lowkey also made it into a personality trait. I know it's not just me that has realised thrift culture has become progressively more unlikeable and problematic despite the fact that at its core it's pretty great! It's affordable—back in high school my friends and I could buy a couple of pretty cute pieces with our measly \$10 budget. It's ethical and great for the environment—buying second-hand clothing means less demand for big greedy fast-fashion retailers who exploit our earth's resources and their workers. Additionally, it gives you easy access to cool and one-of-a-kind pieces so you can live out your dreams of being that artsy indie main character who only dresses in vintage sundresses and big jackets that someone's dead grandpa wore in the '70s.

However, thrift culture has unfortunately evolved into a rather ostentatious activity that's honestly just become a subtle flex of the rich. It transformed from something poor people engaged in because they genuinely can't afford new clothing to the frivolous Saturday afternoon activity of Ponsonby girls. **Thrifting has become gentrified and I'm mad about it.**

K Road, a popular hub for op-shops amongst other things has become the new Commercial Bay shopping centre within the last couple of years. Its second-hand stores are either over-saturated with ratty and crusty Champion hoodies priced abominably at \$60 dollars and up (with those prices it makes more sense to just get the item new—at least then you're guaranteed your cute new piece won't have any weird holes or mysterious stains!) or desolate and empty because everything that's of acceptable quality has been bought out by rich teenagers with hundreds of dollars to burn.

So where exactly has all the good clothing gone? Surely they can't need *all* that clothing for themselves. Even though most of us only have two legs, some people apparently do need to own 39476 pairs of "vintage" wide-leg jeans in their collection. The other scary answer to this question is the emergence of a new trend—the re-selling of clothing online. Whether this is through Depop, Carousel, Facebook or Instagram, social media has become increasingly utilised by young adults to put their clothing up for sale to earn a bit of extra income on the side. It's also become an accessible platform for young shoppers to purchase clothing, shoes and accessories from local sellers.

Let me be clear—I think this new trend is amazing. It's such a great idea to be able to give the clothing that's just gathering dust in the back of their closet a new loving home and earn some extra coin on the side! Supporting these Instagram boutiques is a great way to reduce your fast-fashion consumption and support a friend/local business during the process. However, we can't ignore the increasing gentrification of pre-loved clothing—an issue that poses a huge problem for those that legitimately rely on second-hand stores to clothe themselves and their family. Not only have thrift store prices increased dramatically (on top of inflation) which have made clothing more and more inaccessible for low-income earners, but all the good quality items are being bought out by certain clothing resellers to later be sold online at a higher price for profit. Thanks for leaving the rest of us to fend off your unwanted scraps.

The majority of thrifters do not contribute to this problem as long as we keep our shopping habits reasonable and sustainable. It's just the select few that capitalise off the op-shop industry that has ultimately ruined it for the rest of us. Shopping second-hand has only become gentrified and pretentious because of our rising obsession with thrift culture and the increasing entanglement of fashion trends with vintage clothing. As much as I adore the undeniable charm of vintage finds, like a lot of other things in this world—moderation is key.

The purpose of this mildly-angsty-in-places opinion piece is not to shame clothing resellers or regular thrifters—that would be extremely hypocritical as someone that's partaken in both activities. What I hope will resonate is the message of being more considerate and mindful with your consumer habits—for our planet and for our people. Let's keep thrifting sustainable and accessible for everyone.

Little Astronaut

Try read this one in the same cadence and style as *Tiny Dancer!*



MIA AMANO

little Astronaut to be
inhabiting the earth
for five years.
Space enthusiast;
had always loved
rockets and ships
that flew high.
preferred them over
candies and sweets
as gifts and treats.

little Astronaut to be
had started questioning,
pondering, whether
he was alone
in this tiny, blue planet
dwelling among
dwarf stars,
that were bigger
than his entire existence
and everything he had
ever known.

little Astronaut to be
had learned that
the stars that shine
were made of
the same matter that
made him, and his family.

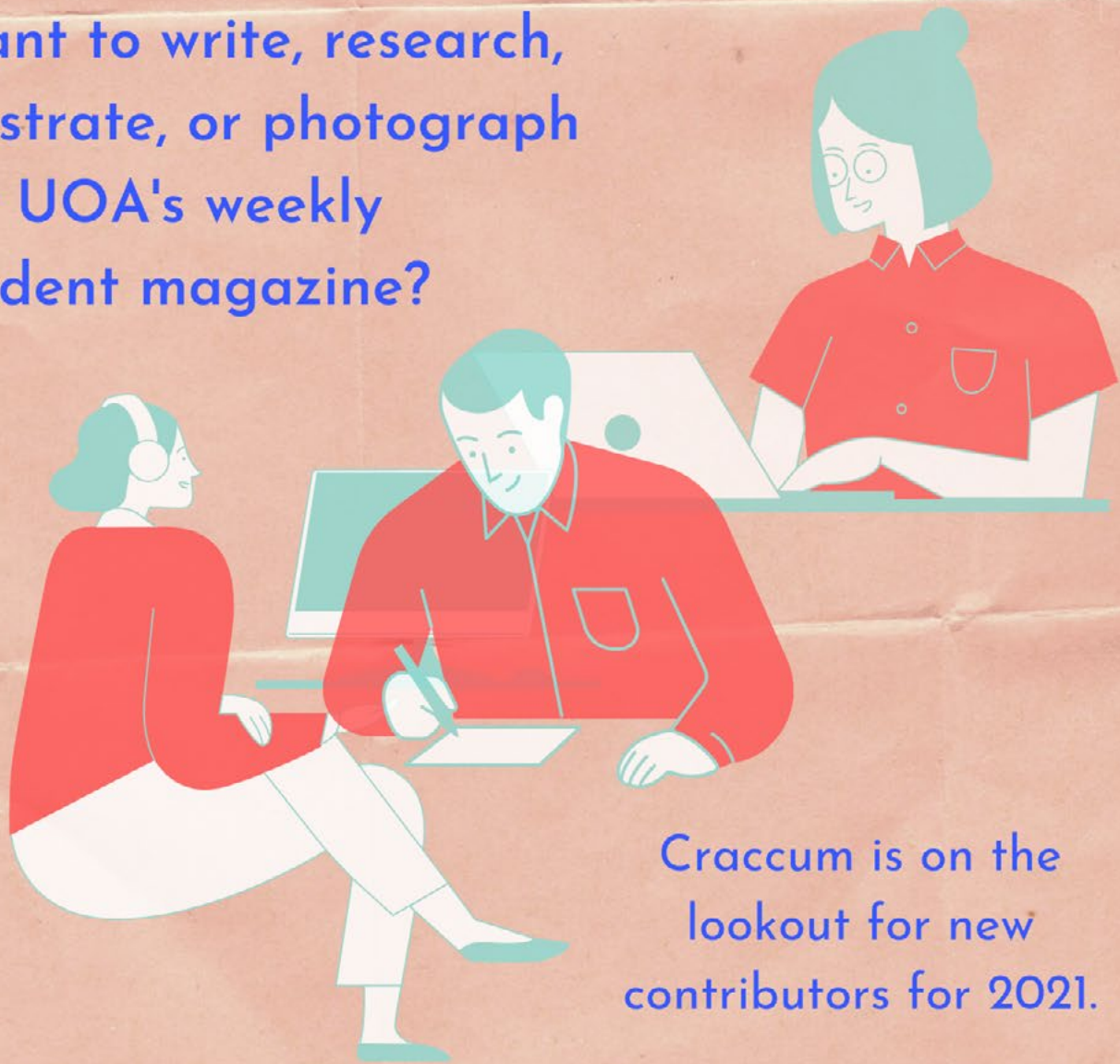
little Astronaut to be
was no longer 'to be'
for he already was
in outer space
observing supernovas;
the death of a star
it reminded him
of his dreams.

little Astronaut
had become one
with the stars,
for
from the stars he came,
and to the stars he went
back to be with
as one
just like how
it was meant
to be.



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Landlord's Weekly

Punished Edition

We at Landlord's Weekly are known for our cheery tone and our unbridled enthusiasm for showcasing those who put food on the nation's tables, and providing a cold house for them to develop bronchitis in. We've had a good few decades, and our magazine has reflected that. **But not any-fucking-more.** The barbarian savagery inflicted on the landlord these last two months... we have never seen such injustice, such systemic cruelty inflicted on New Zealand's most prosperous and therefore most important class. Genocidal intent has been declared on the Mum and Dad investor. But we at Landlord's Weekly will resist, and by God, we will survive.

The Mailbag: Letters & Corrections

Packing up for good,

My wife and I have made the sad decision to exit the game - with the incoming changes limiting our ability to increase rent to once a year, Margaret and I can no longer justify staying on the property ladder, and we will be selling our 17 properties in Maraetai over two months. While exiting the game will give us a \$64 million windfall to afford 12 months of SKY and a Herald subscription, we consider ourselves ruined.

Farewell,
John + Margaret

The night the lights went out in Onehunga,

My name is Barbara Longmead, and I am the legal communicator and interpreter for

Scott Covington, who has been suffering New Zealand's most severe case of locked-in syndrome following the confirmation from his accountant that he was liable for a \$7000 addition to his tax bill in 2022. Scott leveraged his entire reputation on the idea that he could retire on the existence of a single tenant, but that was not his best career idea. Upon realising this, he promptly suffered an intracerebral haemorrhage, and has only been able to communicate to Magic Talk via a complicated alphabet of eyelid movements ever since. Despite this considerable change, he remains in high spirits, and asks me to read every issue of *Landlord's Weekly* to him when they come out. He hopes to be able to raise rent prices with his own finger by 2024. Keep up the good fight, LW. Warmest regards,
Barbara Longmead

It's just unfair, mate

My property manager has always been good to me and my kids - when my daughter Cassie was recently bitten by a rat-king that had formed in our attic following seven years of being denied access to the heating systems, you know who was the first to call the ambulance? George. When Debbie developed mould poisoning from our shower within three days of moving in, you know who offered to get someone to scrub and sterilise the bathroom for one \$600 payment? George. That's what the bludgers of this fuckin' country don't get. George is my closest friend, he was my best man. It's an attack on our best folk, and if I ever see that horse-looking bitch in public, I'll give

her a choice word from my mate George, I tell you what. She'll fuckin' resign in disgrace.

Sincerely,
Anders Blakewood

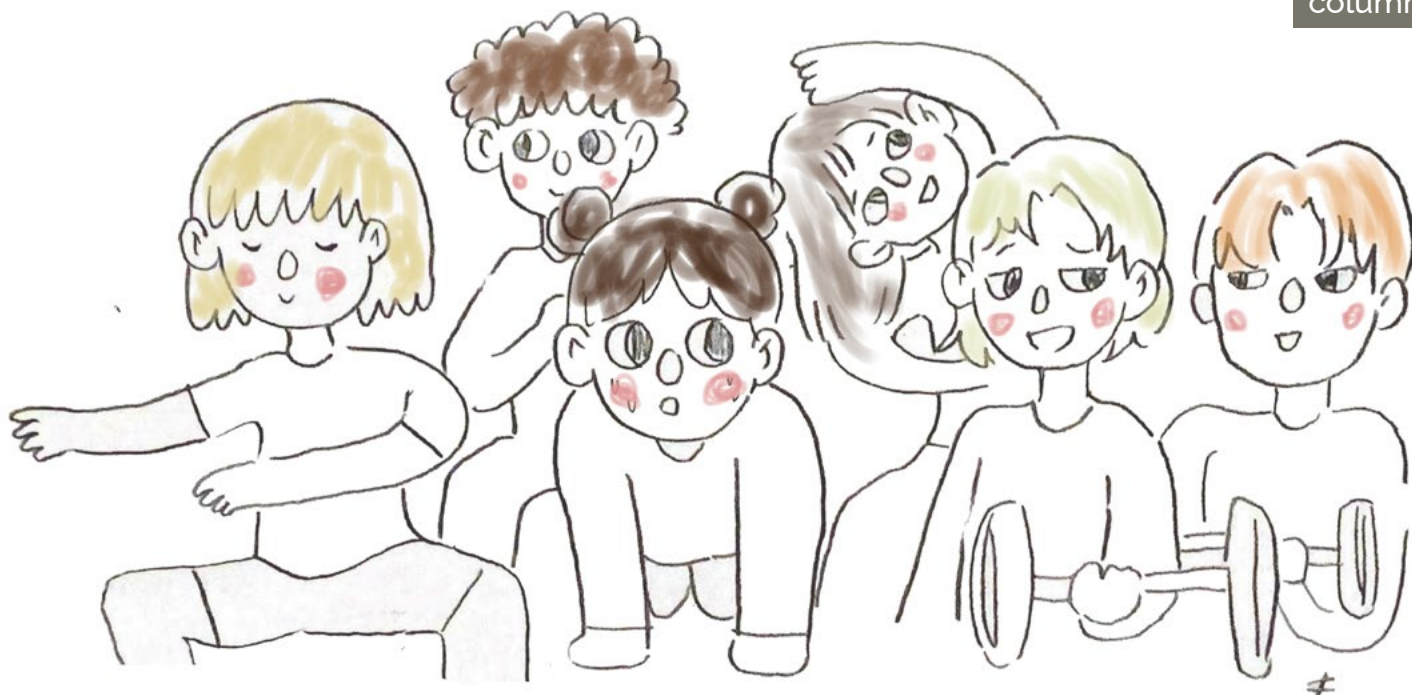
Quick Q+A

"Hey LW! Just one thing. New to this country - is it normal for my landlord to waive most of the expected costs for my long-term habitation of the property? Was not aware of this!" - Fawn Dreshwater

Hello, Fawn! No, this is unusual - but at LW, we think that's a really swell thing for your landlord to do. They should get in touch with us for a profile! :)

"If I am about to be visited by the government, and I cannot get in contact with my long-term landlord - who has not given permission for an unlawful inspection of their property - can I reasonably ask the government to wait until I am ready? Somewhat of an urgent question, to be honest. Cheers." - David Koresh

Thanks for the question, David! Unfortunately, we've had a bit of a backlog in our mailbox, so we hope we've gotten to your question in time. Nonetheless, there isn't much you can do, I'm afraid. While your landlord must provide - in writing, or an email approximate - at least 24 hours notice of an upcoming visitation to the property, government services need not abide by such requests. Hope this helps!



Sweat Drops

In which we compare Zumba instructors to upbeat canines.



MELANIE DUFF

Years of Jump Jam-induced anxiety from primary school PE class have left me rather averse to most dance fitness classes. I've diligently avoided Zumba (which seems to be rather prevalent in fundraisers, community events, and general group fitness centres) until the ripe old age of 24, when this past Monday I psyched myself up enough to take the plunge for the sake of you, dear reader.

Shawn, the very upbeat instructor (what Zumba instructor *doesn't* appear to be a personified golden retriever?) started off the class with a pep talk. "I love Zumba because it's more like a party than a workout! You're going to get sweaty, but you'll hardly notice you're exercising!" I have to admit that I'm a sucker for an inspirational speech, even when it's a bit cheesy.

The music started for the warm-up track and I realised I'd made a mistake in positioning myself where I did, near the back of the class and off to the side in an attempt to be inconspicuous. I had unknowingly stood directly below the speaker, which was turned up *just* loud enough to be uncomfortable. Also, there was an issue with the playback so throughout the whole class the music would cut out - not for long, only for a beat or two at a time, but long enough to be very irritating.

To his credit, Shawn (after a failed attempt to fix it) just went with the flow and tried to make it as non-disruptive as he could.

The first few songs were fairly easy to keep up with, and I managed to get up a bit of a sweat. Unfortunately, I found it a bit hard to see what was happening - this class was the busiest one yet, with around 40 people, and positioning my 5'3" self near the back wasn't a great move considering I'd never been to the class before and didn't know any of the moves. There was, however, a very enthusiastic older man standing in front of me who was clearly a regular and knew every song, so I could follow along with him when I couldn't see to pick up the instructor's footwork.

A few songs after the warmup, things started to get a bit tricky. The coordination between my limbs is mediocre at best (which was the opposite of useful when I was learning drums at high school) so I must have looked ridiculous, but there were enough people between me and the mirrors at the front of the room that I couldn't see myself looking ridiculous, and I was concentrating too hard to be self-conscious about it. Also, there were a lot of moves that involved twisting, and despite being 24, I have the knees of an average 40-year-old so I was pretty sore for

the next day or two.

Near the end of the class, Shawn decided that what the class needed was to watch each other attempt to dance. The group split down the middle, each half faced each other, and we continued to try our best to not trip over our own feet whilst diligently avoiding eye contact with the people on the other side of the room. We were suddenly all acutely aware that when you can see them sweating, jiggling, and stepping the wrong way, they can see *you*.

The Verdict

Fun: 9/10. It lived up to the tagline of "A workout that feels like a party."

Challenge: 7/10. Not too hard as a workout, and fairly low-impact if you go easy on the twisting (though I did work up a sweat, as promised). However, the mental workout more than made up for it - though it would definitely be less challenging if you had a dance background or a modicum of coordination.

Would I go again? I think so. I'd have to be in the right mood though. It'd be fun to go with friends to get hyped up before a night out.

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.

What is your favourite swear word?

In my most correct and exalted opinion, no swear word will ever surpass *fuck*. It's the OG. The classic. No word in the English language is as evocative. After all, what is the point of speech, if not to communicate? Name a word that communicates more effectively than the F-word. I will wait while you try and fail. *Fuck* will convey whatever it is you're feeling: joy, anger, sadness, frustration, confusion (when the preface what the is used) and fear can all be illustrated using just one four-letter word. It is truly a linguistic marvel.

Hi Agony Aunt,

I was always smart in high school, but admittedly kind of lazy, but now that I'm in uni I find it's a lot harder to leave everything to the last minute to get all my work/study done. Is there anything you can recommend to make doing my work any easier?

Signed, former "gifted" child

Firstly, thank you for addressing me with the formality and respect I deserve. From now on, this is the standard for submissions.

Secondly, the realisation you're describing is what I like to call *The Smart Kid Awakening*. It is a rite of passage for every student coming from a "gifted" program to university, where you realise that being naturally smart doesn't get you anywhere anymore. As someone who had to work their ass off for every excellence, it is very,

very funny to watch. While I normally would just laugh at you and ask how you like them apples, you seem like a nice person, so I'll be kind.

Wake up/go to bed early, have a schedule, and go to your goddamn office hours. School should have taught you to connect hard work and success, but the system is broken, so you're going to have to learn it now. Sorry, kiddo. Don't worry, one day you'll be bitter and grizzled like me, and tell the next generation the same thing I'm telling you.

Why is my student loan so large but my employability so small?

You did an Arts degree, didn't you? You definitely did an Arts degree. Don't worry, I have made the same fatal error.

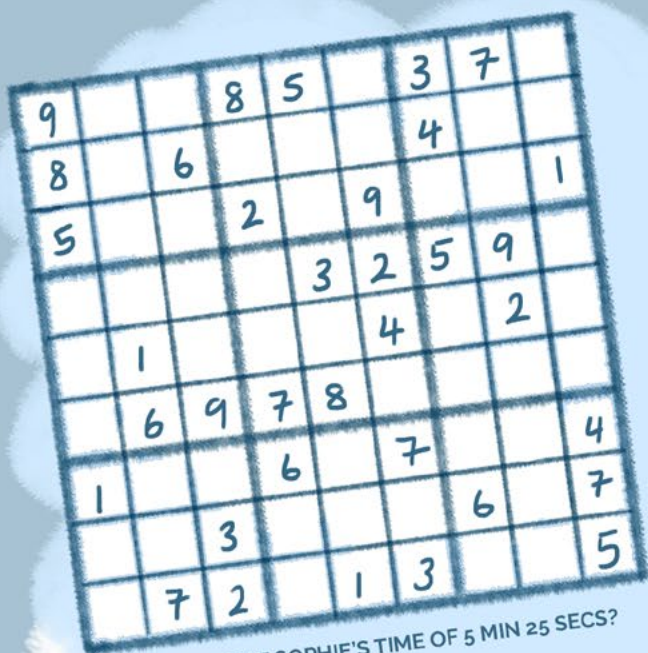
This is basically the fundamental mindfuck of university: "get a degree so you can be employed, but you still won't be able to find a job when you graduate." Unfortunately, I didn't design the economic system (if I did, the highest paid job would be 'Professional Big Mac Eater' and all currency would have Benedict Cumberbatch on it), so I can't do anything about it. Unless you'd all like to elect me Ruler of Aotearoa, in which case I'll get on it.

Why does my head hurt all the time?

Aneurysm, brain tumour, cerebral thrombosis, increased intracranial pressure, meningococcal disease - or maybe you're not drinking enough water. Regardless, you should get more fresh air. (*Note: this will probably necessitate moving out of Auckland.*)

PUZZLES

ILLUSTRATION BY SOPHIE SUN



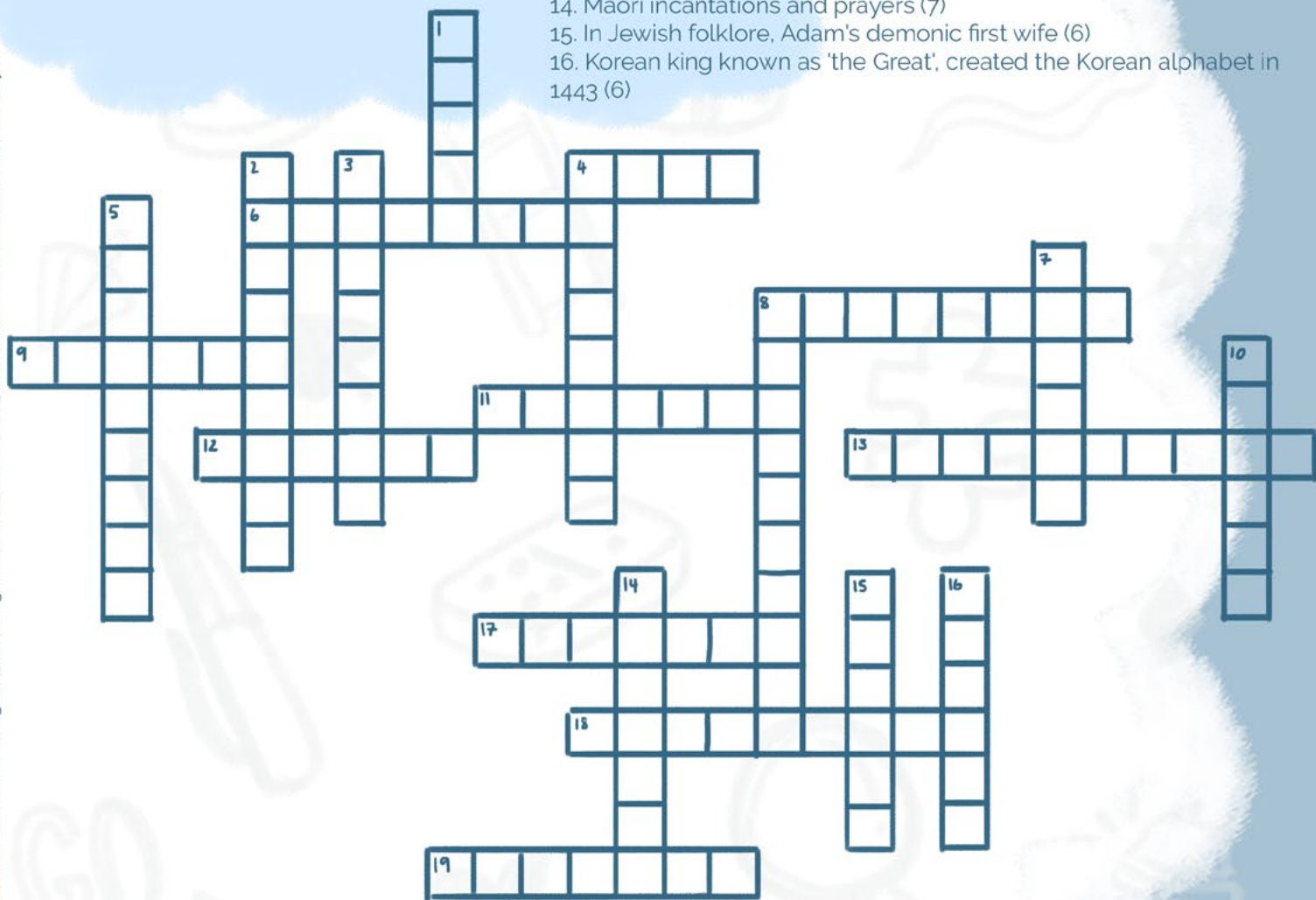
CAN YOU BEAT SOPHIE'S TIME OF 5 MIN 25 SECS?

Across

4. Plant and drink used for ritual and relaxation in Pacific cultures (4)
6. When you lack this protein, your skin begins to sag (8)
8. Largest living rodent species (8)
9. Small, bumpy red fruit with white flesh (6)
11. Bird species with a massive throat pouch for catching fish (7)
12. A fleet of warships (6)
13. Fish-faced robot god-king of Facebook (10)
17. "Fava beans and a nice (blank)" (7)
18. Director who looooooves feet (9)
19. Short sword with a slightly curved blade (7)

Down

1. Considered the most sacred site in Islam (5)
2. Creepy mannequin in a corn field (9)
3. Planet blown up by the Death Star (8)
4. Red echidna friend of Sonic! BIG HANDS! (8)
5. Fell in love with his own reflection (9)
7. One of XÆ A-Xii's awful parents (6)
8. Catholic process of formally acknowledging one's sins (10)
10. Calm, peaceful, and untroubled (6)
14. Māori incantations and prayers (7)
15. In Jewish folklore, Adam's demonic first wife (6)
16. Korean king known as 'the Great', created the Korean alphabet in 1443 (6)



Across 5. Oasis 6. Bajji 8. Dugong 12. Geothermal 13. Cassowary 15. Portobello 16. Mariana
Down 1. Celebi 2. Foie gras 3. Waxing 4. Haku 7. Chemtrails 9. Uluru 10. Taiao 11. Axolotl 14. Amethyst

HOROSCOPES

Delma Vinkley had a wonderful time at Kelly Tarlton's this week, utilising all of NZ's sealife to channel her prophecies for you.

Aries (Mar 21 - Apr 19) *Māori octopus (wheke)*

With your enviable smarts, a problem that has long kept you caged up and feeling small will be solved this week. But when you get out of that issue, be sure to not jump into yet another cage. Your tentacles can only twist so many knobs. Lucky numbers are 23 and 29.



Taurus (Apr 20 - May 20) *Monkfish*

You're feeling so melodramatic lately. You loaded up "Iris" by the **Goo Goo Dolls** and sung that with serious intent. Like, come on, that's low. Well, instead of bleeding just to know that you're alive, why don't you go see a movie? Go see *Mortal Kombat*. Go see some fatalities and just zone out. Lucky numbers are 26 and 30.



Gemini (May 21 - Jun 20) *Pāua*

Guess what? I'm going to be nice to Gemini's this week - you get our national shell. With its pristine aquamarine colouring, it is like looking deep inside yourself, peering way into the murky depths. What will you find? What will bubble up? I think it'll be something reassuring. Lucky numbers are 34 and 78.



Cancer (Jun 21 - Jul 22) *Rock lobster (koura)*

When was the last time you showered? Those aren't barnacles on you, I hope? It's time to reinvest in your self-care routine. Time for some retinol, some bakuchinol, some face masks, some red wine. Your wrinkles are beginning to calcify. Lucky numbers are 82 and 90.



Leo (Jul 23 - Aug 22) *Colossal squid*

Don't let your big head convince you otherwise - you are vulnerable. You need to retreat to the unknowable depths of your ego this week, and only resurface when you know you can take criticism without immediately being punctured and dying a most agonising death. Lucky numbers are 94 and 99.



Virgo (Aug 23 - Sep 22) *Broadbill swordfish*

Did you know that swordfish don't have teeth? That's wild. Anyway, you have a pleasant time ahead, as long as you keep your wits about you. Use your bill to pierce anyone who may throw you off your game this week, just be sure to aim correctly and not hit someone who might be trying to help you out. Lucky numbers are 56 and 82.



Libra (Sep 23 - Oct 23) *Arrow squid (Wheketere)*

For once, you do not feel like being flirted with. For the first time in your life, you reject attention. And that is okay. Take this week to recharge your ink sacs, and squirt away when you feel like getting that kinda way again. Lucky numbers are 45 and 47.



Scorpio (Oct 24 to Nov 21) *Sea urchin (kina)*

Though your outside may ward off predators, don't make the mistakes of leaving your spines out to ward off everyone. Some people still want to know you, even if you don't understand why. Lucky numbers are 7 and 10.



Sagittarius (Nov 22 - Dec 21) *Manta ray (whai)*

Your majesty can be so understated sometimes, but not this week. Soar in your well-deserved heights, let the wind carry your accomplishments under your mucus-laden skin. You've risen above, and I hope your slow fall back to normalcy is graceful. Lucky numbers are 93 and 100.



Capricorn (Dec 22 - Jan 19) *Conger eel (tuna)*

Do not be afraid to reach out of your mysterious breeding hole. Not everyone is as concerned with your face as you are - some even find it charming, or... distinguished. And if they do care, then just extend your freak jaw and bite off their cheek skin. Lucky numbers are 21 and 34.



Aquarius (Jan 20 - Feb 18) *Hoki*

Subtle and forgettable you might be, but even the most bland hoki is elevated with the right kind of batter. Who will deep fry you this week? Who will be the one to push you above your usual limitations, to make your salty flavouring truly something else? Keep an open heart. Lucky numbers are 48 and 50.



Pisces (Feb 19 - Mar 20) *Scampi (kōurarangi)*

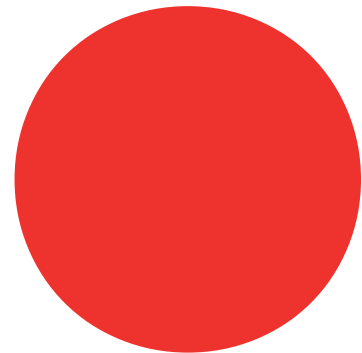
Small you might be, you are a delicious insect of the sea, one who punches above their nearly negligible weight. Find solace in groups for now, as even though numbers make you easier for prey to find, it does raise the chances of you being fertilised pretty soon. So, you know, if you want that. Lucky numbers are 32 and 49.



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Job
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Taura
Rapu
Mahi

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AND FREE POOL



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AND
FREE POOL

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&
PINT NIGHT



EVERY TUESDAY
BUY A DRINK OFF TAP OR A NON-ALCOHOLIC DRINK
AND
GET A \$5 BURGER AND FRIES

T&C APPLY

SHADOWS
BAR & EATERY

2 FOR 1
PIZZA WEDNESDAYS



EVERY WEDNESDAY
BUY ONE GET ONE FREE PIZZAS

T&C APPLY

COCKTAIL NIGHT
2 FOR \$15



\$1 HOT WINGS

EVERY THURSDAY

T&C APPLY