

CRACCUM

magazine 12

convoluted comics

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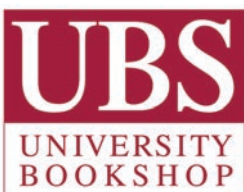
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study-leave me alone

The last week of semester is upon us, and we're meant to be participating in a "Stress Less Study Week". As with most wellness events on campus, this involves adult colouring, "chill-out zones" and rent-a-pets for frazzled students to cuddle frantically while trying to figure out how exactly they will catch up on the four lots of lecture content they ignored while doing assignments throughout the semester.

We're not aiming to shit on wellness weeks here. It's fairly obvious that they are limited in their efficacy; the students who need the most support are not likely to participate in a mandala colouring competition, or be healed by the restorative powers of Scruffy the loveable mutt from the SPCA. But these events are organised by people who have good intentions, and at the very least they encourage discussion about mental wellbeing in a university setting.

Unfortunately (and we're speaking from experience), if you're feeling depressed, anxious or chronically stressed at uni, the sight of smiling students scribbling affirmations and snuggling puppies in the quad or outside the Law library can actually make you feel even more alienated than you did before. In addition to this, wellness weeks allow both the University as an institution, and individual faculties, to check a 'Wellbeing' box on their list of KPIs, and assure everyone that they take affirmative action to promote wellness on campus.

This, of course, is bullshit. The University shouldn't use wellness weeks to absolve themselves of responsibility for students' mental health. The structure of uni courses is integral to the wellbeing of students. Course convenors have a huge level of influence over their pupils' stress levels. For example – here's

looking at you, Law school – a full-year course with an 80% exam is going to be pretty fucking stressful. A one-semester course with three regularly spaced assignments and a 30% exam allows plenty of opportunities to get desired marks and to compensate for assignments that haven't gone well. Also, when faced with impairments to mental health, it's much easier to get extensions on assignments than it is to be granted aegrotat or compassionate consideration for exams. There are plenty of ways departments can limit stress; rotating deadlines for essays, for example, allow students to pick a topic based on how well the due date fits in with their other assignments. It also seems logical to set exams that give students the chance to show how much they know, as opposed to trying to trip them up with niche questions.

The unfortunate reality is we probably can't rely on the University to have our backs on this one. After all, what does it matter to them if a student burns out and drops out? They've got 42,099 more to satiate their thirst for dolla bills. So what can we, as students, do to manage stress coming up to exams? If colouring books and beanbags don't help, then what will? In Aditya Vasudevan's column this week, he derides the advice, "keep calm and drink tea". As Caitlin is Irish and Mark is Scottish (surprise, he's not as swarthy as he looks!) we, in fact, wholeheartedly endorse sitting down with a steaming mug. Drinking either hot or cold liquids is recommended at the onset of a panic attack, because it allows you to focus on the sensation of liquid sliding down your oesophagus, rather than the lack of air going into your lungs.

More than this, having a cup of tea gives you time to take stock of your situation. Work out how many days of study leave you have cumulatively, both before and in between exams. Divide your study days proportionally between your courses, based on how much work each paper demands. Make sure you are realistic with your timetable – if you schedule

8 hours of study every day knowing full well you won't actually complete 8 hours, you will just feel like a failure. If you schedule a more achievable 4-5 hours you'll be able to feel a sense of accomplishment when you reach your projected goal. Check out Rayhan Langdana's column this week for a prime example of when goals go bad. Talk to your bosses about getting time off work, or (ideally) picking up more shifts after exams finish to make up for days missed during study leave. If you wake up in the morning and it's raining and the idea of dragging yourself into the library to fester in wet socks fills your soul with dread – don't go. Wrap yourself in your dressing gown and study from home – who cares if you aren't quite as productive? The state of your mental health will have a far larger influence on your life than any exam ever will. There won't be any study at all if you burn out.

There is a point at which we have to distinguish between productive stress, and unmanageable stress and anxiety. Productive stress spurs you on; it gives you a shot of adrenaline when you walk into an exam room. Experiencing unmanageable stress or anxiety interferes with your ability to cope with daily tasks. It doesn't spur you on; it makes you want to stay in bed. If it's the latter, after exams you can start thinking about longer-term solutions. There is a time for pushing through, and a time for recognising when your stress levels aren't sustainable and you need to make a change. This change might come in the form of taking fewer papers next semester, and just taking a bit longer to get your degree. It might be changing your major, or even your degree itself. It might be taking a break from university altogether. You aren't stuck; you have options.

For the moment, wake up in the morning and decide what you are going to do with that day, and that day alone. And don't forget that in a year or two you won't even remember these exams. ■

EMERGING EMERGENCY HOUSING CRISIS CALLS FOR GOVERNMENT TO FORGIVE DEBTS

Pressure is building for the government to forgive the debts of people forced to take out loans from Work and Income NZ (WINZ) in order to afford emergency motel accommodation.

The loan system is designed to allow individuals access to short term housing if their previous accommodation becomes unavailable, saving them from spending time out on the street. However, Auckland's distressed housing market and social housing shortage means that some end up using the policy for weeks, if not months, while they search to find accommodation that they are able to afford.

In the meantime, their motel stays are often extremely expensive. Some end up paying as much as \$1000 a week for the privilege – meaning that, factoring in interest, they ultimately accrue tens of thousands of dollars of debt to the government, all as they attempt to get on their own feet.

These individuals then, obviously, often have

no viable method to pay that money back, potentially trapping them in debt for the rest of their lives.

One Auckland mother has accrued \$60,000 in emergency housing debt over six months, according to Auckland Action Against Poverty. The woman was evicted from state housing after traces of methamphetamine were found on the property, but AAAP say that it was not clear if the woman in question was responsible for the contamination.

Regardless, that woman, a mother of eight children, was left without a place to stay or a means to afford conventional accommodation. She has now been barred from seeking further financial assistance from WINZ at any point over the next year – at which point the debt, including interest, will have surpassed \$100,000.

Darryl Evans, head of Mangere Budgeting Services Trust, also talked to Radio New Zealand about the issue. He has been helping a solo mother, with two daughters, who is currently paying more than \$700 a week to stay in emergency accommodation while she waits for a state house.

After spending nearly seven months in the motel she owes WINZ over \$20,000 – money which will take her years to pay, on top of existing debts to creditors and her children's healthcare bills. The debt will probably take her as long as 20 years to pay off. Mr Evans said that the woman will most likely have to give up paying for high quality food for her children in order to repay the debt.

Alistair Russell, organiser for Auckland Action Against Poverty, says the problem is easily fixable – it just requires pressure to be put on the government to fix the policy.

"There is the clear capacity for Work and Income to make this a payment so it doesn't cause financial hardship, but at this stage there's no will to do so and I think that the minister needs to make a call on this and actually direct her staff to do the right thing."

An ActionStation petition, calling on the government to forgive all outstanding Emergency Housing loans, will be delivered to parliament once it accrues 10,000 signatures. At the time of writing, the petition is 9,571 signatures strong. ■

DICK SMITH MINISTER UNDER FIRE FOR HOUSING COMMENTS

Meanwhile, uncomfortable language from Nick Smith, National's Housing Minister, has renewed calls for the government to be more proactive in dealing with this country's homelessness crisis.

Last week, Smith issued a statement criticising those who had begun complaining about the sudden rise of people living in garages and cars across Auckland.

"The idea that that suddenly happened in May 2016 is a figment of some people's imagination," Mr Smith said. "These are long-term challenges."

Some families are paying as much as \$400 a week in order to live inside other people's garages – one social policy analyst says that one in ten

South Auckland properties has a garage tenant.

Social workers are also providing anecdotal reports of massive increases in the numbers of Auckland families that are forced to live in their cars, or in tents, because they are unable to afford conventional accommodation.

The implication of Mr Smith's phrasing – that sudden increases in homelessness are a "figment of [the] imagination" – led to him promptly being torn apart, both in the national media and by the opposition.

Figures from Auckland City Mission found that the number of homeless people living in the CBD more than doubled between 2013 and 2015 – from 68 to 147.

More charitable readings might interpret Smith's comments as referring to Auckland's institutional problems around housing – both of which are,

in fairness, genuinely "long-term challenges". However, even then, Smith is not really in the clear.

As Minister for Housing, Mr Smith has long been in the uncomfortable position of being forced to toe the party line and shy away from describing Auckland's housing problem as a "crisis".

Government figures show that rental prices for three-bedroom houses throughout the city have increased by around 25 percent since 2011. Median house prices in Auckland passed \$800,000 for the first time last month. Council believes that anywhere from 3,000 to 13,000 more houses need to be built per year, compared to current levels, in order to meet demand.

These problems, and the inefficacy of the central and local government responses to them, are the driving forces behind the problems Mr Smith was addressing. ■



ALL THE WRITE MOVES

UNIVERSITY FUNDS WRITING INITIATIVE

Last week, The Gus Fisher Gallery saw the launch of a brand new “National Writing Initiative”, designed to help promote and connect New Zealand writers across the country. It is hoped the group will become a flagship organisation in the Pacific literary scene.

The Academy of New Zealand Literature (Te Whare Mātātūhi o Aotearoa) is intended “to explore and promote the diverse strands and vibrant voices of our contemporary fiction, poetry and creative nonfiction”.

The Academy’s website will host resources designed to help New Zealand writers – including “Paris Review” style interviews with New Zealand literary figures, feature articles written

on the New Zealand writing scene, while the organisation also works to help connect writers with opportunities and funding both nationally and abroad.

ANZL has been funded through a \$100,000 seed grant from the University of Auckland.

Currently, the organisation is made up of fifteen fellows and around 100 members. Membership and fellowship is invitation only – no applications for membership are being accepted. This is slated to grow as the organisation secures further funding.

The group has already been the subject of a minor controversy – speeches made by University staff during that opening event seemed to imply that the group would be dedicated to turning Auckland into New Zealand’s main cultural centre, rather than operating as a resource to help support New Zealand writers

across the country.

This implication set off some criticism from writers around the country, particularly in Wellington and the South Island, which ultimately culminated in a Spinoff article defending the organisation, written by ANZL’s organiser, Paula Morris.

The piece, titled “‘The only negative voices are from Wellington’: How an exciting new writing initiative drew instant scorn”, claimed that the view the University had of the group was coloured by the grants’ application process – Morris said that she found herself ‘grimacing at every word’.

The University has not yet publicly responded to the article or the furore.

The first round of features and interviews are already live on the ANZL website, <http://www.anzliterature.com>. ■

FART AIR

AUCKLAND GETS A WHIFF OF CULTURE

The Auckland Art Fair returned to the Auckland Waterfront last week, after a three year hiatus.

The fair is one of the biggest dates on the New Zealand cultural calendar – an important event both for Auckland’s cultural scene and for local galleries.

Exhibits organised by galleries from around the world will be featured at the show, including a number of galleries around Sydney and Melbourne, the nomadic “Mutt” gallery from Santiago in Chile, and from the Bergman Gallery from Rarotonga. Forty galleries from around New Zealand will also take part, with works by a number of established New Zealand artists.

The brief hiatus between shows was caused by a change of ownership – the fair is now owned and organised by North Port Events, the same organisation that runs The Food Show and The Baby Show. The show normally operates on a biennial basis, so the interruption was really only for twelve months.

Art Fair Co-director Stephanie Post said the break has allowed the organisers to “refocus” and “rethink” the event.

Ticket sales were reportedly “very good”. The show is expected to be attended by more than 12,000 people – although none of the days sold out in advance.

Those who attend the fair will have the opportunity to take out interest free loans in order to buy the art on display. Paying 10% upfront, guests may then borrow up to \$25,000 in order to pur-

chase works, take them home immediately, and pay off the debt in monthly installments.

It seems that the event is another success for Auckland’s booming arts scene. It follows the immense success of the Pop Up Globe earlier this year, whose organisers were forced to expand their initial run twice in order to meet popular demand.

Show Me Shorts, originally an Auckland-based film festival, now country-wide, earned Oscar Accreditation for a second awards category, with the film festival already being the only New Zealand-based festival that provided film-makers a direct path to Oscar nominations.

And later this year, Auckland Theatre Company will open up their brand new waterfront theatre, which will provide a dedicated home to the theatre company’s performances. ■



TAXING TIMES POLITICAL BUTTHEADS BUTT HEADS OVER CUTS

\$3 billion worth of tax cuts are potentially on the table as one of the National Party's policy goals, coming into next year's election campaign.

The issue was brought up during a press conference, and came just days before Bill English's Budget announcement. Key said that the current money available for tax cuts would only cover around \$7 a week for the average New Zealander – too little to have a meaningful effect for most people's finances.

"On balance I think (New Zealanders) would prefer that we spent that money on health and education, and they certainly want to see us meet our target of having debt reduce to 20 per cent (of GDP) by 2020," Key said.

Key went on to say that "demand will grow" for tax cuts, and that their budget would need to

be in the \$2-3 billion range in order to be worth pursuing.

The average wage – \$68,000 a year – has been slowly moving towards entering the highest personal tax bracket, of 33% at \$70,000 a year. NZ last saw tax cuts six years ago, in 2010. National increased GST from 12.5% to 15% to compensate.

ACT Party Leader David Seymour criticized the size of National's hypothetical cuts, saying that they ought to be bigger – that even if National was to put them in place, they wouldn't cover the more than \$2 billion lost in 'bracket creep', caused by people's wages rising to compensate for inflation.

Labour Party finance minister, Grant Robertson, said that the government cannot take that funding out of revenue "when people are living in cars, the health system is starved of \$1.7 billion and school funding has fallen by \$150

per student in the past year."

According to Robertson, the Treasury reports there will likely be a \$1 billion surplus in 2018, not enough for National to be able to afford the sorts of cuts they are describing.

Labour Party Leader Andrew Little said that the proposed cuts represent an "election bribe", and that they are "reckless".

However, Labour does have a policy to institute minor tax cuts, but only ones that would see them adjusting tax brackets due to the bracket creep, listed above.

Earlier this year, Labour announced that they would introduce a limited free Tertiary Education policy if they win the 2017 election. That policy is projected to cost \$1.2 billion per year.

NZ is currently more than \$115 billion in debt. ■

MENTAL HELP INCREASE IN ACCESS TO MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

New Zealanders are getting access to the mental health and addiction services that they need, according to National's Health Minister, Dr Jonathan Coleman.

Statistics published by the Ministry of Health show that last year more than 44,500 young people (aged 19 and under) sought treatment for mental health issues. Of those, 70 per cent were seen by counselling services within three weeks, and 91 per cent were seen within two months of the initial consultation. Meanwhile, of over 102,000 adults presented to mental

health and addiction services during the same period, 84 per cent were seen within three weeks, and 95 per cent were seen within eight weeks.

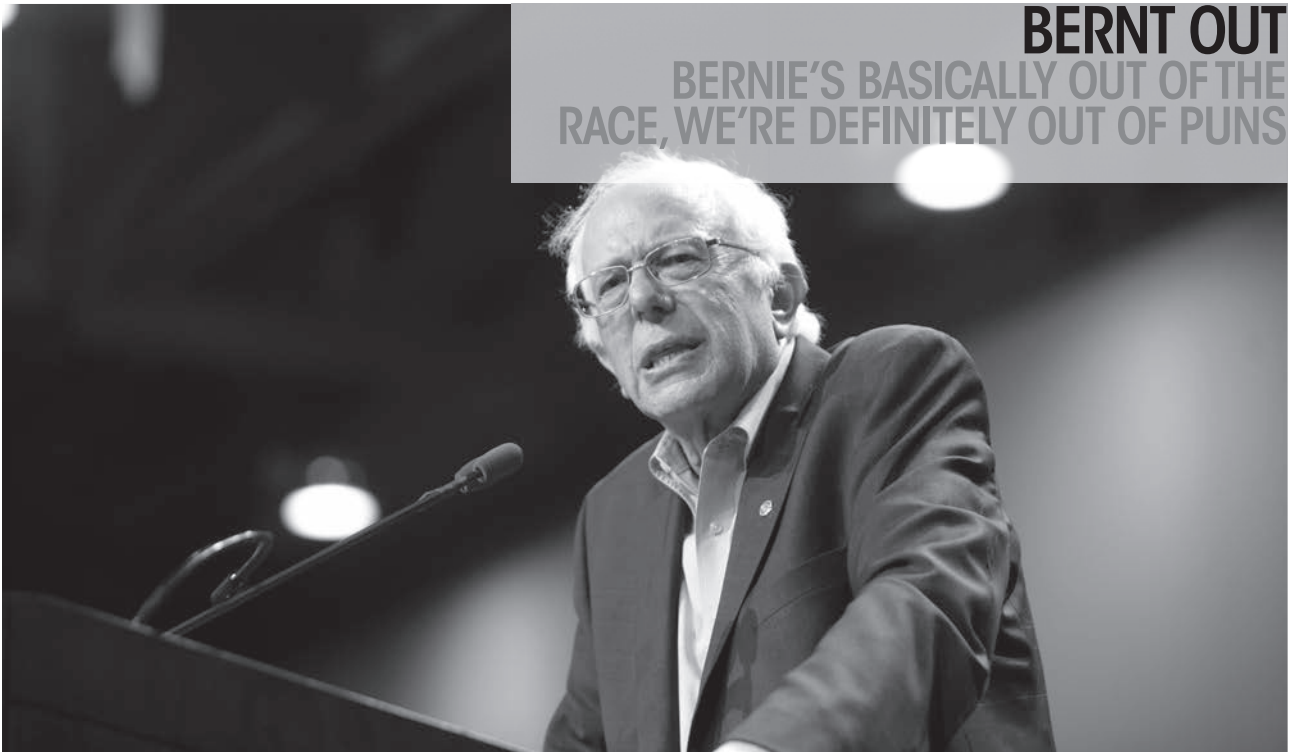
The National-led Government has increased mental health and addiction services funding by \$300 million since the 2008/9 Ministry of Health report, to a total of \$1.4 billion for 2015/2016.

In a press release, Dr Coleman stressed importance of having access to mental health and addiction services within an "appropriate time frame," adding that it was "encouraging" to see youth access had apparently improved. However, Coleman also noted that over the last five years there has been a 21 per cent increase,

and "mental health and addiction services across the country are responding to increased demand."

The most recent New Zealand Doctor/IMS Health fax poll claims that nearly three quarters of GPs do not feel that they are equipped to deal with the increase of mental health cases. President of the Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Psychiatrists Professor Hopwood said responsibility for mental health support falls equally on health care providers, but notes that GPs are typically the first people consulted for health needs, and so proportionally would see the majority of mental health cases first. ■

BERNT OUT BERNIE'S BASICALLY OUT OF THE RACE, WE'RE DEFINITELY OUT OF PUNS



The Democratic Party of the United States is going to nominate Hillary Clinton for President. For Bernie Sanders the campaign might as well be over. Yet his campaign is repeatedly stating that he is in this to the bitter end.

Many are asking why, especially now that the Republicans have sorted out their issues and are coalescing around Donald Trump. All Bernie is doing is hurting Hillary, as a press starved of the spectacle of the Republican race looks for their new story. As it currently stands, the polls have Hillary and Donald in a dead

heat. This is unlikely to change until Bernie stands up and backs his primary adversary.

It is not quite panic time yet in the Democratic Party however. At this point in 2012 Mitt Romney was up by three points nationally, and traditionally polling this far out is far from accurate. However, the ten-point blowout is no longer the popular choice. The general consensus is that once the Bernie supporters fall behind Hillary she will be up around four-five points. Still, an elongated battle is not what Hillary needs.

As for the electoral college where the President is actually decided, some strange things are happening. Currently Hillary is leading in Utah, and has been for some time, admittedly within

the margin of error. This is despite the fact that Romney carried 73% of the vote in the state. By contrast, in Pennsylvania, Quinnipiac have Clinton only up one point in a state that has been strongly Democratic since 1988. While both these states are expected to remain for their respective parties, the fact that they could even be considered competitive show just how much discontent there is with both the nominees and the political status quo overall. Will this election see the biggest shift since Reagan Democrats, with the industrial mid-west Republican and the south-west Democratic?

Well now there are only six long months to wait to find out. ■

THE TOP FIVE THINGS WE LEARNT THIS WEEK

1. The Warriors don't have a floor. How embarrassing would it be if the Warriors finished behind a team who have had all of their points docked? The Eels have lost 12 premiership points over their salary cap scandal. That puts them only 4 wins behind with 13 games to play, and if their current form continues they should pass the Warriors with ease.

2. Gary Johnson is currently the most liked presidential candidate. It is no secret that Donald Trump has the highest unfavourable

ever seen in presidential politics. It's not so highly reported that Hillary Clinton has the second highest unfavourable in history. The result of this is that over the last month the presumptive Libertarian party candidate, Gary Johnson, has received around 10% in several major political polls. And that's not as an unnamed third candidate – it's unprompted. What this means is that general dissatisfaction is high and that Trump's ever so slight path to the presidency may be widening.

3. There is no longer any grace period on *Game of Thrones* spoilers. Like seriously, cool it down people, some of us have essays due and need to wait a night. It seems that as soon as someone has seen the latest episode they

assume that everyone has, and feel the compulsive need to talk about it on Facebook. It's not cool guys.

4. The new University website is now live.

While looking far slicker – like it was actually designed in the 21st century – the practicality is yet to be fully realized with the removal of 'quick links' the biggest change. Some issues with mobile browsers has also been noted.

5. I really should have spent more time in class and less time not in class. Also some study would have been nice and all those marks attached to tutorials would probably have been useful too. ■

lifestyle

WHAT'S ON 30 MAY – 5 JUNE

Kick off the week with some wonderful creative engagement at a free **theatre workshop** run by Minus Theatre. If you have any level of experience in dance, art, music or theatre and a keen interest in performance, this workshop is for you. There is also a particular call-out for people with non-Western genealogies and stories to tell. Held at St Paul St Gallery, 6-9pm, search "Minus Theatre" on Facebook for more details.

Wander down to Karanga Plaza (between Silo Park and the moving bridge) from 3.30 to 4.30pm on Wednesday to get hoopin'. At **POP Hula**, you can make your own hula hoop from upcycled materials and show the town your best moves. Sure to be a cute time – quirky exercise at the water's edge – what's not to love?

We've got your Friday night sorted with **Yoko-Zuna's** new EP release show at Kings Arms. With support from Lukan Rai\$ley, Miloux and LarzRanda (plus more acts to be announced) the evening will keep your mind off exam stress for sure. Doors open 8pm, first act on at 9.

Check out the monthly **Antiques & Collectors Fair**, on Saturday (12pm-5pm) & Sunday (8am-2pm – coincides with the outdoor flea market) at Avondale Racecourse, inside the race building. Whether or not you intend to buy anything, it will be worth the \$2 door fee just to see all the interesting objects that come out of hiding for these events. And who knows, you may just walk away with a bargain...

AGONY AUNTIES

Dear Aunties,

I started a new job this year and am loving every minute of it, but I feel like my co-workers

are beginning to treat me as a punching bag. They verbally harass me almost every day and one even hit me with her handbag. I like to make jokes, keep things light hearted and never take myself too seriously, so I don't want to make a deal of it, but I have so much else going on in my life right now (both personal and professional) and it is really bringing me down. How do I get them to stop without seeming like a loser?

plz halp,

bruises like a peach

Dear *bruises like a peach*,

It sounds like it might be time to start taking yourself more seriously! It is not okay for your co-workers to be taking out their personal frustrations on you, especially not in this abusive form. It is important to remember that their actions are not your fault – they are probably just lashing out at you because you are the closest available target at the time. However, as this is already happening repeatedly, you need to put a stop to it before it gets too wildly out of control... If you enjoy the job and are thus unwilling to resign in order to escape these mad colleagues, you need to find another way to protect yourself. Perhaps there are signs you can begin to identify when a co-worker's mood begins to take a sour turn (and proceed to remove yourself from their presence), perhaps you could make jokes about how funny it is *not* to be hit with a handbag, or perhaps you could try for good old confrontation/conversation (just make sure you have a trustworthy escape route planned). Good luck – you deserve kind co-workers!

Love,

The Agony Aunties XXX ■

PLEASE SEND YOUR PROBLEM IN 50 WORDS OR LESS TO LIFESTYLE@CRACCUM.CO.NZ, ANONYMITY GUARANTEED.



A SERIOUS CASE OF THE SHAKES: A SALT AND PEPPER SHAKER COLLECTOR SHARES HER STORY

I suppose it all started with family road trips. We'd drive through small towns like Tirau and Paeroa, stop for a pie, a stretch of the legs and inevitably a squiz in a nearby antique shop. My parents were weirdly avid collectors and used to drag me along on their never-ending searches for white ornamental ceramics and antique wine pullers. I hated this "family fun time" – that is, until I discovered salt and pepper shakers.

My first pair were a set of baby chickens wearing chef hats. I'd never seen anything so adorably, hilariously tacky. The elderly shop assistant wrapped them delicately in 3-day old newspaper, and when I got home, I placed my new purchases on a shelf – kitsch, ridiculous, wonderful. I wondered how many more of these joyous objects were out there.

Many, it turned out. I now own 40 pairs of S 'n' P's and one of the best things about collecting them is that they're never hard to find. There are souvenir shakers, movie merchandise shakers, joke shop shakers, and op-shops and antique stores are full of them because they are just the sort of thing no one really needs, or ever wants to be given, especially if they're heinously kitsch. But I love kitsch. O yes, the kitscher, the better. The crown jewels of my collection are a pair of smiling and frowning carrots, my 'sexy' gnomes (because one of them reclines in a shameless 'come hither' fashion) and a pair of undie-clad lady bottoms (why did you choose me those ones Grandma?)

I suppose people collect things for a lot of different reasons, but it makes my day when I find another weird ceramic coupling and wonder: "What possessed someone to make this?" ■ EMILY FREW

LE UNI STUDENT BY NEWSINCERITYMEMESXOX



~le uni student~
"lol basically living on
2 minute noodles FML"



~le uni student~
"and like I'm really good
with my money so idek"



THE CRACCUM GUIDE TO THE METRO GUIDE TO AUCKLAND'S CHEAP EATS: CHINOISERIE

Chinoiserie has some legitimately good cheap eats, but in order to get them you should treat the place like a big game of Operation, and not touch the sides. Chinoiserie made the list due to its steamed milk buns. A steamed milk bun is basically the product of an illicit interracial affair between a pork bun and a burger. It has a dough-like soft bun with fillings that range from chicken and beef to the more enticing squid and pork belly.

Their sides are by no means terrible. The issue with them – other than their unorthodox cooking method (who deep-fries ribs?) – is that they weren't cheap. The milk buns were around \$8, while the sides were closer to \$15, which seems excessive considering they are meant to be sides. One small thing I appreciated is that they have Brothers Beer on tap, a great craft beer and at a relatively affordable price (for craft beer).

The decor at Chinoiserie embraces the China-town aesthetic, with dragons painted on the walls and those maneki-neko cats that wave their paw back and forth sit at every table. This place really makes an effort to create a unique aesthetic, which I can appreciate as it marks them out as different. Take a photo, chuck a shitty Auckland filter on it, and this place will be right at home on your snap story.

At this point I am halfway through the Metro Cheap Eats list, which is somewhat slack with the first semester drawing to a close. I had aimed to be done by now but these require far more saving than the name led me to believe.

HOURS OF MINIMUM WAGE NEEDED FOR TWO PEOPLE TO EAT HERE (INCLUDING EXORBITANT SIDES): 4.9

HOURS OF MINIMUM WAGE NEEDED FOR TWO PEOPLE TO EAT HERE (EXCLUDING EXORBITANT SIDES): 3.7

■ SAM LYNCH



BIKRAM YOGA BRITOMART REVIEW

Sweat. Stretch. Detox. Oh, and don't forget to breathe!

Walking through the doors and up the stairs to Bikram Yoga Britomart, I was greeted by a friendly smile and a brief introduction by Bikram Yoga teacher, Anita. My initial knowledge of Bikram Yoga was basic: I knew that it was stretching in an extremely hot room. I was excited to explore the benefits of this: releasing toxins, being able to go deeply and safely into postures and allowing your body to work harder because of an increased heart rate. After the introduction, I also found out about the breathing techniques involved to help you relax, keep your heart rate steady and allow your body to adjust to the heat.

The room was kept at a snug 40 degrees Celsius for the entire 90 minutes. The

experience was challenging, but there wasn't one moment where I didn't have a beaming smile on my face – after all, who doesn't like a challenge? My class was at 9:30am and for the rest of the day I was feeling fresh, light and full of energy! What made this experience enjoyable and pleasant was that I felt like I was in a safe and controlled environment the entire time and that Anita really knew what she was doing which allowed me to fully relax.

I would encourage anyone and everyone to give Bikram Yoga a try. You are always able to sit aside for a while if you are feeling dizzy or out of breath, and the team at Bikram Yoga Britomart is there for support and encouragement. My tip for your first Bikram Yoga class would be to embrace the sweat and enjoy yourself! ■ ZOE-LOU MORRIS

IMAGE CREDIT: HOT YOGA WORKS

FASHION ON CAMPUS

Alena (Art History) and Sylvia (Asian Studies)

Alena: "Truly, I just try and not wear the same thing as yesterday."

Sylvia: "I'm opposite, I find an outfit and I stick with it until it gets dirty."



AUCKLAND UNIVERSITY STUDENTS' ASSOCIATION
PRESENTS...

STRESS LESS STUDY WEEK

MONDAY 30 MAY - FRIDAY 3 JUNE

WITH THE HELP OF
CANINE FRIENDS PET THERAPY,
THERE WILL BE DOGS ON CAMPUS!

CITY CAMPUS

MONDAY 30TH MAY, 11:30AM
ON THE GRASS AREA IN THE QUAD

GRAFTON CAMPUS

THURSDAY 2ND JUNE, 11:30AM
ON THE GRASS AREA
IN FRONT OF BUILDINGS 505 & 503.

TAMAKI CAMPUS

WEDNESDAY 1ST JUNE,
TIME AND LOCATION TBC!

KEEP UPDATED WITH THE FACEBOOK EVENT
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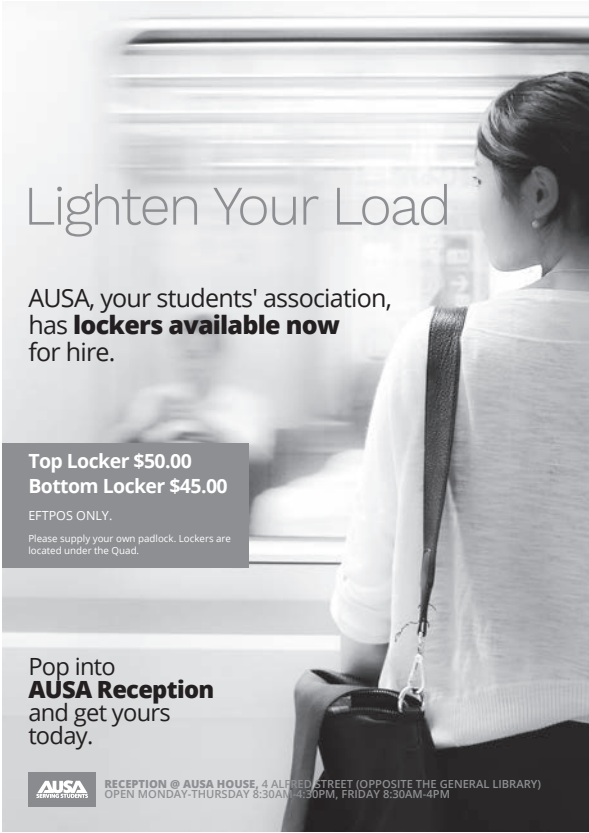
FROM THE MEDIA OFFICER

GUESS WHO'S BACK. BACK GAIN. THE MO'S BACK. TELL A FRIEND. I HAD TO WRESTLE MY COLUMN BACK FROM THE PRESIDENT THIS WEEK. I THINK HE HAD A BIT TOO MUCH FUN... THIS IS CRACCUM AFTER ALL, WE GOTTA FIT THEIR MO. THIS WEEK, AUSA IS PROUD TO PRESENT STRESS LESS STUDY WEEK. TAKE A MO' FROM YOUR HARD WORK TO PLAY WITH SOME PUPPIES OR HANG OUT IN THE CHILL OUT ZONE. CLOSE MO WORD AND CHECK OUT THE INTERVIEW WITH OUR CSO AND THE ARTICLE BY OUR WROS ABOUT GREEN MP JAN LOGIE'S SOCIAL CAMPAIGN AGAINST BARRIERS TO SURVIVORS OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE RECEIVING HELP FROM ACC.

What's Up in the Clubs?!

The Art History Society is holding its first event on Thursday the 2nd of June at 6.30pm. Come along to room 206-314 in Arts1 for a screening of 'Woman in Gold' followed by drinks and nibbles at Shadows. All are welcome, not just Arts students, and non-members are able to sign up on the night for a small charge of \$5 to join for the entire year and attend all of the events.

PLEASE EMAIL ARTHISTSOC@GMAIL.COM WITH ANY QUESTIONS.



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fingers on buzzers

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Friday 3 June 1-2pm, Case Room 4, OGGB, 260-009

www.auckland.ac.nz/universitychallenge

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THE UNIVERSITY OF AUCKLAND
SCHOOL OF MANAGEMENT & SOCIAL SCIENCES
NEW ZEALAND

Meet the Clubs and Societies Officer

Jessica Palairret is AUSA's Clubs and Societies Officer (CSO) for 2016. She's your go-to for any questions about clubs and putting together applications for grants. You can get in touch with her via email at cs0@ausa.org.nz.

WHAT CLUBS DO YOU BELONG TO?

Will told me that as CSO I'm automatically a member of every club on campus. But the only club I'm really active in is the Debating society.

ARE YOU NOW, OR HAVE YOU EVER BEEN A MEMBER OF THE LABOUR PARTY?

I have been- still have a card but don't know if I'm officially still a member.

YOU AND AUSA PRESIDENT WILL MATTHEWS GO WAY BACK - CARE TO EXPLAIN HOW YOU MET?

Ha! We're both Wellingtonians, and met in 2011 when we were both in a school production for the Sound of Music. Will was my Uncle- I was playing one of the von Trapp kids. Here's some proof...

THIS IS YOUR SECOND YEAR ON THE EXEC, WHAT HAVE YOU LEARNED IN YOUR TIME ON THE EXEC?

How much AUSA does! We've got a president who consistently pulls 40+ hour weeks, officers who do the same (despite their job only requiring 20h!) and portfolios that work really hard to help students out every day. But the other thing is how hard it is to be a student's association in 2016. We no longer have universal, mandatory lunch breaks where everyone gets together

PREFERRED PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES?

Kanye West.

SHOOT. SHAG. MARRY. GRANT ROBERTSON. JOHN KEY. CAPTAIN VON TRAPP.

Marry Von Trapp, definitely. Problem with both Grant and John is they're both middle aged, I actually know Grant which makes things awkward, and I imagine for both it would be a bit like shagging your Dad. But for the sake of the question, of course I'd shoot John and shag Grant.



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acc help not harm – remove the barriers!

*your ausa women's rights officers give you
the low-down on green mp jan logie's social
campaign aimed to remove barriers to
help for survivors of sexual violence.*

Trigger Warning: Sexual Violence

For survivors of sexual abuse and sexual violence, reaching out and getting support is never easy. After a traumatic experience, you lose the ability to trust. Who will believe me? Will they blame me? Will they look at me differently? are questions that plague survivors every waking day.

When some do decide to speak out, however, doing so means reliving the experience. Telling our stories means recalling details we would rather have left unremembered. But we can't. We remember. Because sexual violence is a personal injury, and its claws affect us profoundly.

In NZ, we are extremely lucky to have a system like Accident Compensation Corporation (ACC) that provides comprehensive cover to people who have suffered a personal injury and make a claim. In most cases, personal injuries must be physical for a claim to be accepted. Nevertheless, there are some cases where mental injury is also covered.

However, 'mental injury' as defined under the

Accident Compensation Act 2001 means "a clinically significant behavioural, cognitive, or psychological dysfunction". This means that survivors of sexual violence must be first diagnosed with a psychiatric condition under the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM), prior to having their ACC claims approved.

For sexual violence survivors, this qualification to receiving much-needed services such as counselling and support is more than just limiting. Not only does it stigmatise survivors with a psychiatric condition that they may not have, but it also deters a large number of people from engaging with a system previously put in place to help them. Furthermore, the process of being assessed that a sexual event must be the "most substantial cause of the mental injury" re-traumatises survivors. It causes them to unnecessarily have to justify why they feel the way they do. Moreover, mental health diagnoses impose life-long implications. They make it more difficult to successfully claim health insurance when companies ask survivors to disclose their mental health histories.

So, in recognition of the barriers preventing sexual violence survivors from making ACC

claims to cover support service expenses, Green Party MP Jan Logie has launched a petition and campaign. In it, Logie calls on ACC to change its processes so that a mental health diagnosis is not needed in order for survivors to receive the treatment they need. Logie is calling upon ACC Minister Nikki Kaye to instruct ACC to remove this harmful barrier.

Sexual violence is a health epidemic that affects men as much as it affects women. To remove any unnecessary obstacle that denies survivors another avenue to help is to give them our dedication and support. Here at AUSA we strongly endorse Logie's petition and campaign, and encourage University of Auckland students to get behind it as well.

Keen to find out more? On Monday 30th May at 12pm there will be a meeting outside of ACC Auckland headquarters (18 Sale St). Come along as we 'hand back' our diagnoses, and stand in solidarity with survivors of sexual violence.

To show your support, there is also a petition that can be signed at http://action.greens.org.nz/remove_the_barriers. ■



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tales of tinderella

khyati shah goes on a sociological trip to tinderland

Tinder used to remind me of buffets: a great deal of variety but typically at the expense of quality. Or perhaps it's more like a fast food drive-thru – allowing one to consume a Chicken McCheese at 2am without having to leave the comforts of one's car. Isn't that what Tinder is: a dreamland for Netflix & chill-ers and DTF-ers? After all, it is notoriously known as a location-based hook-up app at the fingertips of anyone with a smartphone. An unprecedented means of instant gratification available to the masses.

There are countless anecdotes about Tinder experiences gone wrong, ranging from sly awkwardness to outright sexual or cyber abuse. Perhaps saturated reporting is what's at play here. There is a presumption that Tinder is mostly populated by socially awkward, LCD-tanning, 'operating from mum's basement' individuals, or what the internet calls 'fuck-boys' – smooth-talking hotties who can't even spell fidelity.

Most types of social media, Tinder included, are dynamic and sensitive to their users' preferences and manipulation. If true, the subversion of stereotypes, and the creation and recreation of niches other than DTF are all likely possibilities. So, this past summer, I bought a ticket to Tinderland to find out how much water the Tinder stereotypes hold. This was my quest: to seek out these little niches, to shed light on the Tinder stereotypes and those who actively defy them. The only way to do this was to (un)officially become a Tinderella. Ball gowns optional.

The profile set-up was quick, but not dirty. Once the free app has been downloaded, you can set up your profile before you can finish ordering that Pumpkin Spice soy latte. Within minutes I was swiping left and right on potential dates. Once you get a match (i.e. both parties have shown interest in connecting with each other), you can start messaging one another and banter typically ensues. Now that you've been acquainted to the logistics of it, let's see how it panned out for me.

Seven dates, two weeks. Game on!

I went on ornate, as well as cheap and cheerful dates. More importantly, it was with men I would not typically run into in my 9 to 5. I dated a designer, a professional tennis player, an accountant, and two entrepreneurs. Day jobs were but one marker of how diverse and interesting these individuals were. They all seemed to be thriving in their chosen fields and were a far cry from the images of Tinderfellas lent to me by popular beliefs.

Here are some of the magical moments between the swipes.

One of the Tinderfellas made a reservation at a celebrity chef's culinary experience. How sexy are reservations? Splurging aside, it showed his perceived value of our date – that it's worth a little pre-planning. In fact, when it was time to clear the bill, I offered to split it (feminism points to me!), but he insisted he paid unless I think it to be a chauvinistic gesture (feminism points to him!). Generous and thoughtful – date game level: 10.

Then again, not all memorable dates involve fancy dining. Indulging in some old-school spontaneity saw one Tinderella and I jumping into calm waters on a hot summer night, overlooking the city lights. The juxtaposition of seclusion and publicity here may have been mistaken for a chapter from a Nicholas Sparks novel.

If there was one thing tying all my experiences together, it was the genuine human connection. In the midst of all the spontaneity and unavoidable short-lived awkwardness, fleeting moments held genuine connections, non-platonic or otherwise. These connections have an interesting way of manifesting themselves, whether it is via a parallel history of sibling rivalry or a mutual preference for some form of sapiosexuality.

Yes. People come to Tinderland to play, but it is you – the user – who defines *which* game to play.

Having said this, there are two elephants in the room when it comes to using Tinder. Both need addressing.

Apparently it is shameful for a socially apt, reasonably easy-on-the-eyes individual to resort to online dating. You need to reconsider your life choices, young lad(y)! But why is there a special stigma reserved for using modern

technology as our wing(wo)man? Nothing we do is traditional anymore. A lot of our lives are spent online. We shop, communicate, and network online, heavily and regularly. If this is an unconvincing theory, perhaps a more mindful use of technology in our love lives will help to counter the taboo.

Then there is the moral dilemma surrounding swipes. How shallow of us to select/reject someone purely based on some pixels and alphabets orchestrated by him/her? In reality, this is no different from noticing someone at Shadows and wanting to approach them. We don't have perfect information about anything or anyone in the real world, let alone in the virtual world. But we seldom render choices made on imperfect information immoral.

You want to set sail to Tinderland and trade in some guilt-free swipes too? If you are so inclined, read on.

Risks of awkward silences, awful banter and general potential for embarrassment are inherent in any blind date. However, these can be managed. Be selective with whom you swipe right on (unless a "buffet" is what you're down for). I looked for witty bios, paid close attention to not only how many abs there were in their shirtless selfies, but also what their photo collection revealed about their socialising habits, hobbies and interests. If I could picture myself in any of their photos doing those activities, it was an easy swipe right. By the same token, for your own profile, hand-pick photos that show your beautiful, multi-faceted selves – cute selfies only go so far. Then comes the "match" stage. The banter here is crucial for deciding whether it's worth meeting in person. I typically refrained from replying to "hey beautiful, what's up?" and its variants, but was quick to message back those with slightly more imaginative convo-starters.

So, embrace the silences and grow comfortable with the fact that chewing each other's ears off the entire time is not necessary. Sit somewhere you can people watch for an unlimited supply of observation-based conversations. Do not stop taking chances (within reason, of course). Just remember, you can always go home.

The choice to stay beyond the clock striking midnight is totally up to you. ■

it's getting hot in here

catherine ma calls bullshit on daniel
meech's overpopulation article (issue 8)

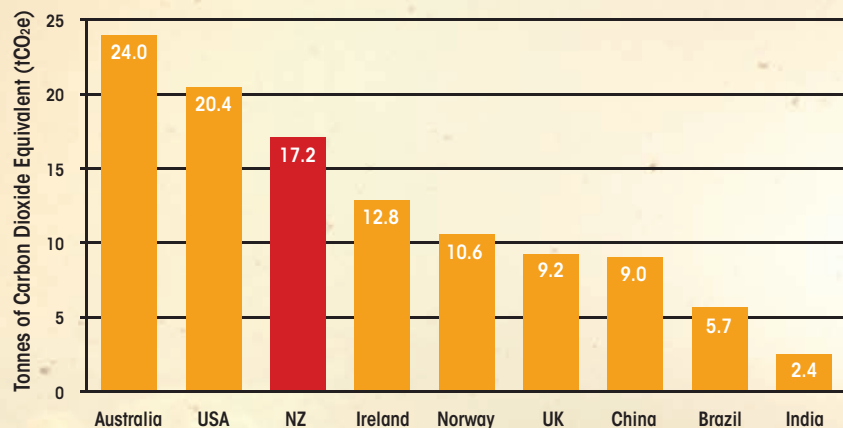
Walking through the sliding glass doors of the Engineering building, I pick up my Monday morning usual; a small coffee and a fresh copy of Auckland University's finest editorial publication. As I wait at the crossing, flipping through the pages, I stumble across a piece that seems right up my alley.

In fact, it's the featured piece of the week. But as I begin to read further, through the outlandish claims backed with no credible evidence and bad reasoning, it becomes all too clear that I am going to have to stand up to this crazy bullshit. And *I'm* going to do it with evidence.

Placing the blame of our human environmental issues on overpopulation is not only an oversimplification, but a dangerous falsehood. This isn't just an opinion based on incorrect facts, but something that is actively detrimental to the reparations we are making today and the environmental goals we hope to achieve in the future.

It seems to follow that if overpopulation is the

PER CAPITA GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS (2012)



main (and perhaps *only* important) source of our earth's environmental crises, the nations with the largest populations must be most to blame. This mindset is where dangers arise. The misconception may take the pressure off of smaller nations like New Zealand, but the truth of the matter is that despite John Key's attempts to downplay our role on the global stage, we ranked 3rd in the world for per capita warming emissions in 2012. This is while China, the world's most populous nation, comes in 7th with

around half the emissions per capita.

Similarly, the United States represents only 4 percent of the world's population, but 16 percent of the earth's total greenhouse gas emissions. In contrast, India, the second most populous country with 17.6% of the global population only accounts for 4% of the total emissions.

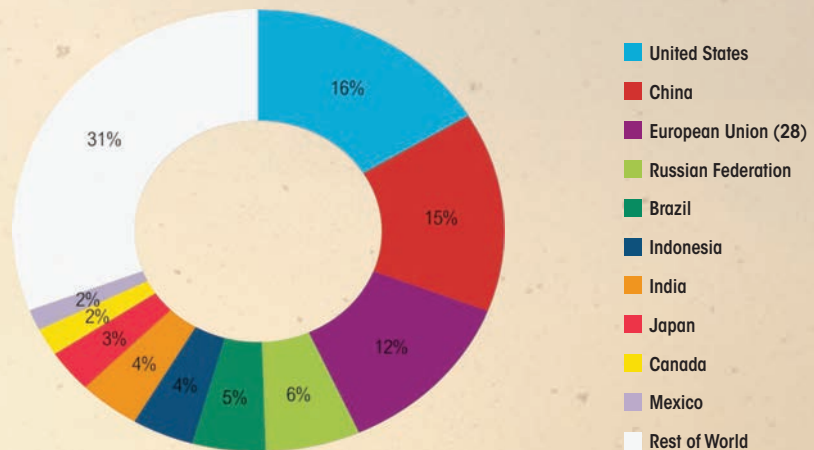
Even these statistics don't tell the full story. When corporations in the First World outsource large aspects of their production to developing

nations, the high emission processes involved in producing consumer goods are centered in places such as China and India. But this is while the majority of the profits from these goods go back into the Western world. Who should really be responsible for these emissions? Is the power of environmental change in the hands of the thousands of factory workers living on a pitiful wage, or in the consumers who foster this situation through their buying habits – where cheap and plentiful always outcompetes environmentally friendly?

Most of this stuff is just common sense. People in stage four demographic transition (i.e. post-industrial) nations like Japan and Germany reproduce the least (sometimes to the point that the nation's population begins to decline) and consume the most. In contrast, areas with the highest birth and death rates as well as the highest populations (think Bangladesh, Sri Lanka) aren't exactly hitting up the local Kmart to buy some more mason jar lemonade cups they don't need.

Telling New Zealanders that the majority of our environmental issues are due to overpopulation is telling us to relax and that it's not our fault. It's telling us we can keep living the lifestyles with which we're comfortable, because nothing that four million people do could possibly make a difference in the long run. Well, it's time for a reality check. Twenty-first century Western life is responsible for roughly a third of the earth's greenhouse gas emissions, despite comprising less than a sixth of the world's population. The waste from our excessive packaging and thoughtless consumption is turning our oceans into dumps, the products of which wash up on the shores of those who you would so easily blame for our environmental issues.

CUMULATIVE GHG EMISSIONS 1990-2011 (% OF WORLD TOTAL)



But here's the thing. No, one person sitting in the supermarket aisle for way longer than she needs to in order to find out which dishwashing detergent is the best for the environment *isn't* going to make a difference – not even a dent in fixing where we are as a planet. But she does it anyway. Because it's about sending a message.

Sending a message to the dishwashing detergent producers that as a consumer, environmental consciousness is something worth valuing.

Sending a message to the next generation, instilling a sense of pride in being a conscious consumer.

Sending a message to myself that the fight isn't over yet.

Telling a generation of university students that environmental change is not in our hands is probably one of the most dangerous lies one can tell. Because although that one person sitting

on the linoleum comparing brands isn't going to change much in that moment, they can make a significant change in the world when they make the decision to educate themselves and others, which will have a positive impact in their university years and throughout their career. Scientific progress has long been the enemy of those who would profit from maintaining the status quo, but in the end, facts will always negate society's resistance to change. And just as the earth *does* orbit the sun, and cigarettes *will* kill you, the issue of environmental change *is* in our hands.

First they told us global warming didn't exist, then they told us it didn't matter. Now they're telling us it does exist and it does matter, but it's those fucking breeders over there's fault.

Daniel Meech advises you to wear a condom so as not to "fuck over the world" with your offspring. And for him, I can think of no better advice. ■

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a road trip through the kiwi mind

a study in lude

BY SHMULY LEOPOLD



PROLOGUE TO A PRELUDE

Mother Earth was heaving and shuddering. Sweating and straining, a bead of perspiration running down her forehead, hairy cheeks trembling with fury, veins popping, rectal sphincter on the verge of total collapse. This was going to hurt. "Oi, are done on the bog yet?" lisped Father Time, typically impatient. Father time was always a coward. "Fuck off ya egg. This takes time!" replied Mother Earth. "Lol" Time responded. The heaving and straining reached a crescendo as the clock on Father Time's forehead hit 3pm. The lights dimmed. A rapturous fart escaped Mother Earth. The universe shook. And it happened – out flew New Zealand. First the North Island, large in the middle, incredibly painful to push out. Then the South Island, long and thin, following the North, flopped on out. And it all began.

This is the oldest myth in recorded history. The Mori-Oriz, an ancient hyper-literate Ugandan militia fled Africa in their wakas (later stolen by the less literate, but equally African people known as the Bloody Maaris). Upon reaching the edge of the world they looked up and saw the North Island wrestling its way out from between Mother Earth's behind, hovering a

mountain's distance above them. Out flew the explosive island nation, as volcanic in its emergence as it is in its geography.

PRELUDE

New Zealand, 2008. Things have gone brilliantly. The GFC has hit. A whole series of bankers in New York were taken into the streets and lynched. The New Zealand people banded together around the bankers of the world, even electing one of them.

"Now, it isn't true that all Jews are bankers. This is a lie spread by Helen Clark to discredit me. Helen Clark is a lesbian and should not be trusted. But bankers are much like the Jews, they are persecuted. They have a hard life. And they should certainly be given control of another people's sovereign nation. That nation should be New Zealand. A two-state solution will not work. We. Are. In. Control..." giggled the newly elected Prime Minister.

LUDE

Storm clouds conglomerate above. One particularly entrepreneurial storm cloud is ag-

gressively acquiring a series of smaller clouds. These smaller clouds are being amalgamated. Turned into produce. Shipped to China. Shipped back. And sold off bit by bit. I watch all of this from below. A mountain's height below. I'm standing on a street corner under a curved streetlight. I'm in a panama hat, a beige trench coat, suede chukka boots, and of course I'm lighting a Marlboro Red. Pensively I sip on my cigarette, the smoke blows back into my face, it gets in my eyes, they sting. It makes me look moody, cynical, theatrical.

My road trip begins here. My suede shoes ruined. My beige coat discoloured by CEO Cloud's newly mass-distributed product: Hail". This is making me look less moody and more, well, soggy. I'm waiting for my lift. I'm travelling with my two favourite ethnics: Quack Bin, political theorist and food critic. Quack Bin is a buck-toothed oriental, and liberal. And of course Abdul Mohammed Jafar Chapatti, known as the "brown shower" to his close friends. He smells like curry, goes for runs, writes columns about running, and has recently radicalised. They screech to a stop, the smell of burning rubber briefly doing battle with the smell of burning



Marlboro Red (despite the encroaching sog). I get in the back seat, wring out my shoes, make a fist at the sky (now attempting to vertically integrate the gutters and flood water drains into its ever expanding empire). And off we go. A quick stop at university, Abdul Mohammed Jaffar Chapatti has to return *Plastic Explosives For Dummies*. Why not start here? As good a place as any to figure out the modern New Zealand character.

I get out of the car. Leaving my erstwhile companions behind to debate housing, I look to the darkling sky, a snarl on my lips. A portentous lightning bolt sprints out the board meeting, terrified his use of foreign trusts is going to be exposed. He just didn't have capacity to deal with that kind of contentious, unctuous, interverbal communication at present. "Panama," the thunder boomed behind him, a few seconds too slow for him to hear. I watch all of this, making notes in my leather bound journal. I fumble trying to strike a match – soggy matches, soggy mind. One finally lights up. Time for another cigarette. I walk, smoke trailing behind me, to the smoker's area outside the General Library.

A gnarled, hunched goblin claws himself out of Kate Edger and into my field of vision. His face is twisted with hatred. Or a stroke. Probably a stroke. Muttering, the mature student makes his way over. "THIS," he gestures thunderingly, "is a no smoking CAMPUS!" I'm not pleased, but I believe in respecting the elderly, I have a gulp of cigarette:

"Alright, baby-boomer. Let's establish a couple of things. First, I'm standing directly next to a university supplied ashtray. Secondly, the council owns the footpath and until they ban cigarettes on footpaths, you're fresh out of luck appealing to legality. Also, why the fuck would you cross the street to tell me that you don't want me smoking near you? There is one thing I love about your generation. Sure, you've ruined the environment, the economy, real wages have decreased, homelessness has increased, rents have skyrocketed,

you've reinstituted student loans, and best of all you've been consistently, steadfastly, unapologetically condescending. But what I really appreciate about you is I get the pleasure of watching you die. Even if I suck down forty of these a day. You. Will. Die. Before. Me."

The goblin called me "a disrespectful little pup". I dramatically dropped my cigarette butt, crushing it with the toe of my now completely decimated chukkas. I undo my coat, turn and stride off towards Albert Park, trench billowing in the wind. This road trip is going well.

I trip over, scraping my knees, bloodying my nose. My once perfectly chiselled features are now ruined. I've also sunk from six foot two to five foot ten. And have gained weight. Luck is a bitch. I look up, and see a smiling face looking back at me...

INTERLUDE

Her hair just looks so good. I can smell it from here. I wonder what her bum smells like. God, I can't pop a boner in front of my kids. Think about something else. Welfare increases. Free Student Loans. BAs. Ok that did it... Wait she's coming. What do I want to order.

"Ummmm...Can I have you for dinner luv?"

"Sorry?"

"I want to swallow your whole pony tail while gently putting one of my fingers up your bum"

"I'm really not comfortable with this"

"Banter"

"No seriously please stop"

She's feisty, she wants me. Time for phase two. I have to touch it. I have to, reach out...

RE-LUDE

...the smile is terrifying. She has the face of a fucking dementor. Eyes giant black holes. Teeth yellow and gnarled. She helps me up. "Thanks," I mutter. I look down, even with the bidding

war going on in the celestial boardroom, this loon is still scrawling chalk into the side-walk hysterically giggling.

"I love babies. I'm offended by things. I feel MY rights are important. I WILL TAKE YOU TO COURT, YOU DAMN BIGOTS."

With a start I look around, there are hundreds of them now. Where did they come from? Hundreds of street-chalkers, magazine complainers, vexatious morons, snarling all over the place. They can smell my hate. My liberal sensibilities. My reservations about controlling random women's bodies. They start closing in. The rain beats into the pavement, the chalk clings on for dear life, the managerial board are in full panic mode, the lightning's once ingenious plan to keep the company's accounts offshore has been whistle-blown by the wind. The board is furious. They're moving to acquire the ground, the trees, the gutters. They're redeveloping it all into swamp and sludge. The statue of Queen Victoria is up to her knees in mud.

And I'm up to my knees in goddamn Pro-lifers. They're closing in. "We're intellectually serious," they say in unison. They want to know my employer's contact details so they can let them know how poorly I behave towards them and all the mean things I say about them, like calling them morons, weirdos, control freaks, and just really, seriously, pathologically ugly. They yell over and over again that they're the victims. That campus is cruel to them. That they just want the debate. They close in. "Jokes on you. I'm unemployed."

AFTERLUDE

The rain clouds' meeting was up. The mud was rising. "It's all a left conspiracy," they say. "The average New Zealander doesn't care," announces the CEO with a bashful lightning bolt standing silently before the cameras, a menacing security thunderclap only seconds behind him. It was all closing in. Things were getting worse. Menacing. Metaphorical. ■



James McAvoyeur

ARTS EDITORIAL BY SAMANTHA GIANOTTI

Penultimate *X-Men* prequel, *Days of Future Past*, was a nice ol' follow on from *X-Men: First Class*, managing to iron out some pretty glaring continuity errors and providing a platform for James McAvoy to once again do what he does best: weepy-eyed, emotional plights directed at the likes of Michael Fassbender and Jennifer Lawrence, as he pleads with them to maybe not fuck up the world just, like, once.

Unfortunately, *X-Men: Apocalypse*'s release this month has managed to mutate (ayyy) what would have been a neat and tidy ending to this prequel timeline, tossing in Guatemalan American star ~~of my marital fantasies~~ Oscar Isaac as the titular villain Apocalypse, whose sole goal is to bring about the apocalypse (which is basically the superhero equivalent of Mike Myers calling his films' villain Dr Evil. Important: in no way am I ragging on *Austin Powers*, a series that brought a seventy-year-old sex-savvy super-spy played by Mycoh Caine into the collective cultural zeitgeist).

I was well excited. Oscar, the return of Rose Byrne's character (sadly sans Aussie accent), and another chance for McAvoy to have a good cry. Despite this film's praise for Mystique's heroic actions in *Days of Future Past*, having prevented Magneto from assassinating President Richard Nixon (dude can you just chill for fucking *once*) and steeped positive relations between mutants and us humies, it felt like the filmmakers wanted to remind their audiences that Jennifer Lawrence also has a reeeeeeal nice rack. Almost any time a woman was spied through Cerebro, entered a room, or was just trying to do her bloody job (I'm looking at you, Moira MacTaggart), one or more male characters would

seemingly become overwhelmed by the mere presence of a pair of breasts; Jennifer Lawrence and Rose Byrne's mammary magic rendered the likes of revered professor Charles Xavier to nothing more than a gawking *Looney Tunes* character, a cartoonish "HUBBA HUBBA" almost audible (and *actually* audible if you were sitting next to Caitlin, who can't resist a prime opportunity for a pissstake, even in a silent theatre). Nothing was off limits as *Apocalypse*'s Bonergate unfolded - even after Mystique had (SPOILERS) been choked near to death during the film's climax, fellow comrade Beast paraded to her rescue - but not before falling on top of her, whispering "I got you" a mere inch from her near-unconscious face, making sure she could feel his full-on-phallus as he carried her to safety (this last point is conjecture but is also probably totally true).

Apocalypse's appalling treatment of the ladies extended to new addition Olivia Munn - her sexist shitshow started prior to filming, as the already svelte Munn was praised for dropping twelve pounds so that her character Psylocke could look extra hot while wearing latex rubber thigh highs in the Cairo desert (supremely inconvenient for roundhouse kicking enemies in the face without letting loose a lip of your vagina, or preventing sand from taking up residence in your buttcrack. "I don't like sand. It's coarse and rough and irritating and it gets everywhere" said Anakin Skywalker - and Olivia Munn, probably). Bonergate is not limited to *Apocalypse* - a film that was, in fairness, super enjoyable despite an abundance of unacknowledged erections. Anne Hathaway was once asked about the exercise regime she was following to get in shape to play Catwoman. She was also asked about the diet she was on in order to play Fantine in *Les Misérables*, a character who is LEGIT MEANT TO BE ON THE BRINK OF DEATH AS A RESULT OF STARVATION. On the *Avengers* press tour, Scarlett Johansson was asked

about her diet swiftly after Robert Downey Jr was asked a lengthy af question about developing his Iron Man character; Scarlett was also asked what underwear she manages to slink on underneath her uber tight Black Widow suit (Hawkeye and Captain America also have similarly tight pants, FYI).

A woman's attractiveness is a point of debate, a base requirement, a central purpose of many a woman's presence on screen (and, often it feels, in life #realtalk). But it just seems like we can do nothing right. Last week it came to light that St Dominic's College had given its female students a fairly comprehensive list of requirements for their school ball attire - namely, that their dresses are to show no cleavage, nor is their dress to have a back that dips lower than their armpits, and they are not to remove their shoes at any point in the evening. These stringent stipulations are nothing new; schools and workplaces have banned bare shoulders, chests, arms and legs on the basis that a woman's body is a distraction to those around her. Requirements like those of St Dominic's shift the blame from the sexualiser to the sexualised, and leave women bearing the brunt of how others receive and perceive their bodies. Women are ogled, demanded to be attractive, judged on their beauty; they are also told not to be too attractive, too sexual, too distracting.

Unlike President Nixon's shitshow of the 1970s, women should not feel they have things they must cover up - in fact, women shouldn't feel like they have to do anything at all. Just like Anakin's pesky Naboo-een sand, sexism is coarse and rough and irritating - and it crops up everywhere. We must dust off our sandy butts, throw away our sandy sandwiches - and decide for ourselves whether we want to bare our goddamn shoulders. ■



seven hundred and fifty words in defense of *babe: pig in the city*

The DVD I rented was a *Babe* and *Babe: Pig in the City* 2-disc box set. I've gotten a lot of shit for this around the office – *Babe* is the best movie ever committed to western canon, and I won't hear a word spoken against it.

Saint Heliers Video Ezy – my local video store – closed down last week. Equal parts victim of the internet and rising rents, I assume. Or perhaps the fact that I never returned said *Babe* and *Babe: Pig in the City* 2-disc box set. I am aggrieved by this loss. The store had been in business for eighteen years. To phrase that in sentimental terms, they've been open since I was two. It was the old local stalwart, like one of those antique steam trains, or what the Queen is, for English people. The store has been a part of my life for so long that I can remember when they used to have a closed off section for all the pornos, because at that point you couldn't get them online. They were kept behind a little curtain – I think they got rid of them before I realised exactly what the whole deal was, which was possibly for the best (and a massive regret of mine).

I remember going there to rent *Spiderman 2* – *The Video Game*, upwards of twenty times for my PlayStation 2. When I was five, they put a poster for *Bride Of Chucky* directly at my

eyeline, in front of the counter – an image that had buried itself deep into my subconscious, explaining a lot about the adult I am today. It was where I went to rent all the dumb, terrible movies that I would otherwise never pay full price to see. It was where I went to rent all the nutso bizarre shit that I would not have been able to find elsewhere. It's tempting to ride straight on in hard and fast on the nostalgia train. But I'm going to try avoid doing that, for the most part. Instead, I want to make the point that local video stores, the dumb old dinosaurs that they are, were also fucking great, and it is a shame that they're gone.

You might well say, "But Andrew! Streaming services and online rental outlets give you access to a much larger selection, typically at a much lower cost! They're a much more effective way to access TV shows in particular!" (or if you're an editor of this magazine, you might well say "Andrew, get the fuck out of this office and stop crushing cheddar Shapes all over my desk"). Maybe that's true. (*Arts editor's note: The second part is definitely true*). But there's a social value in having a selection of the latest releases ferried into the middle of suburbia, week-in, week-out. Now, having that culture around and available is a social good in and of itself. Even in the week that has passed so far, I've been massively slacked off that I can't get immediate access to *American Graffiti*. But access to powerful, effective filmmaking is not something that's meaningfully changed –

ultimately, for every kid like me, who burned through five films at a time almost every week for most of his childhood, there'll be like three kids who stumble onto *Paris, Texas* or *Orlando* on Netflix, and become similarly hooked.

Instead, the real value of video stores is that they were a way to keep up with the zeitgeist. They were a straightforward mechanism by which it was possible to follow films that perhaps didn't get a theatrical release in this country, but accrued critical and cultural acclaim overseas, within a relatively brisk timeframe relative to their initial release. Netflix, with its curated and temporally disjointed selection, doesn't offer that. Maybe I'll get to watch the films I want to watch eventually – which is fine – but that could be a year from now, if not two. And that's a shame. These kinds of changes make it harder to find and engage in considered discussion about movies – it cuts us, particularly, living on a Pacific island, off from the rest of the world. Now, in all likelihood, this won't be a long term problem. I'll probably just figure out some way to purchase films online. Or I'll get MUBI. Or I'll join the Auckland Film Society. Or maybe, god forbid, I'll just start going to the movies more often, or something else stupid. But in the meantime, I'm going to cling on to my desperate memories of grubby porno cubicles and pig movie box sets. Vive la vidéothèque. ■ ANDREW WINSTANLEY

Bangers to bang out when you're learning guitar

I remember walking into some brick-and-mortar guitar store in West Auckland (not there anymore) with me pa five years ago, scared to almighty, to buy my first guitar. This is where I learnt my first etude. This guy had a red ponytail, a flannel on; I knew he ate macabroni and cheese.

He waltzed on over, showed me how to chug the bajesus out of the lowest string. Etude Dog-Beer-Ute-Missus in G Minor. I'm not going to take a page out of the Encyclopedia Brotannica. We're going to put our loafers on, pop on some Bob Ross cassettes, and snuggle up with our uncles to discuss the five best songs to first learn on guitar.

1. "WHOLE LOTTA ROSIE" - AC/DC

This song will unleash your inner cooked-ness. You'll go hard or go home with this tune. Ten gram rocks are an essential to learning this tune. Albeit the message of the tune is pretty rooted, a little bit of blanking is required to just single out the wonderful guitars of both Malcolm and Angus Young. These lads are tonal gods, celestial rockers from Scotland. They kill on this tune. A Jesus resur-

recting riff from Malcolm + Angus' shredding = jizzle jazzle. This song is designed to get the love of soloing and riffing bubbling up inside ya, until it comes out all sticky and awkward on your sheets. Great for wannabe rockers.

2. "FREIGHT TRAIN" - ELIZABETH COTTEN

Cotten synthesised "Cotten picking", essentially playing the bass notes and the melody notes simultaneously. If you want to learn the blues or folk traditions of guitar, this is where you start. In terms of facility, this will be hard to start with. Independence of the right hand fingers is a tricky task. But, once you have it down, you'll be that much closer to not playing with a drummer or a bass player (dividing your money with one person). Great for the little Hum-cafe hippie inside you. Malcolm and Angus would be proud. Check out the version of Cotten playing this song with her granddaughter. Fuck up my circadian rhythm, that stuff brings a tear to my eye.

3. "LYING EYES" - THE EAGLES

The first proper song I learnt after Dog-Beer-Ute-Missus. The Eagles sure know how to write a choon, and this is one to get your chord shape chops started on. You got your G chords in there, your A chords. You name it son, it's all there. Easy to break out at parties,

weddings, Amish banishment ceremonies. Such good times. For everybody. There ain't no way to hide, your lyin' eye. **The Eagles wink at you collectively**

4. "COMMUNICATION BREAKDOWN" - LED ZEPPELIN

Probably the hardest of the lot if we're talking picking facility; but for those virtuosos among ye, you could bang this out. Jimmy Page is one of the greatest rockers ever, and this riff is a wee banger. A saveloy of sonic mastery. A bratwurst of boisterous guitar buffoonery. Fuck "Lying Eyes", this is where it gets real. This is pubes to bush. This is Roman sandals to closed-overs. For the true spirits among us. Each time you whip this out, you destroy one of Tony Abbott's lizard hatchlings.

5. "NUTSHELL" - ALICE IN CHAINS

Alright, I'll calm it down. Sorry. This tune gets your mood ring flashing like a shuriken in a laser shower. It's all there - your melancholy, your sorrow. If you're tryna woo a wee harlot, just whip out this song, a bit of moaning in the same key, and Robert is your Mother's Brother. Facility is fairly low, feels are high. S'all good. In all seriousness, this song is fairly simple and sounds supple, so get it learnt... on the double. ■ LEWIS WHEATLEY



Modern Family

TELEVISION REVIEW BY SHMULY LEOPOLD

One of the joys of *Craccum* arts reviewing is the fun balance between desperately trying to keep up to date (lest we have *another* review of *The Godfather*), and the fact that we'll always be at least a week out of step. With this in mind, on the 18th, *Modern Family* finished its seventh season. Has there ever been a greater hoax than *Modern Family*? A show that claims to be progressive, but is actually deeply retrograde. A show that claims to challenge orthodox family structures, but instead bends every family into a single happy American mode. A show that claims to be good, but is actually crap. Clever.

So apparently Claire (you know the shrill, blond, stressed out mom) is finally going to run her dad's business (you know the grumpy but ultimately loving patriarch with the large breasted wife). The Claire character is definitely the show's biggest failing. A stressed out housewife who gave up her job for her kids, and now is trying to re-emerge into a professional world (and by now, I mean for like three seasons) could make for some interesting television. But instead we see her constantly learn the value of family. And learn that her only avenue for success as a middle-aged woman is working in the family business. Gee, how forward thinking.

We see the gay couple continue to just be an all-male version of a straight nuclear family. The slightly racially tinged jokes about the breasty Latina wife are still more racist than they are dealing with race. And we get to see a repeat of the Haley-gets-a-sex-life jokes from season one, but this time it's Luke. Oh great.

Seven seasons down. About a million Emmys and Golden Globes. And the rich, nuclear, largely white, largely patriarchal American family gets to keep pretending things are ok. Watch this show if you hate thinking. Love America. And reckon that gays are pretty cool, but only when they're posh, drink lattes and squeal. ■



Veep

TELEVISION REVIEWBY MATTHEW DENTON

For those who have found the current American election a ridiculous (albeit frightening) joke, there is a chance to watch an equally hilarious political-satire show without the consequences of having an *actual* bigoted tyrant as leader. *Veep* follows Selina Meyer as the United States' Vice-President as she and her team navigate the ludicrous U.S. political system, and the reality of how impotent a Vice-President truly is.

While it may sound limited to political geeks, the crass and universal humour will make the apolitical an avid watcher. The show spits out slurs with rapid precision, leaving you in hysterics. Constant ineptitude leads to constant insults. Swear words are in abundance. No mercy is given to any character's mother. It's even funnier watching these leaders and respected individuals act incredibly childish (not unlike what we're currently seeing from a certain Presidential candidate).

The fifth season has seen the departure of Armando Iannucci, who created and ran the show for the first four seasons. However his departure is hardly noticeable; the writing is still sharp and on point. The ensemble cast are so in touch with the nuances and neuroses of their characters, and the way they flip-flop in new circumstances is very true to the foundation Iannucci created.

The whole ensemble works well together and there are no weak characters. Certain praise should be given to the bullish Amy, who practically runs Selina's life, and can cut down any person in one swift sentence, as well as bag-man Gary whose unimportant role is known to almost everyone except him. But the show would not be anywhere as good without Julia Louis-Dreyfus' Selina, a narcissistic and useless politician whose haphazard career would be nowhere without the team she so often inelegantly castrates.

The show is only half an hour and has 8-10 episodes a season, the perfect amount to binge watch in the upcoming break and/or exam period. ■



Preacher

TELEVISION REVIEW BY ANDREW WINSTANLEY

Preacher follows Jesse Custer, a small town preacher who struggles to meaningfully connect both with his parish and with God. Custer is imbued with a mysterious force that allows him to command anyone he speaks to to do whatever he says – usually in the most literal and disgusting way imaginable. To more conservative readers, that synopsis may sound slightly 'out there', but not 'out there' enough to be a turn off. Let me give you a more specific impression: this show is totally gonzo, absolutely bat-shit crazy. It is violent, scathingly anti-religious, dark and mean-hearted.

Preacher is an adaptation of Garth Ennis' comic book series of the same name, dating from the mid-nineties – a series known for being extremely provocative. Note: one of the main characters, "Arse-Face", is a teenage boy whose failed suicide attempt has left him with a face that looks more or less exactly like a puckered asshole. The show, or at least the pilot, seems to reflect the comics pretty well, managing the tone in such a way that doesn't seem as pointlessly juvenile as its source material, while still managing to feel as wicked and subversive.

Worth a special mention are the fight scenes, which were uniformly excellent – well choreographed, funny, and brutal. *Preacher* utilizes a colour scheme that successfully suggests Steve Dillon's original art, while still working nicely in live action. Less great, at times, was the sound mixing – even at top volume, the sound of Texans murmuring to each other can be difficult to parse, especially when you're hearing it on shitty laptop speakers.

It's hard to tell exactly where a show will go after only watching a pilot – the show's showrunners may find it impossible to maintain this balancing act episode after episode, season after season. But on balance, *Preacher* is probably something worth getting in on on the ground floor. ■



The Division

GAME REVIEW BY EUGENIA WOO

I remember playing a Tom Clancy game even before reading one of his many books. I loved the *Rainbow Six* games even though critics might have preferred the flashier *Splinter Cell* ones, and I even tried to get through the latter despite being horrific at games that rely on your ability to sneak around like some kind of ninja ghost. I tried my very hardest with *The Division* because my younger self would have been horrified if I panned a Tom Clancy game without at least putting in 24 hours - but it was ultimately a soulless experience.

The Division is a handsome game. Cinematically, the detail is amazing. However, once you get past the first few hours of ooh-ing and aah-ing at apocalyptic Manhattan, there isn't much left to do. The premise of the game is that a virus has decimated the population, and survivors are left to form some kind of scavenging military unit to take care of those who would turn the chaos to achieve their own evil ends. You find most of this out in the early stages, and then the rest of the plot is derived from you listening to recordings left by those who have perished. It's teased out of its flimsy shell, leaving little to go on and even less to the imagination.

The saving grace of the game is its PvPvE function, where you're left to match-make with strangers and search for loot together. The catch, however, is that if you have a loot cache and someone on your team wants it, they're well within their rights to blow your head off. The paranoia and feeling of being hunted is what *The Division* should have offered from the get-go, but the campaign never really delivers. If you don't have the time or inclination to grind your way through a grieving slaughterfest, then take my advice - sit this one out. ■



X-Men: Apocalypse

FILM REVIEW BY NICOLE BLACK

The *X-Men* franchise has always faced the issue of trying to make every new film bigger and more epic than the last. Unfortunately the writers are yet to realise the *X-Men* films are at their best when they focus on conflict within the team, not some ambiguous outside threat. Unfortunately, *Apocalypse* does just that, focusing on an impressive but slightly cliché villain, preventing this film from being anything but just average.

The first half is good, maybe almost great. Set ten years after *Days of Future Past*, it really is entertaining to see how all the characters had developed in that time. The introduction of a young Jean Grey and Scott Summers was well-written and provided some solid entertainment. This film began to falter around the hour mark when Apocalypse, the aforementioned villain, began to pose a real threat. From that point, the plot fell apart, revealing itself to be lazy and cliché in the most obvious ways. Not even Quicksilver's witty commentary throughout the second half could save this trainwreck. The climactic battle between Apocalypse and the X-Men was completely set up, resulting in some of the worst action sequences in any recent superhero film, and the use of Jean Grey brought with it memories of *The Last Stand*, a movie most people would wish to forget.

Apocalypse was a cool villain, an obstacle that seemed insurmountable for the bulk of the movie, and the 80s setting lifted the mood to something a little more fun than the last *X-Men* movie. However, none of that could save this from lazy writing and direction, resulting in a movie with so much potential that just didn't hit. ■

Books in the Public Domain

Why spend \$15 on a book when that could go toward 1.875 jugs at Shadz (would've got ya a full two jugaroos last year)? We at *Craccum* don't condone drinking in lieu of study ("why don't we have both?" *Old El Paso commercial music*), so here are a handful of classic books in the public domain that you can get your paws on for freeeeee, for a cheeky Friday night read or to brush up before your English 102 tutorial test:

***Dracula* - Bram Stoker**

If you're ashamed of your fourteen-year-old self's penchant for *Twilight*, you can wipe the slate clean by perusing Stoker's tale about Dracu, original nocturnal badass and perennial sex-pest.

***Pride and Prejudice* - Jane Austen**

You've watched *Bridget Jones's Diary* countless times (crying, eating ice cream, looking at pictures of Colin Firth and his wife on Instagram), but did you know that *Pride and Prejudice* inspired Fielding's original novel? Did ya know that? Did ya?

***The Importance of Being Earnest* - Oscar Wilde**

Do not be put off by the abysmal 2002 film adaptation of Wilde's most popular play. The play is spectacular in that its ruthless smackdown of Victorian society remains hilarious today. The film is spectacular in that it was utter shite even with Judi Dench, Colin Firth, and Rupert Everett. Avoid.

***Great Expectations* - Charles Dickens**

'Tis oft said that Dickens' books are so long and descriptive because he was paid by the word. Whether such a tale is true - you don't have to pay him at all.

***Jane Eyre* - Charlotte Brontë**

Did you *eyre* that you can read the eldest Brontë sister's most famous novel for free? A lot sexier and hotter than *Pride and Prejudice* (mostly because SPOILER the novel's climax involves a huge fire).

Go forth: ace your English exams, and drink your watered down beers. Preferably in that order. ■

"What the Fuck is Going on Here?"

and Other Questions Regarding the X-Men Film Franchise

Right, so you've just watched *X-Men: Apocalypse* or you're just about to watch it or maybe you feel so disheartened by the recent *X-Men* films that you're not going to see it at all and you're wondering to yourself, what the hell is going on? This is so confusing. Are they prequels? Reboots? Deboots? Retcons? Same universe, different time-lines?

Short answer: that last one.

Long answer: this article. Here we go.

The *X-Men* movie franchise, as we know it, currently has eight films. There are two trilogies. The original trilogy starring Patrick Stewart consists of *X-Men*, *X-2* and *X-Men: The Last Stand*; the new trilogy starring James McAvoy consists of *X-Men: First Class*, *X-Men: Days of Future Past* and *X-Men: Apocalypse*. (Disclaimer: the new trilogy might extend past three films. It all really depends on whether James McAvoy, Michael Fassbender, and Jennifer Lawrence want to extend their contracts with 20th Century Fox past the three films that had been planned. Jennifer Lawrence doesn't seem too keen.)

ANYWAY. The other two films are standalone films, *X-Men Origins: Wolverine* and *The Wolverine*, which detail the life of Hugh Jackman's Wolverine before and after his brief encounter with the X-Men. Like *Origins*, *First Class* was supposed to be a prequel to the original trilogy depicting how Charles Xavier formed the X-Men Initiative and how he and Magneto fell out with one another. It was supposed to be the first film in an intended prequel trilogy. However, fans and moviegoers noticed some pretty shoddy continuity errors between *First Class* and the rest of the films. Mismatched ages of characters between films (if Xavier met Mystique and Moira MacTaggart in the 1960s then they would have been in their 60-70s in the original series, which they clearly were not), characters appearing in times and place where they shouldn't have been, and Xavier becoming paralysed before he met Jean Grey (which is not the case à la a flashback in *The Last Stand*). This led to the development of *Days of Future Past* which explained away the continuity issues as different things happening in different timelines. So, although the continuity issues were fixed up (more or less), now we have two or more timelines to think about which makes things confusing as all hell.

Let's break it down.



PRE-TIMELINE SPLIT - *X-MEN: FIRST CLASS* AND THE FIRST HALF OF *X-MEN ORIGINS: WOLVERINE*

So we're running on one timeline right now-- some sort of original timeline before any of this time travel shit goes down. The events in these two films run in tandem with one another.

First Class is about Xavier's story – how he met Mystique, Magneto and a bunch of other mutants and formed the original X-Men; how he built Cerebro, and how he and Magneto fell out with one another resulting in a conflict with the two which ended in Magneto going to prison and Xavier forming his school.

At the same time in *Origins*, Wolverine is running around doing his thang. He's joined the army and runs around the world with a group of mutants doing secret missions for the government. He then leaves the program to live with his sweetheart up in Alaska or wherever.

It's about here that the timeline splits. Unbeknownst to Wolverine, mutants have been gathering political interest. In *Days of Future Past*, we find out that there's a lot of fear surrounding mutants which leads Trask Industries, in 1973, to develop the Sentinel Program with the government aiming to control mutants. Mystique kills Trask which sets into motion Timeline A.

TIMELINE A – THE SECOND HALF OF *X-MEN ORIGINS: WOLVERINE*, THE ORIGINAL *X-MEN* TRILOGY, AND *THE WOLVERINE*

Mystique kills Trask, dooming this timeline to an escalating tension between mutants and non-mutants. Returning back to *Origins*, Wolverine gets his Adamantium exoskeleton and claws, Major Stryker tries to trap him, but he escapes and rescues a bunch of mutants who were being experimented on (who Xavier later finds and brings to his school). The original trilogy begins here: the US government is trying to force mutants to publicly reveal themselves so they can eventually neutralise them and remove their

power. Magneto gathers up an army of mutants and wages an attack on everyone that opposes mutants. Xavier finds Wolverine and forms another X-Men to stop Magneto's army and find peace between mutant and non-mutant.

Things seem pretty hopeful by the end of the original trilogy. Magneto's army is defeated and the UN announces their new US ambassador is mutant. But things take a sharp turn. In *The Wolverine*, we find that Wolverine has taken off in search of a "cure" to his immortality and is haunted by the death of Jean Grey who he killed out of necessity during *The Last Stand*. Meanwhile, tensions between mutant and non-mutant peak when Trask Industries (the same as above) has developed robotic weapons that are able to obliterate all mutants. So, in a desperate attempt to assuage the mutant apocalypse, Xavier and Magneto team up to find Wolverine and send him back in time to stop Mystique from killing Trask and setting in motion this doomed timeline.

TIMELINE B – *X-MEN: DAYS OF FUTURE PAST* AND *X-MEN: APOCALYPSE*

In *Days of Future Past*, Wolverine goes back in time and stops Trask's death. Mystique continues to hunt down Trask and finds out that he is selling US military secrets and ends up publicly saving the president from one of Trask's robots. Trask Industries is shut down and the tension between mutants and non-mutants starts subsiding. *X-Men: Apocalypse* follows down this new timeline. A lot of mutants start publicly revealing themselves thanks to Mystique's actions and Xavier's School For the Gifted Youngsters thrives.

I guess in this timeline unlike the other, Wolverine mustn't have escaped Major Stryker and had only just been let free by Jean and the gang. Who knows where he'll go or if he'll ever meet Xavier. Let's hope we find that out in the next needlessly convoluted X-Men film.

Until then, happy watching. ■ MICHAEL CLARK

A Guide to Good Local Bands

May is New Zealand Music Month, a fact that we all seem to forget most years. Oops. Even though this week holds the last days of May, it seems like an appropriate time to salvage the celebratory month by paying homage to some of the under-exposed musical talent around in New Zealand at the moment.

JAKOB

Jakob's brand of introspective 'post-rock' tends to favour long, formulaic build-ups before blowing up your eardrums - in a pleasant (if not very loud) way. Because they're an instrumental group, they're a great study music alternative if you get sick of pretending to like classical music because it makes you feel intelligent while you're thrashing out an essay. Jakob are based in Napier but have recently been touring northern Europe, which seems oddly right for them. I've seen Jakob live three times, and each was excellent. They play shows in Auckland every few months or so, attracting the marginal metal heads to the Kings Arms.

SCARED OF GIRLS

Scared of Girls are a lot like a combination of Kings of Leon and the Pixies in their sound. They have that characteristic, low-key rebellious attitude which came out of 90s alt punk, carrying the idea of being a misfit youth in the 'burbs through their lyrics. They play shows in small venues in Auckland, and their Facebook page is probably the best place to find their next one.

MERMAIDENS

What about these bandcamp tags: "alternative/dark/New Zealand/rock/Wellington/dream-surf/ psychpop/underseawitch". Fair enough. I like them because they have some moments of genuine collaborative heaviness along with softer songs, which is a great sign of a band who knows how to play together for effect. Their female vocalist is pleasantly floaty, and their guitar is full of reverb and spacey effects. They're a good modern dream pop band, combining its '80s apathy with newfound musical punch. They've recently released a full-length album called *Undergrowth*, available on Bandcamp.

CONNAN MOCKASIN

I don't think Connan Mockasin technically

counts anymore, since he has been based in a number of English cities for years and now lives in California, only returning to New Zealand for sporadic shows. But nonetheless, he was born and bred in Te Awanga and has a cringey Kiwi accent, so let's claim him. My favourite part about Connan is his guitar: he basically DIY-hacked the edges off a Fender Stratocaster to make a roughly oval-shaped body, because why not? As for the music: Connan plays psychedelic groovy stuff using a full live band (including funky bassist who is a bad dancer) and very odd lyrics. He has a couple of albums to get stuck into, and hopefully a new one will be coming soon.

THE NAENAE EXPRESS

Initially I was unsure about what to make of this group. Their Facebook page consists of a pineapple as a profile picture, and numerous pineapples as their cover photo. Are they a homage to Pineapple Express? Extreme lovers of tropical fruit? Do they live in a pineapple under the sea? Who knows. Even if they are shrouded in mystery, they write narrative-style songs about cricket and famous New Zealanders, and that's good enough for me. Based in Auckland, they play at the 'edgy' venues like Whammy Bar and the Wine Cellar. ■ CHRISTY BURROWS

Ghostbusters & Remakes: An Honest Look

It's safe to say that the internet has lost its mind over the trailers for the all-female remake of *Ghostbusters*, the second of which came out last week. Both trailers have a lot more dislikes than likes, and the disliking camp have been accused of dismissing the film's potential for sexist reasons.

I can't say I'm as mad or as surprised about Hollywood remaking *Ghostbusters* as most of the internet is, though I'll confess I'm not too excited. There's no doubt that there are people out there, myself not included, who don't want women to have better film roles than 'Bond girl', and discussions of feminism on otherwise popular channels can often rake in the dislikes. It would certainly, still, be a stretch to call even a large percentage of the dislikers "sexist" by

definition. Personally, I don't share the internet cynicism that dismissed *Batfleck* earlier this year, so I didn't dislike the trailers or write an angry Facebook status, but I certainly laughed once or twice watching them.

The trouble with people in the "didn't like the trailers" cohort is their lack of effort to properly address the accusation of a double standard from *Ghostbusters* defenders. The most extraordinary claim I saw was the "it's a remake and remakes are unnecessary so I disliked". Let's take away the feminism debate and see if this claim really makes sense in the film world.

Is it really true that all remakes are unnecessary? Plenty of remakes have been successful, including the beloved Clooney-Pitt *Oceans* trilogy remakes, which are incidentally also being remade with an all-female cast. There's also Al Pacino's *Scarface*, the better known remake of an iconic 30s film of the same name. In fact, remakes have won Best Picture twice; the science fiction horror classic, *The Thing* (sort of a remake), and the critically and commercially successful Scorsese crime-drama, *The Departed*. I could keep going, with Zack Snyder's *Dawn of the Dead* or the Coen brothers' *True Grit*, but the point is made.

That's not to say that there aren't a tonne of

rubbish remakes out there. While I've been mostly neutral/don't care about *Ghostbusters*, the mere existence of plenty of remakes, even in the last few years, has left me furious. The Michael Bay-produced *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles* and its forthcoming sequel have been met with groans from fans and filmgoers alike, and nobody was madder than me to see the cult classic *Point Break* get remade, only to replace hilarious dopey Keanu Reeves quotes and actual plot with a bunch of stunts. And why on earth did well-aged horror movies like *Nightmare on Elm Street* and *Poltergeist* get mediocre remakes?

Those shitpile remakes, all of which made a profit and didn't get many dislikes at all should at least be as equally hated as *Ghostbusters*. Throwing strong remakes under the bus to justify that you're totally not a sexist isn't cool either. Do better, internet. ■ JACK CALDWELL



I Miss The Old Kanye: Defending The Indefensible

WITH ELOISE SIMS

Hello, my name is Eloise Sims, and I am a recovering Kanye West fan. I've been in remission for approximately 3 days, 5 hours, and 22 minutes.

I first became a fan of Kanye when I was seven-teen years old. And when I say fan, I mean *fan*. I was obsessed. *The College Dropout* was the sole soundtrack of my summer.

I can't count how many times I hummed the riff of *Spaceship* while working in my part-time job at a Wellington cinema. The line "I've been working this grave shift/and I ain't made shit" seemed so applicable to my measly \$14.75 an hour.

I knew all his songs, and all the words. I once performed the entirety of *Gold Digger* at a cringe-worthy level of volume at Shadows Karaoke Night (sorry to anyone who witnessed that display). I requested *Black Skinhead* at literally every single party I ever attended, and nodded furiously whenever *POWER* came on at the club. I couldn't talk about the beauty of *Hey Mama* without choking up.

I even wrote an article in *Craccum* last year attempting to defend my hero, after my friends simply got tired of hearing how much I loved this self-proclaimed Messiah of our generation. In it, I rallied for him, explaining that he wasn't the person made out to be in the tabloids. He was just misunderstood. No one really got him. He was an easy media target. In fact, he was a much better person than everyone understood him to be.

I was wrong. Very, very wrong.

This realization came with the release of *The Life Of Pablo* on Valentine's Day this year. As a mega-fan, I felt blessed by the arrival of this new music. I even considered buying Tidal just to listen to the expectedly sweet, sweet tunes of "the greatest living rock star on this planet".

Now, I'm beyond relieved that I didn't make the Tidal investment (although I came dangerously close to doing it again when *Lemonade* dropped). *TLOP* was nothing if not a maelstrom of uneasy thoughts.

I couldn't help but feel a little disappointed. While I was hoping for a recreation of pop genius as reflected in albums such as *My Beautiful Twisted Dark Fantasy*, *TLOP* felt like a mess of disjointed facts. Every song conveyed

a conflicting message – with no coherent conclusion.

It's discordant, to say the very least. While he raps about loving Kim in songs such as *Waves* ("you set the night on fire"), he jumps straight back into lines like "Now if I fuck this model/and she just bleach her asshole/And I get bleach on my T-shirt/then Imma feel like an asshole" on *Father Stretch My Hands*. Also, that line alone might just be the single stupidest thing Kanye has ever written.

TLOP as a whole is confused, irrational, and frighteningly liable to explode. Sure, individually, there are a few great songs on there. *No More Parties in LA*, with the touch of the great Kendrick Lamar, is the kind of song you want to blast out the hood of your red Chevrolet (if you could afford one). But put together, it constantly feels like Kanye is striving towards one idea, before running rapidly in the other direction. In *FML*, Yeezy claims that it's "revealing the layers to my soul". If that's so, then that's a soul that's clearly filled with paranoia, attention deficiencies, insecurity, bravado, and a borderline personality disorder.

Even so, the greatest geniuses can release an utterly crap album every once in a while. I still had faith in Yeezy. I endured my friend's critiques of his Twitter, particularly with the Amber Rose scandal.

"Yeah, he can be a bit of a dick sometimes." I concurred. "But... He's still a pretty powerful musician, right?"

Well, perhaps not. After all of that – his refusal to accept the criticisms of *Rolling Stone* due to being a "white publication", his request to Mark Zuckerberg to invest one billion dollars into his "ideas", his angry rant on SNL about a last-minute set change, his very public dissing of Taylor Swift – I had to face facts.

Kanye was rapidly changing from a merrily tolerated pop icon into something that was utterly indefensible.

If nothing else, the Ellen interview last week completely sealed that attitude. Ellen DeGeneres – she of daytime television interviews that your one annoying friend on Facebook never stops sharing – looks beyond pained.

She is lost. We all are. Kanye slips from a rant about clothes, to Walt Disney, to the Oscars, at a frightening pace. He seems to always be on the edge of making a coherent point, then

slipping away from it.

"I was raised to do something, to make a difference." He says vehemently, to the audience's applause, before continuing on the entirely different vein of, "I didn't take the Oscars as a joke." Discomfort ensues. "Picasso is dead." He virtually wails.

However, possibly the most uncomfortable moment is when he references apparent conversations he's had with Barack Obama. "Leōs talking about the environment," he proclaims, "and I'm talking about clothes, and everyone looks at me like that's not an important issue." We can all envisage this conversation occurring – so strongly, that I have acute second-hand embarrassment from it, right now.

The interview – confusing, maddening, and lengthy – may have been the final indication that West is completely near losing the plot. "I'm sorry for the real-ness, daytime television." He says with a cheery grin. But what he was spouting wasn't exactly real-ness in the first place. There was no truth, no beauty in it. There was no way to respond.

So if you're still a Kanye fan, I salute your dedication. Really.

But, I'm afraid, Mr. West; this lovely thing we have has to end. I'm seeing someone new – less insane, less vocal, but far more concise, creative, and intelligent.

His name is Kendrick, and he is a God. ■

ELOISE IS ONE OF THOSE GIRLS WHO MADE A SHOW OUT OF HATING JUSTIN BIEBER WHEN SHE WAS TWELVE YEARS OLD. NOT MUCH HAS CHANGED. SHE LOVES JOHN OLIVER, PICTURES OF LABRADORS, AND WILL BE TRAPPED IN ENGLAND FOR THE NEXT SIX MONTHS. PLEASE FOLLOW HER ON TWITTER (JOHN CAMPBELL DID IT THE OTHER DAY): @SIMSELOISE



SEX, DRUGS & ELECTORAL ROLLS:

Four White Teens And A Māori Man Walk Into A Courtroom...

WITH CURWEN ARES ROLINSON

More than a month ago this column sought to use a case then-prominent in the media to illustrate how race and privilege influence the administration of our criminal justice system. Its conclusion, perhaps unsurprisingly, was that it was pretty much impossible to deny that despite what you might have been told about New Zealand being an egalitarian paradise, even here "race" has a bearing upon what sort of outcome you might get before the courts.

The trouble with complex ideas, of course, is that they're often reduced to simple ideas. And the trouble with simple ideas is that they are either wrong – or so lacking in nuance upon a surface reading of same that they might as well be.

Two weeks ago, there was a minor furor over the sentencing of a quadrangle of teenage boys up in Northland for their respective parts in a serious string of adrenaline-fueled law-breaking. Between them, they racked up 34 charges of burglary, eight charges of theft, and three charges of receiving – with a sum total for the value of goods they stole clocking in at around eighty thousand dollars.

The sentences for this spate of offending? Up to ten months' home detention for each offender, three hundred hours' community service apiece, and between ten and twenty thousand dollars worth of reparations each.

This was seen as a comparatively light sentence by some. And it wasn't long before people started drawing the obvious conclusion – that these kids got off easy because they were white. And that if they'd been brown (although presumably not a son of the Māori King), the outcome would have been incredibly different.

This appeared to be confirmed a little less than a week later, when a 37 year old Māori man, David Leef, was sentenced to a four month term of imprisonment for several charges relating to his poaching of fish from a protected rainbow trout spawning stream.

Here were four reasonably well-off young white guys who'd been 'let off' with Home-D, while a poorer, browner defendant guilty of an arguably lesser crime found himself thrown in the slammer.

My newsfeed started filling up with progressive-minded people making a direct comparison between the two cases.

Finally, manifest proof of the festering racial inequity within our justice system!

Except that's not what we have here. Not exactly, anyway.

A little amateur sleuthing with the Google-daemon

revealed there was a bit more to this case than the simplistic narrative deployed across social media which sought to explain the disparity between Leef's sentencing and those of others as being largely the result of Leef's race.

For starters, there's the fact that Leef was originally supposed to be sentenced, along with his co-accused, back in April 2015. The reason why it's taken more than a year for him to finally appear in front of a sentencing judge, is that he breached his bail conditions and went on the run for twelve and a half months. This will, obviously, not have helped him in court – and will have directly counted against his prospects for securing a sentence of home detention instead of a term of imprisonment.

Further counting against Mr Leef will have been his curious decision to refuse counsel for his case (despite being offered legal aid, and assistance from the duty solicitors). And his somewhat ballsy attempt to avoid entering any plea at all (whether guilty or otherwise) on the basis that the New Zealand judicial system had, in his mind, "no jurisdiction" over him for this offending due to it having allegedly taken place on Māori land. Now it has in the past been somewhat possible for skilled defence lawyers to argue what you might term a 'cultural defence' to otherwise criminal conduct with some success. But these are defences, not pleas – and are probably going to be rather difficult for the average layperson to even articulate in a court-room setting, let alone win upon.

Leef's courtroom conduct is relevant for two reasons. First, and most importantly, because "no jurisdiction" was eventually recorded as a de facto "not guilty" plea on the instructions of the judge. Leef therefore lost his shot at a potential sentence reduction of up to 20% as a result of entering a guilty plea at first instance. And second, for some reason judges often tend to take an instant dislike to defendants who are perceived to be 'thumbing their nose' at the system, whether by refusing to turn up to sentencing while a representative shouts at a judge that they ought to stand down for lack of jurisdiction; or by refusing to have a lawyer represent you. This last point, in particular, tends to draw the ire of judges (all of whom were lawyers at some point beforehand).

I make no claim as to whether any of the above *should* be the case. Merely that it is. And Mr Leef's sentencing is not entirely incomprehensible, even if some might find it objectionable.

Now contrast all of the above with the judicial conduct of the four teens from Northland. They

entered early guilty pleas (resulting in substantial sentencing discounts). They were competently represented by professional lawyers. They expressed remorse pre-sentencing, went through restorative justice programs with their victims, made financial restitutions, and pledged to pay everything back out of their incomes.

In other words, they did pretty much everything you could expect a 'model' defendant to do to avoid jail, and invoked pretty much every avenue offered in the Sentencing Act in order to secure a reduced sentence.

They were also able to call upon their youth as a mitigating factor in the offending – as the law tends to look more kindly upon those who are not 'older and wiser' by virtue of their brains not having fully matured, while also wanting to give young people a better shot at eventual rehabilitation through lighter penalties. A younger person will therefore almost invariably get a lighter sentence than an older man convicted of the same crime.

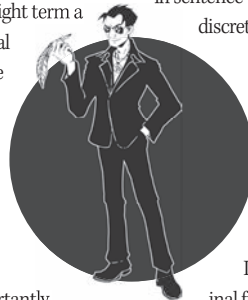
The Sentencing Act mandates that the court *must* take into consideration all of the above factors. As soon as your lawyer raises it, it is pretty much required by law for it to be converted into a reduction in sentence – subject to a certain degree of judicial discretion.

In other words, there are fairly logical reasons for the differences in sentencing between these two cases which do not exactly afford a huge degree of scope for race as the main reason for the disparity here.

It is, of course, inarguable that a criminal from a more privileged background is going to be far better equipped to deal with a courtroom setting than one who isn't. But a simplistic focus upon race which eschews an analysis of the other factors at play (such as economic status) doesn't exactly help us to understand or change this situation.

That is not to say that our judicial system doesn't have a racial problem. Even the New Zealand Police acknowledge their own issues with "unconscious bias" in this area. From a critical legal studies perspective, it additionally occurs that many a minority offender is going to have far greater struggles to scrub themselves up into the mould of being a 'model defendant' than someone more well off and from the dominant culture.

But while there are some great cases out there with which to prove racial bias in sentencing – and, importantly, we must remember that no victim is perfect – Mr Leef's circumstances would not necessarily appear to be one of them. ■



Anti-Social Media

BY ANA HARRIS

Facebook was first launched from a college dorm room in February 2004. Initially limited to Harvard students and later expanded to include a number of other universities and high schools, Facebook went live to the world in 2006. It's now a publically listed company worth nearly \$50 billion USD in 2015, and employs over 12,000 people. In April 2016, it had 1.65 billion monthly active users.

The face book has come a long way from its humble roots. Traditionally a university directory of names and photographs, the face book in its most primitive form was a printed resource intended to help students get to know one another. In some ways Facebook has retained its original purpose, though on a much, *much* wider scale. We each have the ability to connect with hundreds of other people in a matter of seconds. Social media has all but replaced the need for letters, calendars, photo albums... A few years ago a friend even sent me an invite to his wedding via Facebook. I barely need to store cell-phone numbers anymore because I contact most people my age via Messenger.

Social media is central to our lives. It's a major source of news and all kinds of other information. It's hard to imagine a functioning social life without Facebook. Not only is it hugely convenient, it provides numerous sources of guilty pleasure. My flat mates often hear me late at night cackling at videos like *Guy throws eggs to his unsuspecting mother for a year*, or cooing at pictures of babies kissing puppies snuggling ducks. They're jealous of how intellectual I am. A guy I met in second year once confessed to Facebook stalking every single person in our law school cohort before the semester even began. The procrastination possibilities are endless (and sometimes creepy).

Instant communication and escapist entertainment are two of the more obvious attractions of sites like Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter. What we often fail to notice is the marketing potential of social media. I don't mean businesses advertising their products online, though of course these sites couldn't exist without them. Everyone with a social media account is in the business of marketing. To varying degrees of course – for some reason we now let people become Instagram stars because they look good in jeans, are talented at photoshop, or seemingly just because they're Australian. While most of us approach the task with more subtlety, we're all projecting our self-image simply by engaging with others on social media. It allows us to construct pre-packaged self-identities ready for easy consumption by friends, acquaintances, and sometimes even total strangers.

Social media celebrities like Essena O'Neill are caricatures of this self-marketing phenomenon. O'Neill, Aussie teen and PR-guru, renounced her Instagram stardom at the end of 2015 because she felt (all of a sudden) that her account encouraged unrealistic body goals in young women. In a no doubt sincere show of feminism,

she posted a teary video from her beachside mansion in the Gold Coast asking fans for continued financial support, assuring them that their money would mainly go towards her new-found passions: vegan blogging and promoting healthy body images. *The Australian* later noted: "with that impassioned tirade, O'Neill made herself more famous than ever". Essena is currently writing her first book. Genius really.

For the rest of us, it's not money but social inclusion that motivates our use of social media. This is a relatively banal point. It's no secret that most people enjoy getting 'likes' and positive comments on our posts and photos. What's more interesting is the entirely constructed nature of our Internet self-identities. We are the sole censors of content on our accounts (hence why 'frapes' are so obvious, because 'lol im gay' doesn't strike us as the kind of thing that X would post). We only export carefully pre-selected material to our Friends (read: consumers). In other words, the heavily edited version of us – which isn't necessarily a conscious choice, but it's certainly what ends up in our newsfeeds. Death of the author and all that. Photos showing us all dressed up from our best angle in the centre of a ring of friends suggest we're popular, attractive, and have lots of fun at the weekend. Posts about how great it is wearing track pants to uni let people know how laid back we think we are. Albums full of travel photos say we're wealthy enough to explore the entire world over the summer break.

I'm very bad at social media. I once fraped a friend after things got a little weird between him and another mutual friend in a bedroom closet at 5am on a Tuesday. A jovial quip from me about being stuck in the closet received an onslaught of unimpressed comments. "Are you serious? People literally kill themselves over this sh*t and you think it's a topic for humour? Poorly done, 0/10".

A little stung by the feedback on my unintentional gay slur, I avoided making any more posts for a while. Until last week, when I posted a graduation photo complete with a caption referencing various notable life experiences. You only need to draw on NCEA Level One English skills to read the subtext: I am educated. I triumph in the face of adversity. I am a middle class cliché. This photo is an attempt to justify sitting through a very long and boring ceremony (not to mention six years of university). The post got 115 likes, a personal record. Instant gratification achieved.

One of my Friends is a former colleague endearingly dubbed Crazy Julie. A lovely person, Julie is a Facebook menace. Julie provides real-time updates several times a day. I haven't seen her in over a year but I know a lot of intimate details about her personal life. Her statuses range from mundane details about ongoing issues with a sore finger to posts publically ripping out her ex-husband.

Sometimes I lie awake at night worrying that I'll never become a social media icon. But I refuse to stop believing in my own potential, just like Essena told me. Even if I start to doubt, I can take comfort in the fact that I'm not as bad at Facebook as Crazy Julie. ■



The Conversation

WITH RAYHAN LANGDANA

The end of the Semester always puts me in a reflective mood. At the start of Semester 1 we're still in the summertime. It is not unusual to find sand in your pockets; to find a smear of sunblock on your phone screen.

Everyone is tanned, your bank balance is healthy and you make sandwiches for lunch every day. You peruse your reading lists with intensity, hastily adding to your favourites the arcane websites and journal articles that lecturers offhandedly mention at the end of class. You see A's in your future. From Friday to Sunday you sit in the sun outside, drinking a beer that never gets warm.

And then it changes. It's dark when you wake up and darker still when you finish class. Your washing hangs damply on your clotheshorse for days. Sometimes you need to rewash it to get the wet smell out. Kicking open the door to your flat in the evening, you are forced backwards by a gust of icy, dead air that would be equally at home in the abandoned, ravaged, troll-infested Mines of Moria. Flat dinners feature less and less feta, and more and more tins of tomatoes. You've stopped making lunch. You swear that each \$9 sandwich will be your last. You send pleasant texts to your parents more frequently than you did before – like Muhammad Ali at his peak, you're softening them up with a few light jabs before hitting them with the uppercut that is the request for extra money, because you spent all of yours on "printing". The kettle can't boil fast enough for your hot water bottle.

This is my second to last Semester at University. I'm in a reflective mood – I think now is an appropriate time to revisit the goals I set myself at the start of the year.

RAYHAN'S GOALS FOR 2016

GOAL: 100% class attendance.

GOAL STATUS: Ok, this was always unachievable. However, I did pretty good – maybe I can't pick my Ethics lecturer(s?) out of a line-up, but I have been a bleary-eyed, occasionally silent attendee at most of my classes. Attendance seems to correlate with a spike in Facebook activity. Interesting.

GOAL: Write a good *Craccum* column and submit it on time.

GOAL STATUS: It's 9pm on a Monday. This was due yesterday. It's ok. Right? It's ok.

GOAL: Keep doing stand-up comedy regularly, get really good at it, and use the audience's helpless, paralysing laughter to drown out

the voices in your head that tell you not to finish your degree and instead do "something creative".

GOAL STATUS: I did a competition. I didn't get through. I didn't do any more.

GOAL: Exercise five times a week.

GOAL STATUS: Next, please.

GOAL: Seriously, you said you'd exercise five times a week.

GOAL STATUS: I said, "NEXT, please".

GOAL: Remember those new running shorts you bought? The \$40 Nike ones?

GOAL STATUS: Listen to me. I am in control. This isn't about you. I can just stop writing whenever I want to.

GOAL: How much did you weigh at the start of the year?

GOAL STATUS: I dunno. Can't remember.

GOAL: That's weird, because I remember you bought a scale specifically to regularly weigh yourself –

GOAL STATUS: Shut up. That's enough.

GOAL: Ok, fine, your life. Are you happy?

GOAL STATUS: Huh?

GOAL: Are you happy?

GOAL STATUS: I guess? Like... yeah? Some of the time?

GOAL: What about the rest of the time?

GOAL STATUS: Trust you to focus on the negative! All the time! I said I'm happy some of the time – why don't you ask me abo –

GOAL: Yeah, fair point. Tell me about when you're happy.

GOAL STATUS: Well I've got great friends, my girlfriend is cool and really funny. I feel like I've been getting better at gu –

GOAL: Great! Awesome! So happy for YOU! Now, what about when you're not happy?

GOAL STATUS: I... I guess I feel scared a lot of the time.

GOAL: Of what?

GOAL STATUS: I can't really put my finger on it. But it seems to be worse when things are going well, as opposed to when they're not.

GOAL: C'mon man, *think!* What is it? Is it a person? Is it a thing? Is it exams?

GOAL STATUS: Hmmm... Actually, I think maybe I know what it is...?



GOAL: Good! Ok, tell me! You can tell me.

GOAL STATUS: I... I think it might... I think it might be you.

GOAL: Me? *ME?* You're scared of *me*? I – I'm the one who makes you scared?

GOAL STATUS: Yeah. Yeah, I guess that's right...

GOAL: Uh....

GOAL STATUS: *scratching head* Sorry man... hope I didn't offend you?

GOAL: Ahhh... Nah, it's fine. It's just.... –

GOAL STATUS: ...Yeah?

GOAL: It's... it's just that I thought we were friends, y'know? I always thought I was good for you! I always thought I helped you out, man. That's all I want to do.

GOAL STATUS: I know! And I appreciate it! But maybe, I dunno, maybe I just need a little time?

GOAL: *slowly packing things* Ok. If that's what you want.

GOAL STATUS: I think it is.

GOAL: *continues packing*

GOAL STATUS: *looks forlornly at the kettle that GOAL is packing; the one they bought together*

GOAL STATUS: So... I guess I'll see you around?

GOAL: *looking over shoulder as exiting the door* Yeah. I guess. ■

What It Means to be Dead

WITH ADITYA VASUDAVEN

And now comes the part of the semester better known by its true name, the veritable shit-storm. I could tell you to “keep calm and drink tea”, to “keep calm and carry on”, to “keep calm and stop banging your head on that desk”, but I presume that you’ve tried all that. Instead, I find it helps to double down on morbidity.

Death is not an event. It is a cessation of life. In that sense, it is not something that actually happens to you. If assignments and exams are getting you down, run to the rooftops and shout “I will never die”, because you never will. The verb form requires one state of being to transform into another. If I have “arrived”, the phrase only works because I exist afterwards and inhabit the position of being present. Take advantage of this semantic loophole. Think

about it too much and it may disappear. So don’t.

If semantics is one path to immortality, technology is the other. We’ve always adjusted our conception of when someone is actually dead based on our ability to resuscitate them. Before we knew CPR, if we pulled you out of a river, you were dead. Before we had defibrillators, if your heartbeat stopped, you were dead. There is no one moment when you “die”. You are deemed dead; it is a declaratory statement of recognition tied to our knowledge about the human body and its processes. If we didn’t have the science to show that people in vegetative states were still alive, we would probably deem them dead.

Let’s go for a blend of the semantic and the technological paths. Walt Disney, while suffering from lung cancer, wanted to have his corpse frozen out of the hope that he’d one day be thawed out and reborn. Unfortunately for him, this didn’t happen. He was cremated. But let’s say he got his wish, what then? He was wildly optimistic. The amount of time it would take for us to successfully unfreeze and re-animate a corpse is unimaginable. He wasn’t playing with the strongest probabilities. Stranger things have happened, though, and innovation continues to surprise us. We would never have

thought that we could artificially grow organs from stem cells, but such is the progress we’ve achieved. What this means is that, technically, we could refrain from deeming people dead because we think we’ll be able to resuscitate them at some point in the future. Naysayers – fuck off. Let me have this.

An eternal life is probably as meaningless as an eternal afterlife. But fighting over the semantics comes with a perverse catharsis. It makes you feel more alive. So learn your definitions, your math equations, chemical processes and sociological phenomena. Litigate them. Litigate them all. Fight over the stupidest of things. And remember, when you’re sitting at some dingy table at one in the morning hoping for answers from above, keep calm and drink tea. ■



Sending A Budget Down the Coal Mine

WITH ADEEL MALIK

So the budget will be announced tomorrow – which is last week by your time. I am going to try to predict what’s in it. So if everything goes according to plan, this column will prove just how predictable the government is (or alternatively, how near sighted this columnist is).

Predictable does not mean bad or good, but it is a worrying attribute to have when homeownership is dropping, spending on schools is low compared to OECD, and income inequality is on the rise. Again no one cares, because most people still own their own homes – and there is nothing like feeling richer through rent seeking behaviour due to a property bubble.

So tomorrow (last Thursday) we will probably see a boring budget. The government will entice us with some tax cuts, but of course not now. That would be financially irresponsible. It would make much more sense to offer a tax cut in an election year. Not that any other political party would act any differently. In preparation for the impending tax cuts we are unlikely to see an increase in funding for any department. Bill English has already hinted that we are going to likely see a cut in government’s capital expenditure. This means less money to build new schools, roads, and hospitals. Again some might say that due to record immigration, we should upgrade our infrastructure to try to meet the greater demand. The lead economist for EY along with Westpac may have suggested this. With the winding down of investment brought on by the Christchurch build, this might be a smart idea. It would mean taking advantage of cheap credit currently available, but who cares.

All we will hear tomorrow (last Thursday) is likely news about a surplus. However infinitesimally small, there will be most likely some sort of a surplus. It may amount to the spare change in my piggy bank but that’s what the *Herald* and Hosking will talk about. The cuts in spending may run contrary to what the chairman of the reserve bank is saying, but what does he know. They aren’t proponents of sensible centre right policy.

I also expect there to be some kind of triangulation. National will announce some welfare policy that will bamboozle labour into some sort of word vomit again. And I look forward to that happening because it would probably be a policy that I would support and by now even I enjoy Labour screw ups.

Lastly I also hope that we hear something more about the land tax that Key proposed. It will likely reduce speculation in the property market and move more of that cash into the stock-market engaging in making our economy more productive, rather than partaking in rent seeking benefit. We may also hear more information about the Netflix tax – aimed at charging tax on services provided online. But tax is a dirty word, and those policies may be shelved till after the election next year. ■

LIFE IS TOO LONG

Semester Happy Dream Time

WITH SHMULY LEOPOLD

Step one: get out of bed. The older I get the harder it gets to drink mid-week. My head is thumping, and I have three *Craccum* articles to write. I check my phone: "oi fucker, brunch?". Hardcore. "Hehe, nah too poor" I reply hinting-ly. I peak out the window to see if my flatmate's car is still there. Good, it isn't, I can run shirtless to the shower. I quickly check Facebook. 14 notifications. People have had birthdays, people have anniversaries, people keep posting, someone tagged me. It's all very important. *Get out of bed.*

Out of bed. Belch. Sprint to the shower, water rushes. Steam billows. I relax. Oh dammit I need the loo. I run nude down the hall. Quick toilet. Run back. I shower. I loofa the shit out of myself. I briefly giggle remembering a frape from the other day.

Enter: Yakkov Leopold. My younger brother. I hate him. He's everything I'm not. A hundred feet tall. Floppy pretty hair. Gay cherubic lips. An arse to *die* for. And worst of all, he's a fucking rower. Every morning Yakkov gets up around 4am. Rubs oils into his Semitic muscles, and sprints to the lake. Then he sits and floats backwards down the stream. It does not look like a sport to me. Anyway, he usually dates these trashy sluzzers.

Get out of the shower.

I keep stealing his phone. My frapes are genius. None of this "lol I'm gay, suckin cock is the best" bullshit. I go in for the long-game. He had this cray ho that he was texting for a bit, named Abarrane. Lots of "lol what are you up to sleepy head", "how's rowing going? Xx", "such and such is being a real bitch and saying some boring bullshit boring bullshit boring bullshit..."

A flatmate knocks on my shower door. "You've been in there for twenty minutes Shmulz." Fuck I forget there's a third flatmate. "Just wanking!" I yell. "Oh, ohhh, um well, ok then, umm" splutters Shiz. Damn it that was a crap lie. "Jokes!" I yell. "I'm going back to my room for a bit" he

murmurs. Footsteps.

Abarrane: Wuu2? Lol

Yakkov (me): Just having a bubble bath reading a book.

Abarrane: That actually sounds really lovely. I'm in the house on my own, scary!

Yakkov: Poor thing!

Abarrane: Ikr!

Yakkov: You should have a bath too! They are very soothing.

Abarrane: Nah I'm not leaving my room

Yakkov: I get scared too sometimes... I worry I'll slip getting out of the bath, or drop my book in there.

Abarrane: hahahah, oh don't slip. What are you reading? Eek, just heard a weird noise.

Yakkov: I'm reading *Pride and Prejudice* by Jane Austen. Oh dear! I reckon you'd love a bath. I try to unwind with one at least once a week.

Abarrane: Oh isn't that a movie as well? And yeah, but I'm too tired! Baths can be dangerous. Lots of people, especially little people, and drunk people, die in baths.

Yakkov: Oh my gosh! Can that happen? I'm fairly little I suppose.

Abarrane: No like dwarves! Or children!

Yakkov: Oh, what a hilarious misunderstanding. Don't drink and bathe or you might overuse the loofa and hurt yourself, my mum always says.

Abarrane: Don't you have rowing tomorrow? Don't you need sleep?

Yakkov: I don't sleep much these nights. I'm just up working on poetry.

Abarrane: Oh cool, can I read one?

Yakkov: Of course, but not till they are just right. I tend to illustrate them myself.

Abarrane: Can I please read a little snippet now?

Yakkov: Oh, I suppose -

Little sparrow, where did you go?
Not here, not here
Said mother

Little worm, where did you go?
Into the ground far below
Said father

But where did I go?

JUST a work in progress ATM ☺

Abarrane: omg, you're like an actual British poet or something. Like I'd think that was just a poem in English or whatever.

Yakkov: oh you're too kind.

Abarrane: Write a poem called the Lonely Girl for me sometime. Idk why, you just should.

Yakkov: Oh that is so charming! I am actually quite inspired by the Romantic poets. Anyway, the tub is getting cold, gonna go look at the stars and get some more writing done. I feel so inspired tonight.

Step two: leave the house and go to class.

I get back into bed. And sleep. Another semester over. ■





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HAPPY HOUR HAS NEVER BEEN BETTER



the people to blame.

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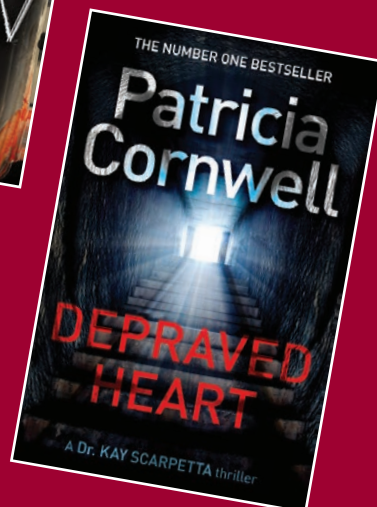
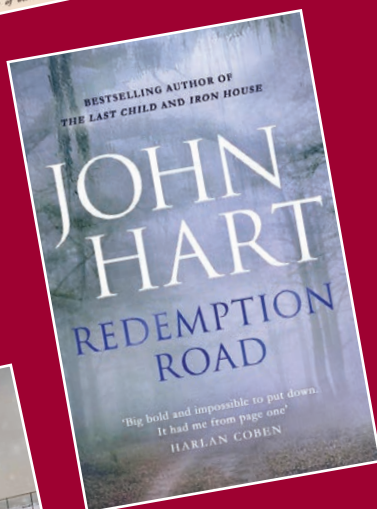
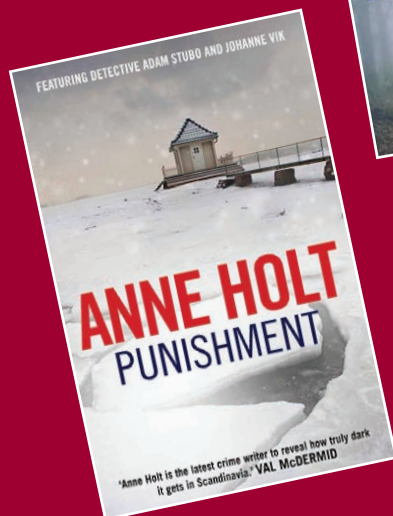
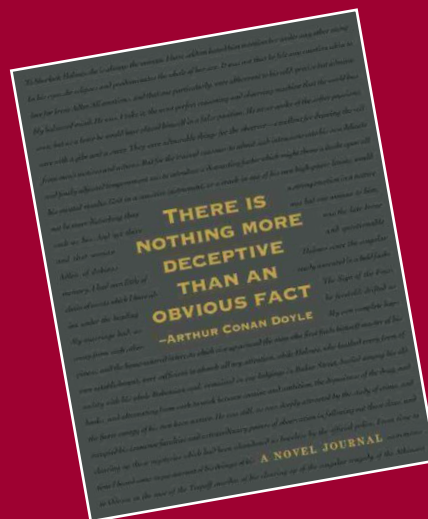
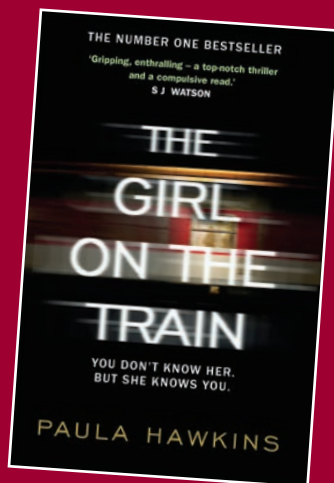
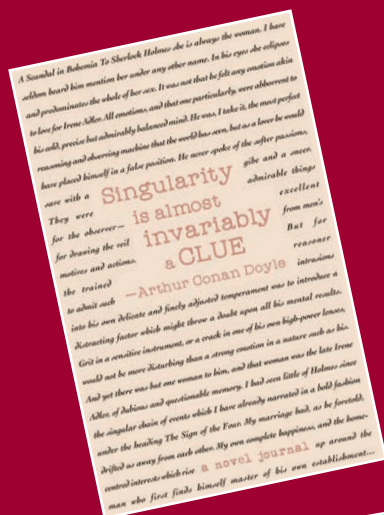
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