



from desk jobs to hand jobs

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final fantasy?

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draco... potter?

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help students in need!

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in the Quad Atrium.**

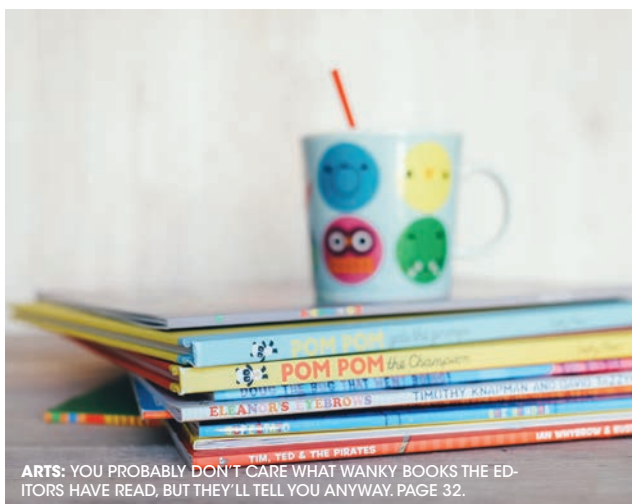
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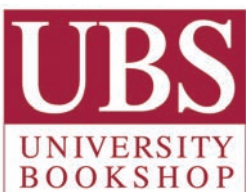
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navy blues

CAITLIN AND MARK EDITOR@CRACCUM.CO.NZ

Mark woke in a fit of terror. He glanced over at the clock. The slightly irradiated face stared back, flickering slightly. 2:47. AM? Probably. He peeked out the window but couldn't hear any birds. Yup, definitely AM. He rolled onto his back and stared up at the slats.

Caitlin was sleeping peacefully when she felt a gentle nudge through the mattress. She ignored it. Classic Mark. Perennial sleep-poker. Thank goodness we decided on bunk beds. She rolled over, congratulating herself on her fantastic bedroom-arranging choices. Then she felt a timid hand creep up and shake her elbow. Fuck, she thought, opening her eyes. What does he want?

'Caitlin,' she heard from the bed below, 'Caitlin, I'm freaking out.'

'Mark, shut the fuck up,' she replied wearily.

'No Caitlin, this is serious. I have discovered a gaping hole in my knowledge. I just realised that I don't know what colour navy blue is.'

Caitlin opened her eyes and paused for a second, unsure if she had heard right.

'Like, I know a whole lot of blues,' continued Mark, 'but if someone gave me a line-up of blues and told me to point to navy blue, I wouldn't know what to do.'

Caitlin closed her eyes. She had heard right.

'Mark, you are the worst person in the world. Go to sleep.'

The next morning the pair arrived at the office. The forest of carpet rolls stacked against the office door, detritus from the bFm refurbish-

ment happening across the way, was not met with joy. A swift and violent removal, a swift and passive aggressive note to the removalists. Neither had slept well; Mark due to his intense emotional distress, and Caitlin due to the sobs and intermittent dry retches emanating from the bunk below. The air was foul (thanks AUSA) and the mood fouler when the underpaid and overappreciated *Craccum* staff showed up to work. Mark saw an opportunity to conduct an impromptu survey.

'Hey guys,' he asked, ignoring Caitlin's *fuck you* eyes, 'what colour is navy blue?'

A flurry of activity. Catriona tilted her head towards the cover of a previous edition. Patrick pointed to a portion of his jumper. Caitlin pointed to a different portion of Patrick's jumper. Samantha motioned to the top line of a packet of Proper Crisps.

'This is navy blue.'

'No, THIS is navy blue. That's more of a mid-night blue.'

'No, that's too light to be navy, but it's navy in the corner.'

'Guys, can I open these chips?'

This was far from the reassuring consensus Mark was hoping for. The discussion raged on. Minutes turned to hours, hours turned to days. Magazine production ceased completely. Food became scarce. What colour exactly were Neil Diamond's blue jeans? Days turned to months. The stack of carpet outside the office grew and grew, rendering the door impassable. Was anyone in 90s boyband Blue actually in the navy? News Editor Andrew 'Absent' Winstanley, having arrived late and contributed nothing but snarky comments and unintelligible WEH WEH WEH's to the discussion, was the first to be cannibalised.

Eighteen months on and the office had descended into a comfortable anarchy. Patrick's blood wasn't navy blue, they had decided. But it did look nice on the feature wall. Hannah was pregnant, a minor miracle considering Mark's violent castration in the third month at the hands of Caitlin for daring to suggest that maybe popular children's show *Blue's Clues* would hold clues to their blues. Catriona had long since disappeared into the couch, resurfacing occasionally to pick fights with anyone who criticised the work of Eiffel 65. Samantha was hanging around the fringes of the narrative, interjecting only to propel the plot and provide opportunities for character development. The years wore on.

One morning, however, the surviving editors awoke to the sound of a key on the door. It was Nando's Presents AUSA President Will Matthews, serving his sixth term, who had just noticed that after as many years the Craccum boxes were finally empty and had come up to congratulate the team. Caitlin slithered over (having eaten her own legs three days after they had decided that the box of promotional Shapes sent by Arnotts were NOT an improved flavour and were, in fact, inedible) and grasped him by the ankle.

'Willy, please help,' she begged. 'Tell us what navy blue looks like.'

Will looked around at the decay and destruction of the office, then back out the door.

'I would say that's a pretty navy blue,' he said pointing outside. The shadow of the former Craccum editing team huddled around the door frame. There, in neat stacks, lay the old bFm carpet. A blue, lighter than midnight, but darker than royal. Mark cleared his throat, nodding.

'Oh, yeah. I guess it kinda is.' ■



CAREER PLANS PLANNED

Labour have pledged to dramatically increase funding to Careers advisors, in the hope that they will help secondary school students better manage their transition into the workforce.

Under the proposed \$30-million-per-year programme, schools will be appointed “highly-trained, skilled” careers staff. Careers advice will be integrated into learning, and each student will receive a personalized “career development plan” before leaving school. Existing careers funding amounts to around \$5m of the annual education budget.

In announcing the policy, Labour Leader Andrew Little said that the plan was an important part of making sure that people leaving school were on the right track to get into employment. “There are

now 87,200 young New Zealanders not in employment, education or training. That cannot go on.”

NZUSA have welcomed the announcement, saying that the move will help students get the most out of their decision to invest in education. “We’ve heard multiple stories of students who were given poor or no careers advice when at secondary school and the negative impact that this has on people as they attempt to move through the tertiary system. Expectations for many in the secondary system is skewed towards going to university but we know only 30% of high school leavers follow that path. We need to start focusing on the other 70% and stop treating polytechnics and industry training as poorer cousins.”

The PPTA have been similarly supportive, saying that the dedicated resources are important if careers advice is to be effective. “What is important

is that these people are able to have the tools to be able to tailor the right opportunity to the right student at the right time. It’s not a shortage of information – it’s about people who can recognise the needs of the students and link them up with the information they need.”

This has been a relatively big year for Labour education policy, having earlier announced the staggered introduction of free tertiary education to be rolled out over three consecutive Labour terms. Like Labour’s Careers Advice programme the policy fits into Labour’s Future Of Work commission – a two year project designed to help make sure that Labour’s economic policy is designed to help minimize shocks to the country’s economy from increased globalisation and automation. The commission will wrap up just in time for next year’s election. ■

OH, THE HUMANITIES

Shrinking enrolment numbers are causing ongoing headaches at Otago University, with the current victim being the University’s Humanities department. Job losses and the scrapping of “Low-Enrolment” courses are reportedly both on the cards. Humanities at Otago not only includes subjects like Classics, History, and Politics, but also Languages, Film Studies, and the University’s Law Faculty. Enrolments in Humanities courses at Otago have fallen by an equivalent of 237 full time students – 4.6% of the annual intake – in the past 12 months.

The University ordered a funding review late last month, in order to evaluate where to cut costs. Currently, the department employs a total of 450 academic staff. One staff member, who did not want to be named, said that the stress of the review

has decimated morale within the department, with senior staff members fearing for their jobs.

Professor Tony Ballantyne, Pro-Vice-Chancellor of the Humanities at Otago, has refused to comment meaningfully on what changes might be made before the process is completed, but has emphasized that it will be “business as usual” for students.

This is not the first time that Otago have been forced to contemplate controversial cuts – last year, the decision was made to cut the University’s Design major, after enrolments dropped from more than 250 per year in 2000, down to less than 50 in 2015. Enrolments have been falling in the Humanities Department since at least 2011, and have fallen 14% since 2010 for Otago University.

Otago University has had problems attracting students in recent years, as competition between the

major New Zealand universities has become more intense. Earlier this year, the unexpected success of expanded financial incentives to school leavers saw the University overspending their scholarship budget by more than \$1.1 million dollars. The blow-out forced the University to report an operating deficit for their first financial quarter – the first time Otago has ever done so.

Some departments are not suffering through the same decline, however. The Department of Health Sciences at Otago has been steadily growing over the last few years, having now become the University’s biggest department. Otago receives extra funding from the Central Government for their Health Sciences Department, although they declined to comment on how that affected the department’s growth. The review process is expected to be completed by early August. ■

It's official – Hillary Clinton has become the Democratic nominee for President Of The United States, and in doing so she has become the first female nominated by a major party.

Yet if you were to ask all of the attendees of last week's Democratic National Convention you would find that the majority are not overly thrilled [*news ed: you can tell by all the boo-ing*]. Amazingly, despite their much more conventional candidate and tamer election, the Democrats appear to now be more divided than the Republicans. And why wouldn't they be? In the end, despite all of the talk around #NeverTrump, their race was a tighter one.

Bernie Sanders managed to almost upset the "sure-thing" election of Hillary Clinton, and he did so by changing the face of the Democratic party. He brought in new, younger voters, many of whom are now desperately unhappy that Bernie didn't win.

That narrative is part of the reason the party is now in such a disarray. It is easy to point to the immediate reason that the DNC was not unified: the internal emails, released by WikiLeaks, just prior to the start of the convention. Those emails, detailing the internal communications between staff members at the Democratic National Committee, showed that the worst fears of this new Bernie brigade are in fact justified. The Democratic party was working actively against their revolution. The Democratic Party did not stand up for what they



DNC = DO NOT CARE (FOR THIS CANDIDATE)

expected it to stand up for.

And yet, if you asked the diehard Democratic voters, the ones that always vote, and always vote Democrat, they supported Hillary by a wide margin. Why? Because she is the Democratic Party to them: a party of experienced pragmatism, an established party, a party of political compromise and gradual change.

Ultimately, this disunity is a tension between the Democratic Party as a political institution – one with codified positions, its own interests, and its

own structures to uphold – and the Democratic Party as a stand-in from the American Left.

Now, that's not a tension that can be easily resolved, if at all.

But for now, it means that in the week in which the Dems were meant to show themselves as a unified force, to act in combat to the disorganised Trump machine, they in fact looked splintered. At least the GOP crowd booed when Ted Cruz didn't endorse Trump – the Dems booed when Bernie *did* endorse Hillary. ■

SHOOTING GALLERY

IN RESPONSE TO RECENT POLICE SHOOTINGS IN HAMILTON AND ROTORUA, ACTIVIST GROUP 'NO PRIDE IN PRISONS' HAVE CALLED FOR THE NEW ZEALAND POLICE TO BE DISARMED. THIS OPINION PIECE WAS WRITTEN BY JUSTINE SACHS – A UNIVERSITY OF AUCKLAND STUDENT AND A MEMBER OF NO PRIDE IN PRISONS.

Police lethally shooting civilians seems no longer to be an exclusively American pastime. Three weeks ago, New Zealanders saw their police force use firearms on two separate occasions. One of these incidents left a civilian dead, a casualty of those ostensibly committed to creating "Safer Communities Together".

Police shootings of civilians in the United States continue to spark outrage and anger, with many Americans calling for their disarmament and legislation that ensures police wear mandatory body cameras on their persons to mitigate use of excessive force. In New Zealand, the news has been met with borderline indifference, maybe even some support from certain quarters.

Comments on the websites and the Facebook pages of the major media outlets reporting on the issue – both of which I'd advise never reading if you want to retain your faith in humanity – are often derogatory towards the victims, gleefully dehumanising them rather than taking the time to mourn their deaths.

There does seem to be an idea in New Zealand that we "have it good". This idea shines through, even when it comes to the fatal shooting of civilians at the hands of public servants committed to keeping us "safe". Maybe that's true, in comparison to the United States – though that's not really saying much. But issues of police brutality, institutional racism and state violence are still pervasive here and need urgent addressing.

Public safety from police violence is a major concern, and the New Zealand Police have continually demonstrated that they cannot be trusted with firearms. 2015 data shows that Police in this country use some kind of force – firearms, tasers, fists – against civilians almost *once an hour*. Fatal

police shootings are also becoming more frequent: University of Canterbury criminologist, Professor Greg Newbold, has reported that over the last decade there has been a 160% increase in these incidents. Furthermore, independent research has revealed that 56% of the time, when lethal force is used, it's used toward Māori – as clear an example of systematic racial prejudice as any similar statistic from the US.

Even the police themselves are willing to admit that there is a problem – take the word of former Commissioner Mike Bush, who went on record last year in saying that Police had an "unconscious bias" toward Māori. All this paints a grim picture and indicates an absolutely real problem.

For us to truly "have it good" in this country – if we want to *actually* build "Safer Communities Together" – we have to be willing to solve problems in ways other than a top-down system of violence. Firearm reform is a good first step in that direction. However, for at least one Hamilton man, it's a step a few weeks too late. ■



SHE BLINDED ME WITH SCIENCE, BUILDING

The doors of the brand new science centre have opened for the very first time, after a three year wait and a \$200 million dollar spend.

Construction on the building has not yet technically finished (levels 2, 3, 4, 5 & 7 are currently blocked off from public access) but the building is slowly being opened up to public use. The plaza has been open as a thoroughfare from July 4th, while classes have been operating in the building since July 18th – the beginning of semester. Computer labs throughout the building have been accessible since the second week.

When completed, the site will bring many of the different science departments together in one building for the first time, including the School of Environment, the Institute of Earth Science and Engineering, National eScience

Infrastructure, the Department of Psychology and the School of Chemical Sciences.

It is intended to act as a “gateway” to the University – similar to the existing Kate Edger – and includes a new common area, as well as “state-of-the-art” research and development facilities. The new building is eleven stories tall (not including the basement) and has a total floor area of 23,500 square metres. In addition, the adjacent office building has been refurbished.

Construction work on the site was forced to temporarily halt last year after it was uncovered that some of the concrete used in the building was sub-standard. The concrete in question was supplied by Firth concrete, a subsidiary of Fletcher construction, who handled the development. The areas affected by the problem were ultimately relatively minor – one basement wall was affected, as was part of the floor on the eleventh storey.

Vice-Chancellor Professor Stuart McCutcheon has described the building at its initial launch as an important part of the University’s development: “It demonstrates our commitment to science and reflects the importance of science and innovation to New Zealand’s future.”

The site is the most recent in an ongoing slate of construction projects currently being pursued by the University. Last year, the University completed construction and opened the brand-new Newmarket Campus, which will absorb the academic work currently being conducted over at Tamaki. Plans were also approved in April 2015 to begin work on a new Engineering extension, to take place in the current site of the 403/404 building. That development is expected to be completed in time for the 2019 Academic year. In addition, the University is also constructing a new block of student accommodation on Symonds street, due to be opened early next year. ■

THE TOP 5 (POSITIVE) STORIES YOU MIGHT HAVE MISSED.

5. The Olympics start this weekend. Despite all the issues surrounding the build up to the 31st Olympiad, the events will start and we all will become interested in rowing again. And even though the rugby sevens is no longer the free gold medal we once believed it would be, the experts are picking a reasonable haul overall, with a decent shot at beating the current record of 13 (from London 2012 and Seoul 1988).

4. Tank is coming to Kate Edger. While so far there have been no signs of construction, the old Pod Espresso will be the latest part of the university’s Quad Improvement Plan when the popular juice bar opens later in the year.

3. Drake is the workout king. ‘Hotline Bling’ notwithstanding, a study of Spotify playlists conducted by FiveThirtyEight showed that his music featured on more workout mixes than anyone else. With Kanye West and Eminem close behind, there is a big drop off to numbers four and five, JAY Z and Rihanna respectively. The top workout song was ‘Panda’ by Designer.

2. There is going to be a Lego Batman movie. While I know this isn’t exactly breaking news,

and the first trailer has been out for almost half a year, in a world with as many issues as ours you need to concentrate on the positives. And after watching the Comic Con trailer, which introduces Michael Cera as Robin, it is definitely something to be positive about.

1. Nintendo shares plummeted 20% in a day after it was revealed that they don’t actually have a stake in Pokémon Go. While it does own about a third of the Pokémon company, the development rights were licensed out to the Google subsidiary Niantic Labs and there was minimal profit participation. Despite this, the company’s shares are still up over 50% since the game’s launch. ■



EGGS AND MAYORAL SANDWICH

Welcome to week three of our rolling coverage of the Auckland local political scene, in the slow but actually super exciting lead-up to the 2016 local body elections. #pleasevote #lol

SKYPATH

Earlier this week, Councillors voted unanimously to enter into a public-private agreement funding "Skypath", a \$33m walk-and-cycle-way across Auckland Harbour Bridge.

Planning for the project has been arduous, taking more than three years in total, and has included environmental testing, wind testing, cost-benefit analysis, a multi-stage design process, several rounds of public consultation, several rounds of funding meetings, and several rounds of voting.

Despite the holistic nature of that preparation process, there has still been some very loud opposition to the project – in particular, from the The Northcote Residents Association (NRA), a small community organisation from the North Shore.

The group have repeatedly claimed that the development will cause a variety of issues for Northcote residents, including unnecessary congestion [*news ed: too many people using the bridge*], public underutilization of the crossing [*news ed: not ENOUGH people using the bridge*] not enough carparks in the area [*news ed: remember, this is on the bridge designed for pedestrians and cyclists*], public safety problems [*news ed: literally, 'what kind of bridge only has two exits'*], and also outsized environmental impact [*news ed: see 'environmental testing', above*].

The NRA were previously threatening "hundreds of thousands of dollars" of legal action against the Council in order to drop the

project, but ultimately dropped the lawsuit, saying that they did not wish to waste their supporters' money.

As a result of the unanimous vote, the Council will partner with H.R.L. Morrison & Co's Public Infrastructure Partnership Fund for the project, who will pay for part of the construction cost.

Users of the crossing will also have to pay a small fee in order to use the crossing – the proposed rates are \$2 one way with AT Hop, and \$4 one way/\$6 return through other methods.

DEBATE

Following up from last week – the first debate of the official campaign season was held last week at Acacia Coves retirement village in Watte Downs, South Auckland.

The debate itself was a relatively small affair – attendance was less than one hundred people – but the event was still a good chance for each candidate to explain what differentiated them from their competitors.

Phil Goff promised to raise \$20 billion for the Council through "Infrastructure Bonds" – a system which he said would help the Council avoid further rates hikes. Vic Crone said she would aim primarily to save between five to ten percent on major infrastructure projects, and further decentralize Council authority.

John Palino says his priority is to abolish urban limits – the zoning laws which dictate the outer boundaries of Auckland City – and allow further urban sprawl. Mark Thomas' priority would be to reorganise the budget, in order to refocus existing funds on traffic and housing.

UNITARY PLAN

Also following up from last week – last Wednesday,

Auckland Council officially reacted to the Independent Hearing Panel's recommendations surrounding the Auckland Unitary Plan.

The document will be a major force in shaping Auckland's long-term development – it is the "rule book" from which property developers and Urban planners have to play.

As to be expected when releasing a document of that level of importance ten weeks away from Election Day, the build-up to the official Council response has been an easy focal point for those critical of current Council operations.

Vic Crone, former Xero boss and centre-right mayoral candidate, submitted an opinion piece to the New Zealand Herald, condemning the Council for "leadership failure" over the growing Auckland Housing Crisis.

"We've lost sight of the fact that the two core purposes of councils under the Local Government Act are to firstly enable democratic local decision-making and secondly to meet the current and future needs of communities (infrastructure, local public services and regulation)."

"The upcoming Unitary Plan must bring about a dramatic change in planning restrictions, allowing more houses where logical."

ACT Party Leader and electorate MP for Epsom, David Seymour, sent out a press release condemning the Council immediately before the document itself was released.

"In order to balance these issues Auckland Council will need to abandon their war on city expansion and stop banning development at the fringe. We already have a home shortage of 32,000, so strong action is essential.

"Councillors must now take charge. If they find it all too hard, then they'll need to step aside and allow the Government to legislate for them." ■

lifestyle

WHAT'S ON 1 – 7 AUGUST

This week we are featuring a few free events that are on every week, to help keep you interested in Semester Two!

Fancy some experimental music on a Monday night? Take yourself down to the Wine Cellar at 8pm for **Vitamin-S**. This night of “non-idiomatic,” or “free” improvisation is an institution in itself. The event is free, but let's be honest, you will want to buy a drink! If you want more information Vitamin-S have their own website: vitamin-s.co.nz.

Poetry Live is on every Tuesday at 8pm, at the Thirsty Dog Tavern on the corner of K'Rd and Howe St. The event is free, and several poets will perform live readings of their writing. A lovely way to engage with what's happening in our literary world!

Support our own student musicians by heading along to one of the **Lunchtime Concerts**, presented by SOMSA (School of Music Students' Association). Every Friday from 1-2pm, it's a delightfully different (and free) way to spend your lunchtime at the end of the week! The concerts are held at the Music Theatre, School of Music. You can check the SOMSA Facebook page to find out who is playing each week.

Another local institution is **Friday Night Salsa** at Mexican Cafe. Try your hand (and feet) at Salsa: there is a professional Salsa dancer on the floor from 10.30pm to guide beginners. There are tunes from DJ King Salsa, plenty of margaritas to be had and – who knows? – you might pick up a few new moves on the dancefloor. From 11pm-3am, free entry, 18+.



THE UOA FAIR TRADE CLUB PRESENTS: SAMPLING SQUAD @ NGOPI

The Fair Trade Club is back with another review of an ethical business! This time we are exploring the wonders of Malaysian food. If you live in Auckland it's very likely you enjoy some good South East Asian food (maybe even something beyond instant Mi Goreng). We decided to visit Ngopi [ngo-pee] on Anzac Ave, a trendy non-profit Malaysian café with affordable student prices and some sweet murals.

Ngopi, in its early days, was initiated by the senior pastor of the volunteer-based House of Praise Church of New Zealand and his wife. Their motto is simple and real: “if you can't afford to donate money, why not donate your time?” Anyone can volunteer, just flick them a message on their twitter or IG or via email at askme@ngopi.co.nz. All profits are distributed to two main charities: Habitat for Humanity, an NGO devoted to building decent and

affordable housing, and the A21 Campaign, a non-profit organisation fighting human trafficking.

We tried three dishes which were all of a very generous size for a great price of \$11-12.50 each! We ordered Mamak Mee Goreng, Chicken Laksa and Char Hor Fun and for dessert we got free Kaya toast. Kaya is a coconut jam, a well-known snack in Singapore and Malaysia. The drinks are also amazing! One to try is the Teh Tarik: a traditional Malaysian tea that has been ‘pulled’ by pouring the tea from one cup to another to produce bubbles and froth.

Ngopi is much more than just a hangout place for students. In Indonesian it means grabbing a coffee but for us it also means a non-profit community that is able to make a difference every time you purchase a coffee or something to eat.

AGONY AUNTIES

Dear Aunties,
I have this recurring problem where I will agree to do something, and then get too busy to do it, but also leave it too late to uncommit myself. I am putting myself in uncomfortable situations because of this.
Please help, any advice would be appreciated,
Overcommitted

Dear Overcommitted,
It sounds like you need to get your life admin in order! It seems to be normal these days for students to be ridiculously busy, with a heavy workload from uni courses on top of employment, internships and other commitments – not to mention trying to have some sort of social life! However, this does not excuse letting people down by cancelling at the last minute.

First of all we would recommend saying “no” to people more often. If you have too much on, it's okay to not be able to do something! And do your best to keep track of what you have said “yes” to. We all know the feeling of time slipping away at an alarming rate but there are things we can do to help: use a diary, make to-do lists, prioritise your commitments and if things change, send that difficult email straight away rather than putting it off. If all else fails, pull the “overcommitted, stressed out and emotionally unstable uni student” card and hope to be forgiven!

Best of luck,
Aunt Phryne and Aunt Wilhelmina xxx

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



A FIRSTHAND GUIDE TO SECONDHAND SHOPPING

A lot of us are still shopping in overpriced second hand places in Auckland's CBD, when there are so many opportunities outside of the central city. As a relatively knowledgeable person on this topic I have decided to share with you a few secret places to discover bargains and experience the wider Auckland community!

GREY LYNN

Jo's Stall Bric 'a' Brac (598 Great North Road, Grey Lynn)

This store is one of the very few inexpensive op shops in CBD. The owner Jo purchases homewares mostly from estate sales but doesn't mark up the products to unaffordable prices so people less well off can get the basics.

ONEHUNGA

St Vincent de Paul (345 Onehunga Mall)

SPCA (217 Onehunga Mall)

Salvation Army (310 Onehunga Mall)

St Margarets Church Shop (10 Waiapu Ln)

Onehunga a.k.a the kingdom of op-shopping has so many places in close proximity. These are my favourites but there are many more that you can discover for yourself.

MANGERE

Mangere St Vincent de Paul (32 Coronation

Road)

While you're on the Southside this particular op shop is a good one to see, there is also a great café nearby called Ruby Red.

GLEN INNES

Glen Innes SPCA (217 Taniwha St)

Salvation Army (49 Mayfair Pl)

Eastern Bays Hospice Shop (19 Mayfair Pl)

Dove Shop (185 Apirana Ave)

Glen Innes was one of the first places I started op-shopping and is still just as good.

AVONDALE & NEW LYNN

SPCA (2021-2029 Great North Rd, Avondale)

The Rainbow Op Shop (1288 New North Road, Avondale)

St Vincent de Paul (3087 Great North Rd, New Lynn)

Hospice Shop (17 Delta Ave, New Lynn)

West is Best when it comes to op shops, Avondale leads into New Lynn and there are some markets on a Sunday in Avondale at the racecourse. They have an underground store-room full of treasures as well as extremely affordable fruit and veggies.

That's it for today folks, happy shopping!

■ BONNIE HARVEY



SHAKSHUKA / BAKED EGGS

Serves 4

2 TBSP OLIVE OIL

4 GARLIC CLOVES

1 MEDIUM ONION

1 TIN OF TOMATOES

1 TBSP CUMIN

1 TBSP PAPRIKA

SMALL HANDFUL OF PARSLEY

AS MUCH SRIRACHA OR CHILI POWDER AS YOU LIKE (OPTIONAL)

4-8 EGGS (DEPENDENT ON DINERS - 1 TO 2 EGGS PER PERSON)

VEGETABLES OF YOUR CHOICE, A CARROT OR CELERY

4 PITA BREADS (OPTIONAL)

This one pan dish is a flat favourite as it's easy cooking, easy eating and easy cleaning. Shakshuka is a dish eaten in many parts of the Middle East and is easily adaptable to what's in your kitchen.

Heat oil in a deep sauce pan or heavy bottomed pot and cook diced onion until translucent but not brown. If you want to add any vegetables this is a good point to do so – diced carrots, celery or capsicum work well. Add the finely chopped garlic and cook through for a minute. Add the tin of tomatoes and lower the temperature to a gentle simmer. At this point turn your grill on to 150C. Add the spices, sriracha and chopped parsley, stir through and cook for 8 minutes. Now crack an egg into a small bowl or ramekin and make a small indentation with your stirring spoon and slip the egg into the dip. Then to make it sink further into the mix put your wooden spoon to the side of it and drag away from the egg – creating more space for the egg to be covered in the sauce. Repeat for as many eggs as desired and put under the grill for 4 minutes or longer for a firmer set yolk. Serve at the table with extra sriracha, parsley and pita bread.

This dish is totally vegetarian. Vegans could add chickpeas, lentils or beans instead of eggs. For meat eaters you could add extra flavour with sausages or chorizo at the start with the onion. ■

FASHION ON CAMPUS





AUSA Noticeboard

Special General Meeting

If you thought American politics was entertaining, wait until you see AUSA prepare to change some of its constitutional provisions. Exercise your first amendment right this Wednesday 3 August, 1 PM in the Quad.

Nominations for the AUSA Executive

This is your last week to be nominated to run in the AUSA Elections for the 2017 Executive. Want to be part of an organisation that helps make student life better? Pick up a nomination form from AUSA Reception today.

Harry Potter Week

That's right, **this week** AUSA is bringing you a whole week of magic. If you aren't already enticed by Quidditch Pong at Shadows, check out the Facebook page for more events.

Cultural Week

As if Harry Potter week wasn't enough, in week 4 cultural week will be happening. We have some awesome events planned that include poetry, music, food, and cultural performances. More details soon - keep your eyes peeled on the AUSA Facebook page. ■

FROM THE MO

The AUSA pages are buzzing this week with many of the AUSA Executive clamoring to let you know the awesome events that are on the ever-nearing horizon. Be sure to read Yilong's interview over a pint of the ol' Shadows butterbeer. ■

Notice is hereby given of an
AUSA WINTER GENERAL MEETING
to be held
WEDNESDAY, 24 AUGUST 2016
or (if the meeting was inquorate)
THURSDAY, 25 AUGUST 2016
at 1.00 pm
Student Union Quad

AUSA
SERVING STUDENTS

Deadline for constitutional changes: Noon,
Tuesday, 9 August 2016.

Deadline for other agenda items: Noon,
Tuesday, 16 August 2016.

Association Secretary



Run for AUSA.

Nominations are now
open for the **2017 AUSA
Executive.**

**Notice is hereby given for Nominations of
2017 AUSA Executive**

OFFICER POSITIONS: President, Administrative Vice-President, Education Vice-President, Welfare Vice-President, Treasurer

PORTFOLIO POSITIONS: Clubs and Societies Officer, Culture and Arts Officer, Environmental Affairs Officer, Grafton Representative (Must be a Grafton Student), International Students' Officer (Must be an International Student), Media Officer, Political Engagement Officer, Queer Rights Officer, Student Forum Chair, Tamaki Representative (Must be a Tamaki Student), Women's Rights Officer, Craccum Editor

- Nominations open on Friday, 18 July 2016
- Nomination forms are available from AUSA Reception, 4 Alfred Street
- Nominations close at 3.00 pm on Friday, 5 August 2016. They must be handed in to AUSA Reception only.

In accordance with the Auckland University Students' Association's Constitution, nominations are open to currently enrolled students of the University of Auckland, who must be members of AUSA. Accordingly, all nominees must present proof of current enrolment, and any other required information, to the Returning Officer no later than the close of nominations, or their nomination will be ruled invalid.

Please Note: To run for the Treasurer's position you must have passed at least two Accounting papers at the University of Auckland and show proof of this.

AUSA Returning Officer

EMAIL AVP@AUSA.ORG.NZ WITH ANY ISSUES OR QUESTIONS

AUSA
SERVING STUDENTS

Create a **Co-QRO!**

Change the
Treasurer into the
**Finance Vice
President**

Get a **Free Lunch!**

SPECIAL GENERAL MEETING
3rd August 2016, 1pm, University Quad

Notice is hereby given of an AUSA SPECIAL GENERAL MEETING

to be held on

WEDNESDAY, 3
AUGUST 2016

at 12.00 pm
in the Student
Union Quad

The SGM has been called to consider the
following changes to the Constitution:

CHANGES TO TREASURER

THAT Section 2 (i) be amended by deleting the
line "Treasurer" shall mean "The Treasurer of
the Association"

THAT Section 27 (iii) (e) be amended by delet-
ing the word "Treasurer" and replacing it with
the words "Finance Vice President"

THAT Section 38 (ii) be amended by deleting
the word 'Treasurer' and replacing it with
'Finance Vice President'

THAT Section 41 (v) be amended by deleting
the word 'Treasurer' and replacing it with
'Finance Vice President'

THAT Section 1 (ii) of the Second Schedule to
the Constitution be amended by deleting the
word 'Treasurer' and replacing it with 'Finance
Vice President'

THAT Section 1 (ii) of the Second Schedule to
the Constitution be amended by deleting the
words 'two accounting papers', and replacing
these with the words 'one accounting paper'

THAT Section 13 of the Second Schedule to the
Constitution be amended by deleting the word
'Treasurer' and replacing it with 'Finance Vice
President'

THAT Section 17 of the Second Schedule to the
Constitution be amended by deleting the word
'Treasurer' and replacing it with 'Finance Vice
President'

THAT Section 3 (iii) of the Third Schedule to
the Constitution be amended by deleting the
word 'Treasurer' and replacing it with 'Finance
Vice President'

THAT Section 2 of the Fourth Schedule to
the Constitution be amended by deleting all
instances of the word 'Treasurer' and replacing
these with 'Finance Vice President'

THAT Section 3 of the Fourth Schedule to the
Constitution be amended by deleting the word
'Treasurer' and replacing it with 'Finance Vice
President'

CHANGES TO QUEER RIGHTS OFFICER

THAT Section 27 (iv) (f) be amended by adding
'(who shall be a queer member or group of
queer members)' after the words 'Queer Rights
Officer,'

THAT Section 28 (i) be amended by deleting
the words 'and Women's Rights Officer' and
replacing it with the words 'Women's Rights
Officer, and Queer Rights Officer'

Association Secretary

AUSA
SERVING STUDENTS

Notice is hereby given for Nominations of 2017 AUSA EXECUTIVE

OFFICER POSITIONS:

President, Administra-
tive Vice-President, Ed-
ucation Vice-President,
Welfare Vice-President,
Treasurer

AUSA
SERVING STUDENTS

PORTFOLIO POSITIONS:

Clubs and Societies
Officer, Culture and Arts
Officer, Environmental
Affairs Officer, Grafton
Representative (Must
be a Grafton Student),
International Students'
Officer (Must be an
International Student),
Media Officer, Political
Engagement Officer,
Queer Rights Officer,
Student Forum Chair,
Tamaki Representative
(Must be a Tamaki Stu-
dent), Women's Rights
Officer, Craccum Editor

Nominations open on Friday, 18 July 2016

Nomination forms are available from AUSA Recep-
tion, 4 Alfred Street

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information, to the Returning Officer no later than
the close of nominations, or their nomination will
be ruled invalid.

Please Note: To run for the Treasurer's position you
must have passed at least two Accounting papers
at the University of Auckland and show proof of
this.

AUSA Returning Officer

Interview with Yilong "Party" Wang

Our interview starts in the Portfolios Office at AUSA House, before I have a chance to ask a question...

I'm not a Labour Party person. As far as I know, I think National's policies are better than Labour. Sorry Will.

Yilong Wang is one of our newest Executive members, but in his short time with us he's already learned the ropes (as his quick response above shows) and had a big impact. Yilong is one of those people who is always smiling, always happy to get involved, and always looking out for students, especially international students, which is fitting as he is our International Students Officer for 2016.

WHAT ARE SOME THINGS THAT YOU THINK A DOMESTIC STUDENT DOESN'T THINK ABOUT WHEREAS AN INTERNATIONAL STUDENT DOES?

For international students whose first language is not English, they often have to translate what's being said in English into their first language...

They also have to think about who they should make friends with. It's not about not knowing how to make friends, but about not knowing the culture... I still remember when I was in high school and in my first few days here I was hanging out with a group of friends and the other friends would quietly tell me that someone else in the group was gay... these things surprised me, not that they were gay but that people would tell me these labels.

IS THAT SOMETHING QUITE STRANGE ABOUT NEW ZEALAND CULTURE THAT YOU HAVE NOTICED? WHAT WAS THE BIGGEST CULTURE-SHOCK?

The culture-shock really for me would be in the partying. First-year in O'Rorke Hall and there's so many different types of party. Beer drinking party. Beer pong party. House party. Even if you go camping, you go camping for having fun with alcohol. I didn't know that. I always think of going camping/ kayaking as a sport thing. It [the alcohol] surprised me, but I also had fun.

AS INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS' OFFICER, WHAT ARE YOU HOPING TO ACHIEVE IN YOUR ROLE?

I really want to get International Students' voices heard. With the increasing number of international students, I want to create a friendly environment for them and help them feel connected. I want to let them know there is place like AUSA that has their back. I really want to introduce them to kayaking, or joining a first year hall! It's so much fun - you cannot miss it! You make friends along the way and you may even find some you like...

WHAT DO YOU THINK WE CAN DO TO CREATE THAT FRIENDLY COMMUNITY?

For AUSA, we can promote our events to international student communities and stand up for them in situations like the Albert Park attacks.

It is important that we have a voice in media, like Craccum. We need to show compassion.

INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS CAN'T VOTE IN NEW ZEALAND ELECTIONS, HOW DOES THAT IMPACT THE IMPORTANCE OF INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS' GROUPS ON CAMPUS?

At a national-level, the government has to provide a certain standard of education and care. But, there is not specific policy. Only campus organizations can help international students. At the national-level, international students don't have a voice.

YOU CAME INTO AUSA LATER ON IN SEMESTER ONE, WHAT WERE YOUR FIRST IMPRESSIONS OF THE ORGANIZATION?

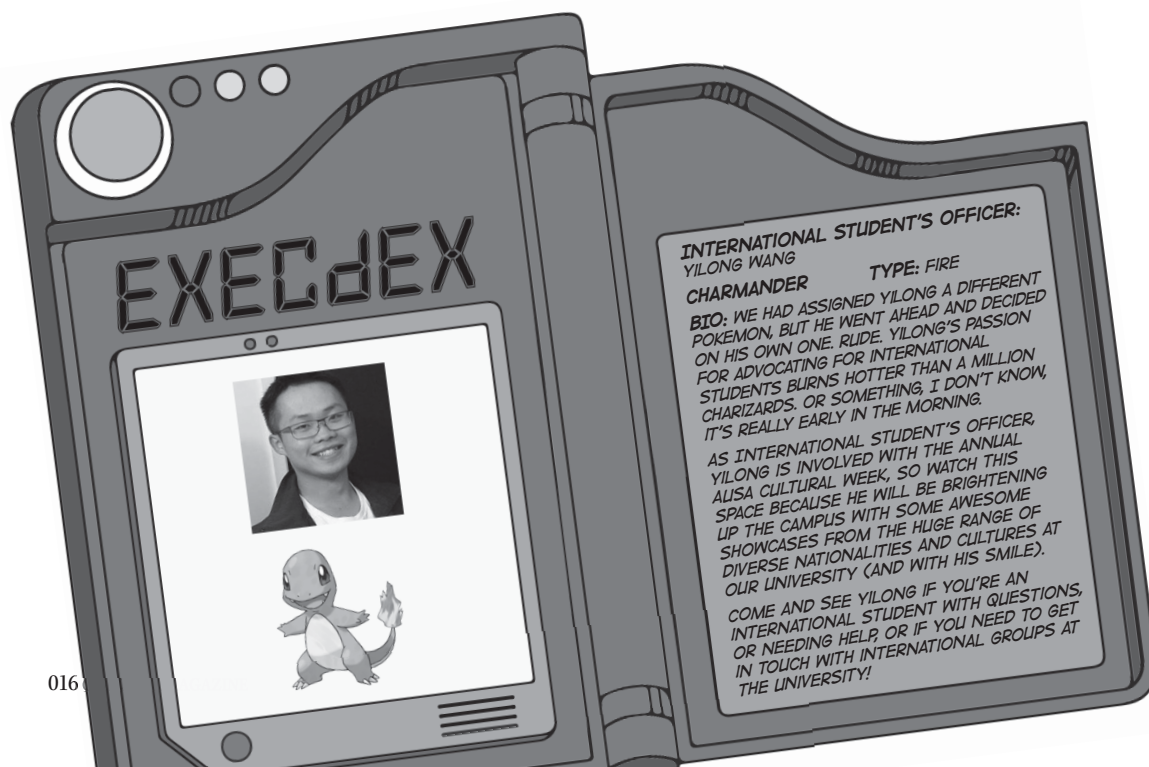
I was impressed with the professionalism in the Executive. Everyone is really enthusiastic to express their voices and represent other students' voices. Everyone works very hard for the student body. But, at the same time, the culture is quite chill. I like it.

ANY COMMENTS ABOUT THE POKÉMON WILL ASSIGNED YOU?

My Pokémon is Charmander.

HAVE YOU CAUGHT A CHARMANDER YET?

I haven't, I may start to play though because some many Execs are playing Pokémon Go! ■





Submissions Open for Kate

WE WANT YOU to submit opinion pieces, poetry and/ or artwork for this year's Kate magazine.

Kate is an annual publication containing student-written pieces and artworks which express student perspectives on women's issues. This year, Kate will be launched during Womensfest later this semester. Your Women's Rights Officers welcome all sorts of opinions and commentaries, and you don't need to be female-identifying to submit anything.

If you think that you have something interesting to say about the broad subject that is women's issues, then feel free to write an opinion on a topic of your choosing, design an art piece, or write a poem how you feel about feminism!

Please send submissions and/ or questions through to wro@ausa.org.nz. Submissions close August 31st.

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final fantasy?

eugenia woo takes a counter-strike
at diversity in video games

The issue of diversity in video games is polarising. Let's phrase it as a question: are video games diverse enough in representation? For a lot of gaming studios, diversity is just one item on the list of "What Sells" that can be ticked off with a one-liner about a minor character being queer.

Manveer Heir said it best – "there is a vocal crowd in the gaming community that despises the idea of diversity in games." We hear this from developers all the time as a defence for the "dudebro" playable characters flooding the market, as if doing justice to the complexity that comes with being human is something that detracts from the gaming experience.

However, the worst part is that sometimes we believe it. What if companies do end up struggling to sell copies of the next *Mass Effect* game because BioWare implements non-binary gender options? It seems like simple, business model maths: the majority of the people play-

ing games think that having a female playable character divorces their experience from reality, therefore the chances of them buying a *Grand Theft Auto* where you don't play as a caricature of a divorced gangster are slim. Gaming studios think that a game won't sell as soon as you stray outside the realm of the angsty male hero and sexualised, racialised violence.

Those studios are right, but only up to a point.

Yes, it's statistically likely that sales will dip if the female and/or queer antagonists in games are given some kind of relevance to the plot other than the "they were hot 'til they went mad with power" trope. Yes, there will be predictable backlash from the E3 crowd if *Assassin's Creed* has another game where men can't play a brooding European misogynist. But what if statistics don't line up with the fears of gaming studios?

The Internet Advertising Bureau recently published figures showing that 52% of the gaming audience is made up of women. God knows how many of those women are fed up with how they're meant to kill giant demons with ridiculously impractical leotards on before the game marries them off to some random guy.

God knows how many other players are even more alienated because they simply don't identify as male or female, let alone players who are trans and have their own host of concerns when it comes to accurate representation. We also have to take into account the racialised violence that videogames have, and the poor excuses given by creators who try and justify unacceptable depictions of xenophobia as evidence of a more immersive game experience.

Some of us want to see characters who are queer, non-binary, and/or people of colour represented positively in games. The BioWare approach of "let's throw these stereotypes into a bag and see what kind of villain we get" was never really good enough and shouldn't be the future of video game narratives. There is a lot wrong with videogame diversity, and a fair amount of it boils down to the intersection of games and media with society. When people say that they want "positive representation", they don't necessarily mean that they want to see themselves as the hero of every game ever made. Also, I can't speak for every person of colour ever so if you're thinking "Hey, I've got that one Asian friend and she doesn't think about games like this" then, well, don't. People

of colour shouldn't be treated like one single entity of better-than-average mathematical skills.

Coming back to how being the hero of every game ever made would get dull – no shit, of course it would. Being overrepresented in mediums isn't any fun either. Players are interested in the sort of representation that gives them a non-discriminatory origin story. They're interested in representation where they can get their character in-game to look like them and to romance someone who isn't either a) a rip-off of Arnold Schwarzenegger or b) a character based on what straight men think lesbians are like. Queer, non-binary, and/or people of colour should be able to feel how heterosexual white gamers feel – like they've been given the chance to tell a story that doesn't assume things about their race, or give them dialogue options that are delivered in the standard, unobtrusive but grating ethnic accent that every studio assigns to its non-white characters.

A lot of what is marketed or trumpeted as diversity by video game studios is, in fact, constructed diversity. *Bioshock Infinite* is one such example. Most of the hallmarks of diversity are there, in a sense; different races are represented, a major female counterpart to the male lead who has incredible narrative significance, and other strong characters who don't fit the traditional mould are present. Unfortunately, everyone who isn't white is either in the thralls of slavery under a fantasy KKK or dead as the result of the in-game Boxer Rebellion. Obviously, the parallels are there – the setting is a caricature of American history, of what would have

Queer, non-binary, and/or people of colour should be able to feel how heterosexual white gamers feel – like they've been given the chance to tell a story that doesn't assume things about their race, or give them dialogue options that are delivered in the standard, unobtrusive but grating ethnic accent that every studio assigns to its non-white characters.

There isn't really a way to respond to that which doesn't read like a curtailing of freedom of expression to some people, but the crux of the issue isn't stopping people from making the games that they want. It's that developers aren't being honest.

happened if the race relations in the US during the 1910s had gotten even more out of hand. The fanatic nationalism and racism in the game has been defended as part of setting the scene, and the studio has deflected criticism by maintaining that the intolerance was just a "factor of the times", and therefore warranted.

There isn't really a way to respond to that which doesn't read like a curtailing of freedom of expression to some people, but the crux of the issue isn't stopping people from making the games that they want. It's that developers aren't being honest. *Bioshock Infinite's* racism was obvious within the first 15 minutes of the game. Game studios won't stop setting games in controversial fantasy locations, and they likely will never exclude controversial content, but if they're being asked about the inclusion of offensive material and its meaning maybe they should be upfront. Don't use the oppression of groups of people as a cop-out for why the studio designed a particular character or narrative. Fantasy oppression isn't any less hurtful; if you're going to be racist, just own it.

I don't want to be that person who talks about what they learned in a lecture theatre at the dinner table but critical theories of technology helped me get my head around this problem. The theories deal with the connection between what's created in new media (in this case, video games) and the lived experiences of the people creating that new media. They tell us what we already know about new media – that it is created by, and serves the interest of, people who maintain the current status quo. One look outside will tell you that the status quo is damaging and discriminatory. Conventional video games and their content are informed by the lived experiences of their creators. Game developers are overwhelmingly male and white. Therefore, the games created by these people serve their interests and

reflect their beliefs and values. A lot of times, controversial content is clearly racist or violently misogynistic or transphobic, and critical theory infers that it's included because it's simply not part of the lived experiences of developers.

While matters of technology design are often presented as neutral technical choices, the fact is that they manifest political or moral values. This phenomenon isn't uncommon in game development. Just last year, Ubisoft scrapped its plans to include female playable characters in *Assassin's Creed: Unity* because they said that it would've been too expensive to animate female character models. Gaming blog *Kotaku* called it a "flimsy excuse," and lots of people wholeheartedly agreed with that description. For the sake of clarity, maybe an alternative way to look at this is to consider not which interests are being served but to instead identify which groups of society are being systematically ignored in the medium. The people being shortchanged by the video game industry are readily identifiable. Ubisoft's reluctance to rig models of female characters isn't just reluctance, it's almost insidious.

This isn't a piece about how the gaming industry is awful. Tarring all games with the same brush would be manifestly unfair; there are some people out there making strides in positive representation, and alternative platforms like Twine have given rise to all new breeds of games that encourage the traditionally alienated. However, the problem is far from solved. This piece is about how people shouldn't have to play a main character who looks like one of Taylor Swift's reject love interests in every 8 out of 10 games. The fact is that in some games if you're not playing as Calvin Harris, you've inevitably got to make out with Calvin Harris. That's not everyone's idea of a good time. Sure, someone out there in their mother's basement is going to say "Screw you, political correctness is ruining *Dragon Age*", but if an angry Meninist keels over in the woods out of outrage and no one is around to hear it, does it still make a sound? Maybe video game studios should peel their ears off the forest floor and get with the times. ■

Tarring all games with the same brush would be manifestly unfair; there are some people out there making strides in positive representation, and alternative platforms like Twine have given rise to all new breeds of games that encourage the traditionally alienated.

The cartoon section of the *New Zealand Herald* was, and has always been, an extraordinary disappointment. Images of Garfield bathed in not lasagne, but obsolescence, across the pages of the puzzle section.

More greyness droned as Dilbert mocked the dreary monotony of the office estuary. The jokes were not targeted towards my ten year-old mind, but they certainly haven't been upheld in a status of legends since their inception. Even now, the comics don't reflect my experiences of the office. Studying the comings

of the office is far more entertaining than the sedentary sedation of sub-par journalism and humour. There is but a jungle in between each cubicle, one that isn't allowed.

It's true, the "office" environment is always a façade for society's worst experiences. What makes this worse is the constant profession of "professionalism". In order to afford life's necessities like textbooks (the ones I don't buy) and food (that I say I won't eat), there is always the desperate plea of the call centre. Justifying my own payments is equally as arduous as trying to tell people I'm not the scum of the earth. All I do is call. Call after call, which inevitably becomes dumping after dumping, eventually picking the stressed fibres in my body to the point of a mild PTSD every time I hear the dial tone. My job is as petty and unnecessary as any job, but, under the watchful gaze of Big Sister, I'm forced to give a shit, even if my contract doesn't state it. Of course, civility is what makes the workplace go on, and I must obey. I

must be professional and keep my lunch breaks under 14:55 so I have time to shit and walk back to my desk in case one poor sod misses the opportunity to experience my voice and sales charm.

The "Ten Commandments of the Workplace" is something that plagues my desk (is it my desk, or am I under the false pretence of ownership and autonomy under Big Sister?). Ten rules by which I have to abide. Their implementation struck me as a joke, so much so that my inner vigilante escaped briefly to correct the various grammatical indiscretions unnoticed in an effort to appear professional. I wasn't sure what sickened me more, the fact that a degenerate spelt computers with an apostrophe (let me tell you, I was livid – "computer's" don't own "off"), or the lurid blue that seemed to advertise the Office Gestapo's clear lack of colour co-ordination. Bic in hand, I made the correction, imploring the infamous eleventh commandment professed by Moses: "11. I can uze good grammarz".

Of course I was proud! My Mum wasn't so

call waitin time mas

ricky h. kings dissect
jobs in the pursuit o

proud. My friends sniggered, then went back to playing “how many times can I scroll past BuzzFeed before I eventually waste my data on the article”. My omnipotent boss sent an email to all clients and employees. Sheer disdain over my actions, but unaware that I had committed the greatest act of altruism imaginable. A new superhero should grace the minds of youth. Big Sister didn’t agree. No one fessed up. The lurid vomit on the walls remained. I was prepared to die a martyr, but my actions were lost to the world of professionalism and apathy.

The act of sedation is something students are all too used to. My talents and exorbitant loan have prepared me for these moments. As soon as I hear “please fuck off, I’m eating dinner”, it’s straight to the toilet cubicle to indulge in the next twenty-four minutes repeatedly switching between Snapchat, Instagram, and Facebook (with the occasional interludes of your personal email for good measure). Work WiFi is the one true opiate to the professional masses. The idea of attending work for eight hours a week and sitting down for that time whilst pretend-

ing you give a shit doesn’t quite work out, despite being so theoretically flawless. My solace in the toilet cubicle, the one closest to the wall, farthest away from Big Sister’s office, is time cherished. The only mark left on my conscience is that of the red circle on my left knee and left cheek from leaning for so long. It’s a beauty in itself, something that humanity refuses to accept. And it is killing the workplace.

Other times, there are the periods of sexual frustration that workplace professionals ignore. Christmas parties break down this professionally coy stand-off. Various stunts involving alcohol and rudely disgruntled employees with the annual pent-up despair lend themselves to primitive emotions. Having sex with a colleague in the disabled toilets seems like a good idea until the actual disabled guy needs it. But so does the masturbatory session you have whilst pretending this story ever happened. Either way, this professionalism demolishes the very grain of human nature.

I have a counter for the number of times I’ve protested through workplace masturbation. Four. Four times. Each time I revel in my newfound productivity, but even that’s a farfetched truth. Each time the guilt becomes slightly less of a burden. Afterwards, a quick hand-washing ritual prepares the mind for the next gruelling four hours and thirty-seven seconds until I can leave. But time is only going backwards. Inside, I may have regretted my acts, but in reality, a small victory maintains my sanity knowing that Big Sister will never know. My soul is not damned to the hell of the sedentary.

g & break- turbating

s desk jobs and hand
f “professionalism”



As far as I am aware, my casual contract doesn't say that I can't judge relentlessly and make false claims of incompetency. At no point in history has an individual said: "Hey, Karen is doing a really good job over in IT". The conversation usually follows a more griping script, something that should be left to desperate housewives. More, "Jesus Christ, Samuel, have you seen Sarah? What an absolutely inefficacious cow! She definitely isn't working hard enough. This is bullshit." Nothing gets done. No one is reprimanded. So it goes. Professionalism is an insidious force on

our proactivity. Our complaints seem to be the extent of the workplace activism. One would expect that improving on efficiency would be a team obligation! But this does not seem the case. Claiming incompetency is the easiest way forward. No smiling and diverse poster will ever sell the company, or a legitimate urge to fix problems, to me. A problem in itself.

Outside of these benign complaints lie the true archetypes of the workplace. Those that we rarely slander. Dilbert always alluded to them, albeit in a frighteningly dull fashion. Easily sixty percent of colleagues (a statistic which is made up, it's probably higher) are amiable individuals that make it worthwhile. There's always an Irish fellow and a student that sit opposite, who distract from the absolute detritus that surrounds you. This is the survival technique, almost as necessary as those other methods that we use. This is where the abhorrent misuse of the English language is mitigated, where good personalities go to die, and where Minesweeper becomes supplementary to masturbation, Facebook, and work. They are by your side,

quite literally, until you're told to work harder or stop going to Countdown because your fifteen-minute break became a month-long excursion to buy chicken.

The ambiguously gendered misuse of human genetics often exists, too. Their sheer disproportionate size and claim that they caught diabetes is only too hilarious to ignore. The constant tailing of the bosses screams desperation for attention. Even the complaints towards me (ten of my last nineteen in fact) show a decency to the professional world, but a completely revolting and undesirable real world talent. I didn't even know that Sprite Zero (not a vaguely satisfying 355 ml can, but the whole one and a half litres of regurgitating goodness) and Ready Salted Crisps (a family bag, not a small bag; small detail, large colleague) could be considered lunch.

Come to think of it, that's it.

But no, of course this is just angry anonymous writing in the Radio New Zealand comments section. The world of professionalism is where the lyrical beauty of concepts such as "be the best YOU, you can be" and "Just be yourself" die. Perhaps I am the enlightened, but in reality, it's a lack of conformity. In a world of invading corporal prowess and greed, human beings are merely the machines to the bourgeois blender. Dilbert showed a world that was dull, dreary, and lacking ambition. Professionalism is a concept that will only become more important as university degrees become more common and the local market globalises and distances. Employers seek those that can abide, not necessarily think. To human nature, this is abhorrent. But to the economy, it is merely a compromise to profit more and grow. Pretension will only develop and we are consolidating society's inequality as we permeate the mould. Dilbert mocked the very essence of Big Sister, but it was still a shit cartoon. Doesn't matter, I sold out and got paid. ■



Hey everyone, Brie Larson liked my tweet

ARTS EDITORIAL BY SAMANTHA GIANOTTI

Living through four days of San Diego Comic-Con each year while you're 10,465 kilometres away is a fresh hell, peppered with celebrity panels, meet and greets, and desperate pleas from my mother that I "please, just stop crying".

You watch from the wings like the third Hemsworth brother; downcast, dejected, desperate for your time in the sun. (Shoutout to Luke Hemsworth who is lowkey attractive and probably comes with a lot less famous-person baggage than his two younger brothers).

But sometimes, a little bit of magic happens. Sometimes you retweet a famous person's picture with a truly ridiculous meme caption; a shout into the void, a plea to be a part of the bigger picture, ya know. And just sometimes, that famous person sees your tweet.

Oscar-winning actress, one half of a gut-wrenchingly adorable friendship with nine-year-old Jacob Tremblay, unnamed member of the Six Chicks crew in *13 Going on 30*, Instagram queen Brie Larson liked my dumbass fucking tweet. #blessed.

Idiotic and asinine though the tweet may be, incorrect it is not. The announcement of the *Captain Marvel* casting is a concrete step towards Marvel Studios effectively representing on screen the swathe of female superheroes they have within their pages. Good shit, Marvel.

Here's some more 🐔...🐔...🐔...🐔...
🐔... good shit goOd sHit 🐔 to come out of
San Diego Comic-Con 2k16:



THE *WONDER WOMAN* TRAILER IS A BANGER

After the boner killer that was *Batman v Superman*, DC had a lot of making up to do. But ho boy, the *Wonder Woman* film feels like it might just be a ripper. The trailer features Gal Gadot kicking a lot of Nazi ass, and an army of Amazons battling soldiers on a beach with swords. This trailer has so many swords. More movies with women wielding swords please.

The one major bummer is that the "Immigrant Song" rip off from *Wonder Woman*'s introduction in *Dawn of Justice* seems to be lingering like a bad smell. Let's hope that, in director Patty Jenkins' hands, the shitty guitar theme is the only thing from Zack Snyder's dumpster fire that's here to stay.

LITTLE GIRLS COSPLAYED AS REY FROM *THE FORCE AWAKENS*; THE WORLD IS A BEAUTIFUL PLACE

Up until *Episode VII*, the only real *Star Wars* dress up choices for women have been Leia's floor-length white gown or her slave bikini. Neither are particularly practical; in one you face tripping on a rogue hem, in the other you risk being masturbation material for some fan-boy's spank bank. This year, little girls traipsed around the convention wrapped in bandaging, their hair in buns and their hands clasping staffs. This is very important.

With a lass as the new jedi in the *Star Wars* franchise, the promotion of women-centric superhero films, and Ghostbuster-gate still grinding a few gears - the cretins of the Internet

must be at their wits end. *Valar morghulis*.

EDDIE REDMAYNE IS AN ANGEL, TOO GOOD FOR THIS WORLD, TOO PURE

At the Hall H panel for *Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them*, perennial sweetheart and all-around cinnamon roll Eddie Redmayne tore into the crowd to deliver all fans present with their very own wand. This flagrant disregard for *Harry Potter* lore ("The wand chooses the wizard, Mr Potter") was promptly forgotten as Eddie led the whole of Hall H in casting a unified Lumos Maxima. Definitely a Hufflepuff move.

MARVEL IS KILLING THE CASTING GAME

My best friend Bri's new role wasn't the only big announcement to excite Marvel fans; new cast members for *Guardians of the Galaxy Vol. 2*, *Spider-Man: Homecoming* and *Black Panther* were also revealed. Danai Gurira of *The Walking Dead* fame was announced as an addition to the *Black Panther* cast, already boasting Chadwick Boseman, Lupita Nyong'o and Michael B. Jordan. The film's screenplay was written by Joe Robert Cole and Ryan Coogler, who is also directing *Black Pan-*

ther, one of the three Marvel movies to hit screens in 2017. The *Black Panther* character is of special status, as the first African superhero; respecting this, Marvel has put the character and his story in the hands of men and women of colour, diversifying their studio's on-screen characters from its current crop of white dudes (three of whom are big beautiful blonde dudes named Chris). Good shit, Marvel. Alright alright alright.

TAIKA WAITITI'S *THOR* FILM IS PROBABLY GOING TO BE HILARIOUS

The previous installments in the *Thor* series are the two Marvel films that some seem to think deserve the least amount of love. No matter your thoughts on such a sentiment (i.e. that these people are totally fucking wrong), it seems that *Thor: Ragnarok* is safe under Taika Waititi's purview. Marvel played some footage directed by Taika that explained away Thor and Bruce Banner's absence from the action of *Captain America: Civil War*, featuring Thor stating that he needed some "me time", jetting off to Australia and moving in with a new friend named Darryl. Thor was also reportedly upset not to be asked to jump into the fracas between Captain America and Iron Man, a gripe boiling

down to the fact that Tony Stark had no idea how to contact Thor because the Asgardian doesn't carry a cellphone. Join me in a prayer circle that this footage is released online. Rest assured that this film is probably going to be Marvel's jazziest one yet.

And so, another four days of hell have come to pass. Look out San Diego Comic-Con 2017 - Luke Hemsworth and I are comin' for ya. ■



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teenage mutant ninja crybabies

jack adams explores the bias of nostalgia

Ghostbusters reviews have been polarising. Either remarkably average or an abhorrent mess. Some have called it “fun” whilst others have called it “potential-ly Hitler’s Mein Kampf spin-off based on Eva Braun’s fellatio dissatisfaction”.

This response is expected when any director takes on the challenge of reintroducing a cult classic into mainstream consumption again, responses that may be considered a phenomenon of the “nostalgia complex”. The nostalgia complex involves one’s sense of entitlement towards a series that they associate with a happier, less traumatic time in their lives. Audiences have complained that Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles look horrific in live-action cinema. The *Transformers* series, once revered in the 80s, was called a farce in 2007 when cartoons were transferred to worldwide theatres. Just like *Ghostbusters*, these films are criticised for “not being like the old”, the adaptations a crisis of memory. These films are lambasted for their irrelevance to the original audiences, no longer aimed towards the mid-thirties audiences who would have consumed them. For those unaware of the recent *Ghostbusters* uproar, it is reflected similarly within the gaming sphere. *Pokémon Go* has led to the influx of many professing their rights towards the franchise due to having played the original games. *Pokémon Blue* and *Red* supposedly link to one’s ability to enjoy the game (not those bastards that don’t even know the original 150 Pokémon).

Disparities develop from this divisive rhetoric. Suggesting that someone’s ability ought to be based on their age is ludicrous. How grand, creating an age-related apartheid or a reverse *Logan’s Run* of the arts. Your father’s desire to sow the ejaculatory seed in the early nineties as opposed to a decade later is the basis for your privilege. Divine. Sifting through a Google search of “ghostbusters reviews” and eventually “ghostbusters reviews good please” only presents a greater degree of reviewers’ emotional appeal. The authors’ claims to have seen the film in a completely impartial frame of mind seems to lose its credence when they use more asterisks than full stops. Emotion floods the page, and, inevitably, their clairvoyance. It becomes a chore to sift through this sore nonsense. Just because one had a supposedly superior childhood does not heighten their claim to an art franchise.

Those that created and marketed these shows never had *your* childhood in mind. No mainstream media, especially when related to children, creates content without an economic prerogative. In our youth, we were merely products of their vicious marketing scheme, though we didn’t see it as such. As in many cases, within the last half-century, many television shows and films are made for the purpose of profit, whether it’s in a further marketing sense or to merely sell tickets. Beloved aspects of our childhoods revolved around someone making money. In that sense, we consumed based on a demographic, grouped together by mere numbers on a page, whether it was age, gender, habits, or whether you could afford Duplo or just those knock-off Megabloks. Back then, though

it hasn’t changed now, we consumed based on someone’s need to sell. We become mesmerised by the arguably paedophilic Grimace and his friends just as we craved the merchandise of our favourite psychedelic drop-kick optimist, Bob the Builder.

We consume based on profit, but oblivion grants us an emotional connection that we hold dear today. It was no coincidence that my bedroom would’ve been a *Bob the Builder* merchandise vendor’s wet dream. I mean, Christ, I did enjoy that duvet with Scoop and Dizzy emblazoned on the front. The coat hangers were a nice touch, too.

Enjoying the memories of old is a matter that maintains our sanity as aging individuals, but a sense of entitlement over certain works is only a surly cleaving of happier days. Bob the Builder, and even my personal love interest, Pingu, were once ruined by the use of cartoon animation. Though I lamented the plasticine effigy of Pingu, I was the product of a time. No one that witnessed, enjoyed, and cherished *Transformers* or *Pokémon* ever had their childhood ruined. Leave that to degrading political stability and the eventual genocide that will ruin humanity. Childhood should never be the hallmark for our critique of artworks. We were daft, likely covered in shit, and depriving our parents of sleep. We knew nothing but malleable cravings of capitalism. Just as we hadn’t a fully functioning brain, we wouldn’t give a child Shakespeare and expect a full analysis and critique. Though, I’m sure the Pop-Up Globe has butchered his works and ruined the childhoods of sixteenth-seventeenth century kids. ■



How'd It Go?

PODCAST REVIEW BY MICHAEL CLARK

New Zealand's podcast culture, like its theatre and indie circle, is very niche yet very vibrant. I would whole-heartedly love to see a New Zealand *Serial* but there is a dark, cynical part of me that doubts this. Regardless, I try to recommend these spots of subculture to everyone because it's something you wouldn't normally listen to, or it might prove enlightening in some way.

How'd It Go? wedges itself neatly between these two things. Equal parts hilarious and introspective, the podcast is co-hosted by Maxwell Apse and Robbie Nicol, two best friends on the search to be better people. The premise is simple: each co-host dares the other to do something out of their comfort zone then report on it for the next episode. What results is a thoughtful and, quite often, relatable exploration into the minds of two individuals as they come to terms with their deepest anxieties and insecurities. With challenges such as approaching and coming to terms with a childhood bully, joining an opposing political party, and learning a new language, *How'd It Go?* is both fun and light-hearted but not at the expense of this underlying insight that courses through the show. Max and Rob bounce off each other quite naturally and the podcast becomes this safe space for the two, while the listener is invited in on their intimate conversation as a sort of mediator.

The podcast's mantra clearly states that it was designed for their own personal growth, but I don't think that's entirely true. I feel as though we're invited on the journey as well; any lessons they learn along the way are ones we learn too. In this way, *How'd It Go?* becomes more of a collective journey than anything else. And I'm glad I'm going along for the ride. ■



Boners of the Heart

PODCAST REVIEW BY SAMANTHA GIANOTTI

I love podcasts. I have whiled away hours contemplating starting a podcast of my own, consistently foiled by the fact that whenever I try to write a script I involuntarily put on a really shitty British accent. But I hate *Boners of the Heart*. I hate it from the depths of my soul because, now that it exists, I can no longer come up with the idea of hosting a podcast where I talk about the super questionable celebrity crushes that occupy space in my heart.

Rose Matafeo and Alice Snedden spend the better part of an hour trying to convince each other of the merit of an obscure celebrity crush, and their riffing builds more momentum than the opening bars of "Thunderstruck". The best type of podcast is one where you feel like you're being let into a friendship - and you can bet your bottom boner you'll want to be friends with these two.

It's a treat to witness two ladies forging a space to be incredibly funny (and recklessly free with details of their Danny DeVito sex dreams); the fact that this is a space where two women encourage others to broaden their sexual horizons is a one-two punch that worked my lil' feminist heart into a frenzy. On a more selfish note, listening to Rose and Alice intently discussing whether or not they would bang Rick Moranis made me feel a smidge less weird about the fact that I lowkey want to make out with Hector Elizondo.

Support local content. Support talented women. Feel less alone after having that Jason Bateman sex dream. Get a boner for *Boners*. ■



Lights Out

FILM REVIEW BY JACK CALDWELL

Lights Out is a horror film based on a viral two minute YouTube short about a woman whose house is haunted by a ghostly figure that only appears in the dark. The film follows a dysfunctional family in which the mother, Sophie, is interacting with this ghost to grieve the death of her second husband. Her son, Martin, is told by his much older half-sister, Rebecca, that the ghost had come before, when Sophie's first husband disappeared.

Lights Out demonstrates perfectly that in order for a horror film to work, you have to care about the characters involved. In an early scene we see a character at work who is warned of the ghost by his co-worker (amusingly, the actress from the short film). He ignores the warning and is attacked, which made my audience laugh, since next to no effort was made to establish his role in the film. By stark contrast, whenever Rebecca or Martin were haunted, the audience fell dead silent, since their plights were well established and nobody wanted bad things to befall them.

There are a lot of jump scares here, a cheap gimmick seen in many recent horror films that opt to frighten the audience rather than build suspense and unsettle the viewer. That said, even when jump scares came, music and, obviously, lighting were used effectively to build that suspense and sense of panic before the jump came.

The motivations of this ghost are deliberately unclear at the beginning, making the investigation that Rebecca and Martin carry out into its past and relationship with their mother as fascinating as it was creepy. This effort by *Lights Out* to establish characters and plot is one that the many terrible horror films out there should take note of. ■



Everybody Wants Some!!

FILM REVIEW BY NIKKI ADDISON

This movie will have you wishing you were a teen in the eighties. Or more specifically, a teen in America in the eighties. No doubt about it. Not only was the fashion 100% cooler, but the music was bangin' and the atmosphere very, very chill.

Everybody Wants Some!! follows college freshman Jake as he moves to Texas and shares a house with his new baseball teammates. Not a lot happens during the movie, but that's why it's so great. It's about a group of college guys in the days leading up to class, partying, looking for girls and hanging out – in the eighties. The guys muck around playing table tennis, getting stoned, razzing each other and telling jokes. It's the type of thing we've all experienced at some point during our teens or early twenties, so watching it brings on a certain responsiveness and sense of nostalgia.

What makes this film, hands down, are the characters. While Jake is the protagonist, his baseball teammates are the stars. Fellow freshmen Plummer and Brumley are solid, perfectly portraying the role of new kids joining a group of older, more superior kids. Dale is on point as the mediator between the two age groups, while Nesbit is the light-hearted 'bully'/asshole of the team. However, it's Finn who really steals the show. Charming, witty and amiable, Finn is a character you can't not like. He doesn't lord his higher ranking over the freshmen and is simply out to have a good time.

Essentially, that's what *Everybody Wants Some!!* is about – having a good time. We watch the guys enjoy themselves, and enjoy ourselves in the process. It's uplifting, inspiring and surprisingly perceptive. Check it out. ■



Weiner

FILM REVIEW BY JAMES HALPIN

'American politician' and 'sex scandal' are virtually synonymous terms. 'Twitter direct message' and 'dick-pic' however, are not. Anthony Weiner (not joking about his last name), a seven-time congressman from New York, was the battler who brought these four terms together into one mighty fuck-up. While sexting a woman on the other side of the US he posted a dick-pic to Twitter. It then transpired after much lying that his penis had been sent through multiple social media platforms (alas, not LinkedIn) to multiple women.

Weiner is a doco about the eponymous politician's attempt to run for the mayor of New York City in 2013. The scandal occurred in 2011. Your calculations are correct; Weiner did run for public office after the sex scandal hit. Man has big old cojones. Or is an idiot. While being capable of articulate and aggressive speeches, Weiner makes some dumb moves. He fails to treat his goddess-of-a-wife, Huma Abedin (arguably the most tolerant woman in the world), an American political staffer and aide to Hillary Clinton, like the political mastermind she truly is.

Weiner is less interviews and more inside access into the campaign and how it deals with the fallout of the sexting scandal. We see inside Weiner's home, watch him playing with his child and his scody, surely has rabies, cat. We also see inside his head through intimate car rides between events, where we witness a resilient man who really believes he has more to offer than how the media portrays him. A hilarious and insightful film which is a must-watch for anyone in Young Labour thinking they're the next Jacinda Ardern.

8 erect penises on Twitter out of 10 moist vaginas on Reddit. ■



Captain Fantastic

FILM REVIEW BY NIKKI ADDISON

It's been a while since I've seen a film as uplifting and thought-provoking as this one. *Captain Fantastic* follows Ben (Viggo Mortensen) and his six children, living off the grid in the Pacific Northwest. It is revealed that the family moved into the woods when Ben's wife Leslie was diagnosed with Bipolar Disorder. Thinking it would help her condition, they rejected the capitalist world they disliked and built a self-sufficient life free from society's mores. "What we created here may be unique in all of human existence," Ben says. "We created paradise."

To members of polite society, Ben and his children's way of life is viewed as abnormal. Their daily routine consists of a rigorous exercise regime followed by a deep meditation session, garden maintenance, hunting, musical practice then reading around the campfire. The family are happy, until Leslie, who has been moved to a mental institution, commits suicide. Suddenly, Ben and his family are forced to leave their isolated life and journey to New Mexico for the funeral, exposing the children to the 'real' world – depending on your view of what 'real' really is, of course.

The best thing about *Captain Fantastic* is the chemistry within Ben's family. Mortensen plays the role of loving, idealistic father perfectly – it almost seems as though the role was made for him. The children, in particular eldest son Bodevan (George MacKay), are outstanding. Funny, sweet and completely convincing in their portrayal of kids raised in the wild, they, alongside Mortenson, carry this film. *Captain Fantastic* is an important work which critiques our materialistic and technology-driven society, raising questions of authenticity, survival and what really living is. ■



Freetown Sound

Blood Orange

ALBUM REVIEW BY CATRIONA BRITTON

Turbulent times continue in America with the struggle for African-American equality, as well as those of other minorities. *Freetown Sound* is a sonic and poetic expression of one British man's experience as an individual of African descent living in America, commiserating and empathising with those who are a part of the daily struggles for equality.

Freetown Sound is Devonté Hynes' (who performs under the moniker Blood Orange) third album. It is his most personal and sincere yet, where one can hear the undertones of racial injustice bubbling under the surface. In "Hands Up", he references the 2012 killing of Trayvon Martin, warning "Keep your hood off when you're walking ... Sure enough they're gonna take your body". Some critics have said this album should be seen in the same league of other politically-toned albums addressing racial tension, such as Kendrick Lamar's *To Pimp a Butterfly* or D'Angelo's *Black Messiah*.

At the same time, it acts as a celebration of black culture, shining a ray of positivity and hope on a race that's so often misappropriated or exploited by white people. The title of the album pays homage to Freetown, Sierra Leone where Hynes' father was born. In several songs, voice clips and spoken-word poetry make appearances, giving a truly communal atmosphere to the album. On "With Him", a sampled voice repeats "Black can get you over, black can sit you down", reasserting the power of an often underserved people.

Having said all this, Hynes is an exceptional multi-instrumentalist who draws inspiration from almost every genre of music imaginable, from minimalist composer Philip Glass to King of Pop, Michael Jackson. He fuses jazz, hip-hop, soul, R&B, funk, and 80s pop ballad together to create a truly varied sonic experience that warmly feeds the soul of anyone listening. ■



Summer 08

Metronomy

ALBUM REVIEW BY JEAN BELL

Metronomy is an electronic pop group hailing from Britain. Formed in 1999 by lead member Joseph Mount, Metronomy has released a range of original material in addition to remixes of the likes of Lady Gaga. *Summer 08* is a product of the lone effort of Mount, his talent for producing intelligent electronic pop made clear; the album is characterised by repetitive, yet not sterile, groovy beats. Mount knows how to craft a song and no loose ends are left on this album, with each effect and instrument conscientiously placed, establishing a clean and well-structured feel to the work.

A staple combination of pulsing synths balanced by energising percussion creates a funky, dancey vibe that runs consistently throughout the album. Even "Mick Slow", one of the slower paced songs on the album, maintains a low-key energy that bubbles beneath its steady beat. Mount lavishes his work with an eclectic mix of audio effects that feel like they glide over you like a sonic wave, such as the soaring synth on "Old Skool". Swedish pop sensation Robyn also makes a welcome appearance, whose sweet and velvety vocals compliment Mount's high-key cooes on "Hang Me out to Dry".

Despite its many merits, *Summer 08* is unlikely to be a memorable release from Metronomy. While the album is tidy, accessible and suitable for easy listening, Mount seems to stay within his comfort zone and shies away from being too experimental or pushing boundaries. Perhaps Metronomy's next record will include the full band, widening the pool of talent and driving the creative synthesis of their release. ■



Flash! Ah-ahh!

Cheap tickets and quality films at Event Cinemas

If the (mostly super weird) choices at the New Zealand International Film Festival really aren't your speed, fear not: Event Cinemas' Flashback Friday series is back in full swing throughout August and September, with a whole lot of classic movies that won't cost you a whole lot of dosh.

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FRIDAY 19 AUGUST

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FRIDAY 2 SEPTEMBER

THE EXORCIST

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THE SHAWSHANK REDEMPTION

FRIDAY 16 SEPTEMBER

GOODFELLAS

FRIDAY 23 SEPTEMBER

A CLOCKWORK ORANGE

FRIDAY 30 SEPTEMBER

2001: A SPACE ODYSSEY

FRIDAY 7 OCTOBER

FULL METAL JACKET

FRIDAY 14 OCTOBER

LOLITA ■

Harry Potter and the Top Ten NOTPs

J.K. Rowling's *Harry Potter* has a place in most of our hearts. For some, that place is terrible, twisted and on the Internet (as most terrible/twisted things tend to be). I set out to try and rank the worst pairings that we, as *fans* have created, and - to be perfectly honest - we are all terrible people.

10. SNAPE/FILCH: Two work colleagues with similar outlooks on life, who stumble across each other in the winding hallways of Hogwarts. In the shadows of the flickering torchlight, they meet and do a whole lotta stuff that makes you confirm you are 18+ before reading about. I'm not going to lie, I actually like it. Both underdogs, surly, overlooked, with a penchant for bullying children. There's even a slight class difference to provide tension and drama! If only Filch wasn't already taken (see: Mrs. Norris).

9. PERCY/FUDGE: A wide-eyed ex-Prefect is taken under the wing of the Minister for Magic. I can see it. The same way I see mould on my bread before chucking it out. The two *are* quite pompous and ignorant for the majority of the books; and they clearly have a thirst for power, or simply for administrative tasks. These two together would definitely be a slimy power-couple. Those that run around with their heads up their arses together, stay together.

8. HOGWARTS/THE GIANT SQUID: Points for creativity. Points deducted for tentacles. (I didn't need this in my life.)

7. FILCH/MRS. NORRIS: These two are basically in a canon committed relationship. But c'mon fanfic writers. Does sex with a cat really rock your boat? I did see a very well-written fic where Mrs. Norris was initially a human, but considering that Filch turned her into a cat accidentally when he tried to murder her in response to being friendzoned, I don't see it working out.

6. HARRY/BELLATRIX: The only way this works is if fanfic writers basically rewrite every element of the story and the characters (which is basically what they do for all of these terrible pairings). This one was only redeemed by the effort put into one of the fics I saw, that was basically a full length novel ending in their honeymoon. Of course, every narrative arc was changed; Harry's parents were alive, his kids were his siblings, and he was completely over Sirius' murder at Bellatrix's hands.

5. MINERVA/SNAPE: This is an 'opposites attract' thing. Except they don't. Let's remember McGonagall was one of Snape's teachers also, please. Maybe they could bond about how the people they loved both died. I'm sure this idea and the subsequent (mostly sexual) works were spawned from their kickass fight in *Deathly Hallows*, where McGonagall #slayed. Let's pause for a moment as I try to replace everything I've read for this article with thoughts about how badass Dame Maggie Smith is.

4. HARRY/VOLDEMORT: I love the enemies to friends to lovers trope. I do. It's basically the reason I read most trashy romance novels. But not here. There is a line, and Voldemort blew it to pieces when he orphaned Harry and was behind, directly or indirectly, practically every death in the series (Lupin/Dobby/Colin Creevey - just to give you your needed punch to the heart for the day.) Yes, the whole series revolves around their relationship

as foils - but he killed Hedwig so...

3. HARRY OR RON/SNAPE: From the people that brought you the golden trio being paired with every adult in the series (did someone say statutory?) comes this weirdness. Harry and Snape do have an obsessive relationship, and it could 'supposedly' be redemption for James' treatment of Snape and fill the hole left by Lily. But that's exactly why it shouldn't happen. Harry doesn't have to answer for what his parents did, and Snape (a grown-ass man) should realise this. Ron has even less in common with Snape than Harry does (no green eyes there.) Ron *hates* Snape, and Snape thinks nothing of Ron - although the King and the Prince would be a nice title. I think people like to forget both legality and morality, but also the fact that Snape has far more interest in ruining the lives of his students than he ever would in dating them.

2. NEVILLE/BELLATRIX: After torturing his parents to insanity, some fans didn't think Neville had withstood quite enough, and wrote this sickening mess of sadism and Stockholm Syndrome. Ignoring their backstory, do we really think that ickle Longbottom could please a witch like Lestrage? Most of the fics involve Neville's quest to avenge his parents generally resulting in capture/imprisonment/torture. What a meet cute. These fics have either one of two endings: true (completely-real-and-not-arising-from-a-hostage-situation) love, or rape.

1. HERMIONE/ANY PROFESSOR: Hermione Granger, the brightest witch of her age, was top in her class for many good reasons, and none of them were because she screwed every dusty witch or wizard that handed out marks. If I had analysed every pairing of Hermione with a professor, it basically would have taken up 90% of the list - and that's just the teachers we care about. We get it. She's a teacher's *pet*. They *dip their quill* in ink. They could grade their sexual experience. I don't care. As it is, fanfic iterations of Hermione have her passed around from Snape, to Dumbledore, to McGonagall, to Flitwick, fucking her way through them all until she found the biggest dick on campus - Haggrid.

I couldn't find one actually well-written piece that evaluated these characters or tried to develop them, as they all basically wanted to play on the power dynamic between a teacher and a willing student - where the student will always be vulnerable. They removed Hermione's agency and continued to perpetuate the 'naughty schoolgirl' image that is so toxic to our society. Hey, does anyone want to stop sexualising underage girls? Cool.

HONOURABLE MENTIONS AND QUOTES:

Hermione and the Sorting Hat

Pregnant Draco and Jacob Black (yes, from *Twilight*)

Ebony Dark'ness Dementia Raven Way/Draco/Harry*

"Dumbledore casts Penue Englartotus"

"My sexual skills are more than adequate for any witch or wizard." Snape said confidently"

■ GRACE HOOD-EDWARDS

*Arts Editor's note: everyone should seek out and subject themselves to the revelation that is "My Immortal". The ferocious sexual tension would make a Brontë blush.

Editors' Essentials

THE MUSIC, MOVIE AND BOOK RECOMMENDATIONS NO ONE ASKED FOR

What's the wankiest book you've ever read?

MARK

Atlas Shrugged: If you ignore the fact that the book is a well-regarded conservative cumrag, ignore the fact that it's over 1000 pages long, ignore the fifty-page transcript of a radio speech about why socialism is shit, ignore the one dimensional characters with poorly defined motivations and bizarre morals, ignore the cringeworthy love story (or stories, Dagny seems to love any man with money, power and poor social skills) and ignore the fact that all the millionaires in the world have abandoned their jobs because no one appreciates them and LIVE IN A VALLEY WITH A GIANT DOLLAR SIGN LITERALLY HANGING ABOVE THEM, *Atlas Shrugged* isn't actually that bad.

CAITLIN

If a book is critically acclaimed, I avoid it like the plague. Man Booker? Man, Boring! Orange Prize? Orange you glad you didn't read that one! Pulitzer Prize? Puhlease take it away! Recently the editorial team, in a fit of hubris, decided to see how many books we'd read on the 1001 Books To Read Before You Die list. This list should be renamed 1001 Books That Will Make You Want To Die. I had read fifteen. Out of one-thousand-and-one. I have a terrible taste in literature, so I don't really engage in a lot of intellectual wank. I have plenty of friends who pretend to read Sartre and de Beauvoir but I can't even get through their Wikipedia pages. I did read *The God Delusion* when I was going through my angry atheist phase at the age of fifteen, and by god (yeah, that's right Dawkins, by GOD) it was a crock of shit. Self-indulgent, whiny, poorly structured, and based on a bunch of "well, duh" arguments – a whole lot of "god isn't real because you can't prove it". Doesn't really take a genius to put that down on paper. At least, I think that's what it was like. I only read half.

HANNAH

Anna Karenina: I mainly read it because I knew it would be on the list of 1001 Books To Read Before You Die (in which I scored only marginally higher than Caitlin). Also I was lured in by the pretty cover, which did not accurately represent the thoroughly depressing content it was hiding. Guess you can't judge a book by its cover amirite?! Would definitely recommend. I learned a lot about Russian serfs.

CATRIONA

I'm put off by anything over 400 words.

SAMANTHA

I go to secondhand book stores and buy aged copies of Plato's *Republic* and collections of Percy Shelley poems, only to never, ever read them. The wankiest of wankers is she who doesn't even wank to completion. My book-buying is a false flag event. I am a fraud. ■

New Zealand: A (Guesstimated) Recap Of The Previous 6 Months

WITH ELOISE SIMS

“The problem with New Zealand,” my tour guide announces, holding an authoritarian ringed finger up for silence, “... is that nothing ever happens.”

I splutter defensively, knowing full well this is 100% true. “That’s not –”

“Is true!” she argues. “Is true! I cannot remember any time I saw headline about New Zealand in Greece. How many times have you seen headline about Greece in New Zealand?”

I think about it. “Well, you did have that old enormous debt crisis meltdown thing last year –”

“Fucking *Germans*.” She mutters furiously, spitting out a bit of baklava. I raise my eyebrows.

“Yes, but this is point, no? We have debt crisis. We get in news. Is terrible. Is very dramatic. But in New Zealand, what was last dramatic thing to happen?”

We’re sitting in a little restaurant in the Costa Navarino, one of the most beautiful provinces of Greece. The view is stunning. No, outstanding. Olive trees are swaying gently in the wind. The green sea is sparkling. Paradisiac. I can’t see any of this, however, because I’m scrolling through the New Zealand Herald website in an effort to prove her wrong.

She sips her coffee patiently. “What is top headline today?”

“Well... Naz got in a fight with Heather-du Plessis Allan.”

“...Naz?”

“She’s like... well, she’s famous because she was on *The Bachelor*. You have *The Bachelor* in Greece?”

“What is bachelor?”

“Er. It’s a show. Where women compete to date this guy. It’s, um, sometimes good. Bit weird. Bit sexist. Lots of drama.”

“I see.” She says, in a voice, which means she doesn’t see at all. “And this Nas character?”

“Naz.”

“She won show?”

“No, she came second.”

She gives me a long look. “And she is famous.”

I squirm. “Well, yeah. She um. She boxes and... stuff.”

She doesn’t need to say anything else. I know her point’s been proved. She’s right. Nothing of massive international note really seems to ever happen in New Zealand. While there’s a certain comfort in that – we don’t have coups, cops assaulting citizens, mass shootings, riots, or any political instability all too often – it makes for a society where many know more about the US election than our own. However, this might just be me. After all, I haven’t read the Herald for about six months (and it felt good, man). This leads me to wonder – has anything really happened, in UoA, or Auckland as a whole, in my absence? A normal, intelligent man would research political activities and relative headlines over the past six months. However, I am no man (points if you get the LOTR reference there). I stand before you as a woman armed with a weekly column, and I’ll be damned if I don’t put it to its intended use – which, of course, is publicizing my inevitable idiocy.

So. Here are my best guesses as to what’s happened in Auckland in the last six months, based on a few scraps of stories I’ve picked up on Twitter and Facebook group chats. Let’s do it.

1. *The Bachelor Was A Thing.* It didn’t seem to end well for Actual Block of Sliced Cheese, Jordan Mauger. Indeed, it appeared he tapped-and-gapped the winning contestant, before probably sailing off to Waiheke Island to reminisce on the simpler times when he worked on a superyacht for Tom Cruise.

Either way, this display highlighted a fact we all already knew – that Mr. Mauger had the emotional range of a Smeg fridge.

2. *White Ladies in New World Kept Blaming Things On Asian Migrants.* Housing prices in Auckland are skyrocketing? Asians. There’s a meth problem in the CBD? Asians. You voted for a National government that has pro-Chinese trade policies? Asians. Their fault. But not the guy who runs the Mt. Eden Chinese takeaway. He’s the right kind of Asian. I mean; his wontons are outstanding. So long as they learn the language.

3. *No One Reads Craccum.* This is fine. It’s not like we need constant self-validation

anyway. Don’t mind me, I’m just listening to ‘Asleep’ by the Smiths for the 200th time.

4. *Lorde Did Things.* These things were good and powerful, yes they were, yes they were. On the Sabbath Day, she said, “Let there be light”, and so the All Blacks came charging over from Rangitoto as our country’s only other cultural export. And so it was.

5. *Stuart McCutcheon Got A Pay Rise.* Stuart is relaxing with an excellent Pinot Noir from the Prime Minister’s vineyard when he is interviewed by Women’s Weekly.

“You see,” he muses, staring out at the acres of his New Lynn estate sagely, “the problem was that my previous salary didn’t entirely fill up my new pool, so I could dive into it like Scrooge McDuck. And now, well, we’ve just solved another problem in the University’s history. How’s that for making our mark on the world?”

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 HAS NOW RETURNED HOME TO MT. EDEN ROAD. PLEASE FOLLOW HER ON TWITTER (SHE WANTS TO TELL HER MUM SHE’S FAMOUS): @SIMSELOISE



The New Fault-Line In Politics – Globalists Versus The Rest

WITH CURWEN ARES ROLINSON

There is a new divide in politics; a cleavage which doesn't tie itself handily to the clean and simplistic "left-right" or even "liberal-conservative" axes that have collectively bounded our political understanding in years previous.

Instead, this fault-line or fissure runs along a far broader front. Whether you wish to delineate the two major oppositional forces as being Globalists versus Protectionists in an economic sense, or Elitists versus Populist-Democrats in an electoral one, it has become painfully clear over the last year or two of strange rumblings in the politisphere that the paradigms within which we used to broadly conceptualize politics have become painfully inadequate.

New Zealand, perhaps surprisingly, has crested the charge on this. Back when the Neoliberal Revolution became truly institutionalized with Ruthanasia in the early 1990s, it created a situation wherein both the major parties of both nominal Left and suddenly avowed Right came together to jointly uphold our newfound More-Market and Less-Human economic consensus. This necessitated the coagulation of oppositional forces drawn from right across the ordinary political spectrum in order to oppose same – and lest you think I'm talking about New Zealand First, consider for a moment the number of ex-National Party MPs who found themselves part and party to The Alliance.

Something similar has recently become apparent in the gladiator-pit of American politics, too. There, it's the perhaps surprising degree of policy convergence between Donald Trump and Bernie Sanders in opposition to the economics of globalization that's collectively sold out several generations of American workers – and in joint support of anti-elitist populist politics – which sets the ground for viewing this strange synthesis.

Although it's the forces arraying themselves in opposition to BOTH of them which prove that we really have arrived at a curious place in modern politics. It's one thing to read a semi-snarky piece of principled journalism which (in my mind, correctly) calls out Hillary Clinton as being a "sensible, moderate Republican candidate" on policy and predilections. It's quite another when a figure like Bill Kristol –

one of the godfathers of the modern American NeoCon movement, and the man responsible for Sarah Palin '08 – chooses to endorse Clinton over Trump over her economic positioning, hawkish foreign policy, and perceived greater amenability to shadowy elites.

In Britain, too, a similar thing happened recently with Brexit. You had the combined might of the UK Labour Party shackling itself to the brain-trust of the Conservative Party's arch-neoliberal wing in order to frantically attempt to beat out the populist fires that were burning for emancipation from Europe. Meanwhile, Jeremy Corbyn – the much-vaunted and wildly-popular-with-Labour's-base-but-not-its-Caucus institutionally insurgent Labour leader – found himself agreeing in private with people such as Nigel Farage about the desirability of Euroskepticism.

All across the world, in other words, politics is re-aligning. But, as is ever the case, the political structures and institutions which we've set up over time to represent the wills and concerns of the masses have become too ossified to meaningfully respond or reflect this transition.

And that's perhaps how we best explain the sudden rise of Insurgent Politics in a plethora of polities worldwide. People got fed up with the aforementioned Globalist-oriented and questionably democratic elites having a near monopoly on real political power through weighing heavily upon the agenda of these parties and institutions. So when firebrands, demagogues, or just pure straight-up socialist reformers started rising to prominence and offering Another Way, or meaningful projection of the concerns and prejudices of ordinary people into the political process, years (if not decades) of pent-up populist rage surged in behind them.

Now to be fair, some might argue that this is not always and unilaterally a good thing. New Zealanders, after all, voted in a referendum to re-criminalize homosexuality in the late 1980s – one example of why too much democracy can occasionally be a bad idea. The other issue, of course, is that a radical 'march through the institutions' almost invariably winds up coming to a shuddering halt at some point prior to the penultimate immanentization of said populist's agenda. Examples of this include the Democratic National Convention conspiring to keep Sanders from winning a Presidential nomination – or, more darkly, the array of 'Deep State' and other coercive measures used to block Alexis Tsipras & SYRIZA from stabbing back against the E.U.'s harshly imposed and decidedly undemocratic neoliberal austerity agenda in Greece.

You could presumably file the Western-backed armed coups against Chile's Salvador Allende and Iran's Mohammed Mossaddeq in the same box – and ditto for the more relatively recent overthrow of the popularly elected Muslim Brotherhood government of Mohamed Morsi in Egypt by the Egyptian Army. It's not so much that Western Democracy doesn't like competitors. It's that the elites we're talking about aren't very great fans of democracy at all.

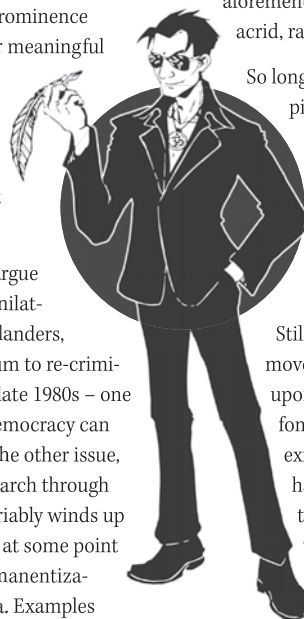
We can see perhaps similar trends here at home in our own politics. On a smaller scale, it's stuff like the National Party using an obscure veto power to block democratically passed laws it doesn't like from taking effect – or refusing to put certain controversial globalist concerns like the TPPA to any form of vote in Parliament at all to begin with. Larger efforts include attempts to firestorm certain individuals and parties out of further participation in politics in the hopes of keeping populist rage safely well away from the actual levers of political power. The efficacy of direct efforts on this front have been somewhat questionable but, due to the peculiarities of the New Zealand national character and political landscape, they do not need to be too inordinately successful in order to accomplish their craven aim.

For here in Kiwiland, the dominant paradigm is not yet one of Globalist-Elite versus Nationalist-Worker – or, for that matter, anything so Romantic in ordination. Instead, we are stuck with a sustained struggle in which the two major players appear to be between the aforementioned Globalists on one hand and acrid, rank apathy on the other.

So long as that latter force remains such a piercing colossus within our politics, the emerging realignment which we have so viscerally seen elsewhere (and which New Zealanders have, ourselves, previously flirted with) shall largely remain more chrysalis than crystallized.

Still, that's the thing about seismic movements in politics. The fault-lines upon which tectonic upheaval is fomented can quite comfortably exist concealed from the peaceable hamlets that have been built above them. The only difference between these and the more obviously visually apparent fissures is the level of energy which is thus built up before being unleashed. Something similar to this is what gave rise to Trumpamania, Feeling the Bern, and Brexit across the rest of the Anglosphere.

I can't help but wonder what our own dramatic political insurgency might look like. Or, for that matter, what he smokes. ■



Are We Being Racist To Taylor Swift?

WITH RAYHAN LANGDANA

This wasn't Taylor Swift's best week ever. Swift, whose public image is built on the idea that she is as transparent, humble, insecure and lucky as any American woman in their midtwenties, was revealed to be as calculating and shrewd as *literally every other celebrity* during the course of her ongoing feud with the Kardashians.

Quick recap: In 2009, Kanye West interrupted Taylor Swift's acceptance speech at the MTV VMAs (a largely pointless award ceremony dedicated to both the art form that gave MTV its name and the thing MTV is most reluctant to screen these days – music videos). He posited the entirely valid (although inappropriately timed) argument that Beyoncé's music video for "Single Ladies" was more deserving of the coveted Video of the Year award than Ms Swift's "You Belong With Me" (and every other music video ever made). From 2009 until 2015, West was viewed as the Voldemort to Swift's tee shirt-wearing, bleacher-sitting Harry Potter. In 2015, Swift presented West with the MTV VMA Icon award, thus quashing the feud (or so we thought). West took to the stage and spoke at length about many things, including his presidential ambitions. All seemed to be well.

Then, in early 2016, West released *The Life of Pablo*. On the song "Famous," he rapped the following line:

*"I feel like me and Taylor might still have sex /
I made that bitch famous."*

The world went crazy. Why would West deliberately burn bridges with Swift again, so soon after their public reconciliation? In Hollywood, nothing is as it seems. Competing narratives emerged. West contended that Swift had heard the line and given it the all-clear – he claimed he wouldn't be so stupid (and cruel) as to release such a provocative song without consulting Swift. In response, Swift condemned the line as degrading and denied any signing-off had occurred. In her acceptance speech for Album of the Year at the Grammys (she won for 1989), she said: "There are going to be people along the way who try to *undercut* your success or take credit for your accomplishments or your *fame*... someday when you get where you're going, you will look around and you will know it was *you* and the people who love you who put you there." Read as: "I got here because of me. I didn't need anyone to *make me famous*." Swift's younger brother posted a video to Instagram of him throwing his Adidas Yeezys into the bin (despite their average resale value of around \$1000).

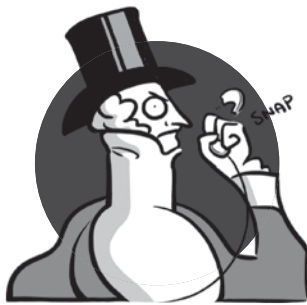
Soon, however, the furore began to die down. This was for a few reasons – in the interim, there were terrorist attacks in Western countries. People seem to care about those. It became clear that the US's two Presidential candidates would be Hillary Clinton and Donald J. Trump. Cops killed more black people. Drake's album came out. *The Life of Pablo* was kind of an underwhelming disappointment. However, around a month ago Kim Kardashian-West gave an interview to GQ Magazine in which she claimed to have possession of a video that *showed* Taylor Swift hearing the lines in "Famous" before the song was released... and agreeing to their inclusion. WHAAAAAT????

Fast-forward to last week. Kim Kardashian-West released the footage on her Snapchat. It's video of a conversation between West (on camera) and Swift (her voice emanating from West's phone, on loudspeaker). Swift is shown agreeing to the line "I feel like me and Taylor might still have sex." They have a bit of a chat about respect, with West noting how important he felt it to show her the line. He comes off as a cheeky schoolkid with a heart of gold figuring out how far he can push the teacher without getting detention. She comes off as a nerdy kid who's been given the chance to join the cool kids' elite – she's at a party and the joint has reached her position in the circle. We hear her hesitate and then decide to puff. Through her coughing, her intentions become clear – if a hit is what it takes to get into the club, sign her up!

Through all of this, I've wondered one thing – is this media takedown of Taylor Swift the first time we've seen racism against a white celebrity? We've seen racism in many forms against all non-white celebrities, ranging from the 'sad realities of Hollywood' racism of only casting Asian and Indian actors in stereotypical roles to the 'Jesus' racism of people bristling at the prospect of Idris Elba playing James Bond because – essentially – a black guy can't meet the requisite thresholds of smoothness and sophistication. Taylor Swift's "transgressions" aren't that bad. She's right – she didn't sign off on the line that sees West basically attribute her fame to his actions. Her general argument against the song still stands – it's gross for West to claim ownership of her fame, and particularly revolting because it's a continuation of the age-old narrative of the patriarchy minimising female accomplishment. But the hatred being directed Taylor's way seems to, in a roundabout manner, be centred on her fundamental *whiteness*. We hate her because she has Fourth of July parties at which photographs are staged. We hate her because of her clean, "Who, me??" incredulity. We hate her because she's a walking "JUSTWHITEPEOPLETHINGS" meme.

Or do we just hate her because she's really, really annoying? Food for thought. ■





Language Matters

WITH ADITYA VASUDEVAN

Urdu and Hindi are very similar. In fact, they are so mutually intelligible that they could be considered dialects of the same language. Despite this, Urdu is written in a script derived from Arabic and Hindi is written in a script derived from Sanskrit.

It is eerily symptomatic of the relationship between Pakistan and India, a matter of identity by opposition, by negation, but somehow also betraying an inescapable similarity. Let's eat almost the same food and live almost the same lives, but don't call us the same name. Language matters to us, but at what level is there more than a superficial attachment?

People quite obviously care about language for simple, practical reasons. Trying to communicate in a foreign country can often be impossible, and when it isn't, it ends up being an absurdist mime show in which everything but the intended meaning is

conveyed. It can be distressing, alienating, and at times, just weird. Communication is not the only purpose of this system of symbols and noises; language is part of our identity, as India and Pakistan quite persistently demonstrate. Once it sets in, it is the binding agent of a culture, the key to everything from normal conversations to obscure poetic allusions. The world's cultures are rich and extremely varied, hinting that the nuances of language may bear some interesting baggage.

My hypothesis, and it is by no means a novel one, is that language and thought must be in some kind of relationship together, platonic or otherwise. My father likes to tell the story of when he screamed out "Wait!" in Tamil (rather than in English) while in the middle of performing surgery. That was his instinctive response – that was the language he 'thought' in, much to the distress of the other doctors and nurses in the room. If it can be said that we 'think' in a language, then perhaps that language can in turn shape our thoughts.

The Sapir-Whorfian hypothesis was a theory in psychology that posited a connection between how we think and the language we speak. At the time it surfaced, it was discredited because of a lack of evidence. But recent studies have reinvigorated its foundational ideas. For example, in the small Aboriginal town of Pormpuraaw, the speakers of the language Kuuk Thaayorre had the strange ability of being able to point out true north no matter where they were. The reasoning was this: their language had no words for left or right, and so it was common usage in the community to describe those spacial orientations in absolute terms with reference to the compass points. You wouldn't say "pass it from right to left" in Pormpuraaw, you would say "pass it from southwest to northeast". This feature of their language meant that they were all uncannily adept

at orienting themselves in absolute rather than relative terms, putting them in stark contrast to most of us who speak English as a first language.

We use words to convey concepts, and it's hard to believe that the words that we use don't reflect back and shape the way we think about the world. Sure, we might always have a word for "tree", regardless of what language we are speaking; but when it comes to abstract concepts or more complex feelings, languages are all subtly different. If I didn't have the word 'melancholy', meaning an inclination to sadness, but rather had a word that meant 'not quite sadness', the way I feel that emotion would subtly change. This is why people always complain about translations of books not being quite up to scratch – they always miss the essence or the spirit of the original.

This hypothesis impacts not only the interactions between cultures, it also weighs on the importance of education. Across the course of primary, secondary and tertiary education our vocabularies expand, and our comfort in using those vocabularies sets in. What this means, in a sense, is not only that our ability to communicate improves, but also that our ability to think and feel in a richer way is unlocked. It could be alleged that this logic has a sting of elitism, because it says that people who have not received any form of higher education are not thinking and feeling in as meaningful a way as people who have had those privileges. I would counter that it is a deeply progressive call for greater educational efforts. Everyone has the potential to access more of the spectrum of human experience than the system is currently granting them. Give it to them. And, on top of that, cultivate diversity – of dialects and languages – so that we have a world of unique thinkers adding their two cents to the cultural fray. ■

GUEST COLUMN

Cigarettes and Disappointments Or A Story In The Night

WITH NATHAN PERRY

1:30am, and a faint smokers itch is beginning to ferment itself into something more serious. The creeping start of a sensation that will force me out of bed, to crawl down a flight of stairs and choke myself in the early morning hours that the healthy people call night. It's growing. The itch, but that becomes irrelevant. My phone, an awkward instrument that seeks to secure my social anxiety, sounds. A dull throbbing to mirror the dull throbbing in my cranium. Knowing that I cannot be relied on to keep contact with the world outside of my

homemade cell, my friend has sent me a news story.

Some kid, some Sikh kid, some student has been misidentified as a Muslim terrorist, I suppose the word Muslim is no longer a necessary one. This passes for news? Still? But there's something strange or at least unsettling about the story. This hasn't happened in France after the recent attacks, nor in Britain following its xenophobic verve and isolationist zeal (funny how an old empire nation can have the gall to do that) nor even from the States after its decades of redefining racial tension and discovering new ways to otherwise and diversify. No. It happened here. In New Zealand. The student is one of our own.

I'm an immigrant myself. The white kind from an English speaking country, the kind of immigrant that makes you cringe when they announce the fact to a room, the kind that is an "other" but only barely and even then, after

the fact, the kind that we'd all rather they didn't talk about it.

We came here, my family and I, my brother and sister proverbially dragged kicking and screaming, to escape the hatred that was beginning to toxify the homeland. Bombs on one side of us, the side closest to the buses in London and proud bigotry on the other. We left. 24 hours on a plane travelling to the very arse of the planet we began to feel very distant. New Zealand, sleepy, parochial and safe, felt very separate from all of the madness of the world. Content to enjoy the passive insanity of a slow demise of democracy at the hands of neo liberalism rather than engaging in the out and out spectacle that the rest of the west has come to expect from its politics.

The night accepts me gladly. It's cold. I love to smoke in the dark, but this morning the dark feels that much darker, the cold that much colder, the rest of the world that much closer. ■



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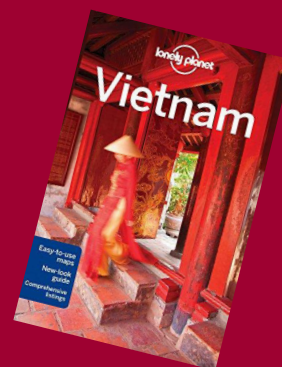
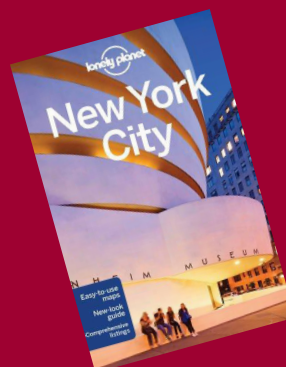
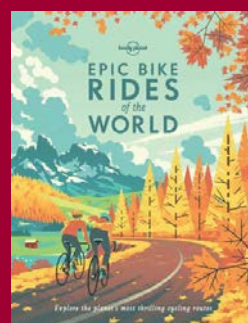
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