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Masculinity Issue

#17

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CONTENTS

EDITORIAL	4
NEWS	6
A TANGO WITH GENDER	8
ARE YOU A HIGH VALUE MAN?	10
MOVIES, MASCULINITY, AND HEGEMONY	12
I CAN'T HELP IT, I LOVE HOW MEN LOVE	15
NO COUNTRY FOR NICE MEN	18
DEAR MASCULINITY, I LOVE YOU	19
THE TWILIGHT EFFECT	20
INKY PINKY PONKY	22
MEN WHO HATE WOMEN AND THEMSELVES	24
INVOLUNTARY CELIBACY IN 2023	26
TOXIC MASCULINITY	27
PUZZLES	28

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WANT TO CONTRIBUTE?
WE WOULD LOVE TO HEAR FROM YOU!
JUST SEND US AN EMAIL!

MAN TIME.

If you wanted this so bad, why didn't you do something about it?

You asked for it, so here it is. After years of complaints, "Craccum is too girly", "where are the sports", "Stop wasting my student levy on pink ink", and at least one hospitalisation stemming from a healthy expression of rage; we've caved to the testy masses. Masculinity issue is here to soothe you, like the mother you're constantly looking for in your relationships!

While masculinity issue will last but one short week, men's issues won't be going anywhere so soon. Thankfully as anyone who's ever spoken to a man can attest, we have a solution for everything. To make sure we get it right we've kicked the girls out, and got the other white man on the team to help crack this nut. He's here to bring a little extra to the team— though he's not sure that it's masculinity per se.

To be fair, it's not just you who've noticed some disparity. When I was hired as co-editor my then boss told me how exciting it was to have some diversity on the Craccum team—some

white male diversity. The modern media is really missing that distinctive voice that comes from benefiting from patriarchal privilege.

But is it really a privilege? Are men not just as disadvantaged as everyone else? Sure, we can walk around at night, reject someone without fear, get paid more, avoid the vast majority of sexual harassment, be afforded more respect, and generally be celebrated for the bare minimum sometimes. Of course, there are other factors at play here, how you present and identify tend to alter it.

There's this increasingly prevalent idea that being a man is a disadvantage. There's an entire genre of podcast where men just...complain. It's healthy to get it all out there, but on the other hand, are any of us actually doing anything? For all the talk about child custody, male friendship, and the chronic lack of the boyz in Craccum, where is the action?

Or are we all just a little bit afraid that you'll turn over all the problems, all the issues, and see that the real problem isn't any one or us. Barring

some particularly monstrous examples, there are a spectrum of things we have normalised that are just not ideal. It's the system, the society billions of dead people have built for us, dropped on our head.

Perhaps it is time to stop shouting from the couch and actually take charge of the situation, that's what men are supposed to do right? Write that sports column, submit some non-pink art, talk to your friends about more than just the new Nolan film. But that does sound like a lot of work, so why don't you dig into some nice man issue content to start with?

Ask yourself *Are YOU a High Value Man?* Feeling a bit down after that? Flip over to *I can't help it. I love how men love* and see that maybe there's a little good in it all. *A love letter to Masculinity* lies in between the Arts pages, *A Tango with Gender* itself in features; and of course, if you just want to get away from it all, the conclusion of the Law School investigation is in the News.

Read on with regards,

The boyz.



UNDER
IN THE MATTER

the Law School on Trial Series 2023

of the STUDENTS
Applicant

AND

the SYSTEM
Respondent

Hearing:

14 August 2023

Appearances:

Craccum Magazine, Legal Ethics 2023

JUDGMENT OF NEWS J

CASE STUDY 3 - LEGAL ETHICS (LAW 458) SEMESTER ONE 2023

The Facts

- [1] LAW458 is a single semester, 10-point course in the LLB. It is not a compulsory paper to complete the LLB, but it is a requirement for all students wishing to be admitted to the bar. As such, almost every student will undertake this paper at some point in their degree, even as a precaution. LAW458 is usually offered in both Semesters One and Two each academic year.
- [2] Zoe Lawton, a sole-practitioner and Barrister by profession, first taught the LAW458 course in Semester One, 2022. She taught it again the following semester, and in Semester One 2023 she was made the course coordinator of the paper. It was at this point that the events took place.
- [3] Both the applicants and the defendants are in agreement on the facts of the case. These are laid out as follows.
- [a] Lectures for LAW458 in Semester One of 2023 took place from 4-6pm on a Friday evening. Lawton prescribed a seating arrangement to students under the guise of fostering professional relationships.
- [b] Lawton overhauled the previous course structure, which was assessed formerly on a substantive essay and exam, worth roughly 50% each. In its place, she instilled three smaller assignments, including one that required students to use LinkedIn to develop professional profiles, and another that required students to use ChatGPT to research issues in the course.
- [c] Lawton also announced that lecture recordings would not be available to students. The caveat to this decision was that students may approach her through email and request lecture recordings in a personal capacity should they disclose an illness, disability or other bereavement. Generally, however, for a missed class, familial or work obligation, students would have no access to previous classes. The court notes that this goes against University policy, which generally requires all lecture recordings to be made available.
- [d] Teresa Brown, a student and an advocate, raised the issue with the Law School's Associate Deans of Equity, Pacific, and Learning and Teaching. They were satisfied with Lawton's exemption. The issue was further escalated to the PVC of Education, who agreed with the decision of the Law School.
- [e] Lawton released marks for Assignment Two in the course after the final examination. Students did not have a chance to benefit from assignment feedback before they undertook the examination. The mean for the assignment was 56.9%.
- [f] On June 23, following several student complaints about the way the course was taught, accessed and moderated, Lawton sent out a Canvas announcement to students. It read, in part:
- [fa] Throughout the semester I have been subjected to a prolonged campaign of complaints...some of you have been very vocal in your criticism of me and this has subsequently emboldened others to follow suit...let me make it very clear that I will not tolerate unjustified and defamatory online abuse from any of you...I would also like to remind you that when University of Auckland graduates apply for admission to the bar, the NZ Law Society alerts the Law School. A list of names are then provided to me and I am invited by the NZ Law Society to inform them of any concerns regarding character. I will not hesitate to express concerns about those of you who have subjected me to unjustified and defamatory abuse. As you can imagine, directing [this abuse] at your ethics lecturer will not reflect well on you.
- [g] In a first for the Law School, after significant student complaints, Assignment Two was remarked because of an error. The mean for the assignment moved up by 7.8% to 64.7%.
- [h] An Official Information Act request was filed by an anonymous student requesting any correspondence between Lawton and the Law School regarding the email sent on June 23. The Law School is currently attempting to deny this on grounds that the request is too wide in scope, and would take them too long to fulfil.

The Case for the Applicants

- [4] The applicants submit that Legal Ethics was run in a way that was inequitable to students. Students who could not attend class in person for any reason other than sickness or disability were barred from accessing lecture recordings, creating an unreasonable standard when students had work or familial arrangements. Applicant Teresa Brown notes to the court that it should be of specific importance that lecture recordings were withheld over confidentiality concerns and yet every individual who would have access to the 'confidential' recordings, could also be present to hear the information in person.

[5] Another applicant herein provides an affidavit.

[a] "Legal Ethics epitomises [Law School] failures of communication, empathy, and accessibility. Is it too much to ask that they not make students disclose private medical information to access lecture recordings; they not turn a course based on professional standards into a networking opportunity; they not have hidden marking criteria for assignments; they not also make whole sections either practically inaccurate or near impossible to research; that they not threaten the futures of an entire cohort because they dared to complain in a private Facebook group. As students we pay exorbitant yearly fees to a law school which claims to be the best, so why are our pleas for the bare minimum being met with structural hostility? Students shouldn't have their entry to the bar undermined for speaking out. Students shouldn't have to beg for consistency."

[6] Another applicant gave evidence that they perceived the email sent as an "overt threat to students". They continued, "I don't think anyone I've talked to has taken it a different way than that. If you dared to speak out against her, she's threatened you there will be professional consequences. I think it's ironic that she's teaching about ethics while threatening her students."

The Case for the Respondents

[8] Herein lies the unedited affidavit for the respondents, provided not by Lawton herself, but by the Law School. The Law School granted LAW 458, Legal Ethics, an exemption from the University's lecture capture recording policy. The Digital Course Outline and Canvas Homepage made clear statements to students about the Law School's expectations around attendance at this course. Students wishing to become lawyers are required to study this course. Legal Ethics is a very practically oriented course designed to ground students in the ethical issues surrounding legal practice. This was why it was appropriate to grant an exemption for lecture capture because this course was specially designed around relational teaching methodology using the kind of scenarios that are found every day in legal practice.

[9] The Law School was satisfied that the teacher had put in place alternative learning arrangements for students unable to attend class in person. The student representative at the Staff Student Consultative Committee meetings reported the teacher had been approachable and responsive on this issue, noting no other concerns.

[10] In respect of the recording exemption, a student chose to escalate this to the PVC Education. The PVC Education also reviewed the Law School's decision and agreed that this exemption from recording was appropriate.

[11] Course assessment on Legal Ethics included three coursework assignments. The teacher reported on Canvas the average weighted grades as being 9.8/10, 17/30 and 7.6/10 respectively. The mean result across the coursework assessment was therefore 68.8%.

[12] Assignment 2 marks were released on 20 June as was the teacher's general feedback.

[13] In acknowledging that this was after the final exam date the Law School notes that the exam followed a format based on the in-class, small- group, team-based practical exercises which were designed as direct preparation for the final exam. The Law School recognises the importance of timely feedback and continues to monitor this across all our courses.

[14] Assignment 2 has been rigorously moderated and, in line with normal practice, assessment from this course has gone to an external assessor at another New Zealand law school. This process of external assessment is designed to ensure both a consistency of approach in marking and alignment with prior years' grades for this course.

Awaiting Decision

[15] Based on the evidence provided, the jury is directed to give a verdict as to whether the conduct was substantively unjust.

[16] The court would like to thank the members of the public jury for their involvement over the passing month. It encourages every member to bring forward any concern that they may have in this institution, in order to improve it for all.

WHAT'S ON AT YOUR STUDENT BAR THIS WEEK

MONDAY

SUSTAINABILITY QUIZ

\$3 COFFEES ARE STILL ON BUT NOT FOR LONG SO GET IT WHILE THE DISCOUNTS LAST! PLUS HAPPY HOUR 3-5PM

TUESDAY

THE BIG SHADOWS QUIZ AT 6.30 - ALL WELCOME BOOK YOUR SPOT BY DMING US ON SOCIALS OR SHOW UP ON THE NIGHT - WITH OVER \$150 IN BAR TABS TO WIN THIS ISN'T ONE YOU WANT TO MISS

THE FIRST FIFA WOMEN'S WORLD CUP SEMI FINAL IS ON LIVE AT 8PM!

\$10 BURGER AND PINT DEAL AVAILABLE FROM 6PM ALL NIGHT AS WELL AS HAPPY HOUR 3-5PM AND 9-11PM!

WEDNESDAY

BESA ARE HOSTING THEIR AGM AND SOCIAL AT SHADOWS

THE SECOND FIFA WOMEN'S WORLD CUP SEMI FINAL IS ON LIVE AT 10PM! GRAB A SEAT IN THE FUNCTION ROOM TO ENJOY THE FULL COMMENTARY

DJ WILL BE CELEBRATING STUDENT NIGHT FROM 10PM ALONG WITH HAPPY HOURS FROM 3-5PM AND 9-11PM

THURSDAY

CESA IS HOSTING A CRAZY BEER PONG TOURNAMENT

EVERYDAY HAPPY HOUR 3-5PM TO MAKE UP FOR THE LECTURES YOU'VE BEEN SITTING IN ALL DAY

FRIDAY

IT'S MAORI DAY! NGA TAUIRA MAORI HAVE LINED UP SOME AWESOME ACTS AND IT'S GOING TO BE A BIG ONE SO GET IN BY 8PM TO MAKE SURE YOU DON'T MISS OUT!

WE ARE CELEBRATING WITH LOTS OF DEALS PLUS HAPPY HOUR IS BACK - 3-5PM AND 9-11PM

ENJOY DISCOUNTS ON YOUR FAVOURITE ITEMS INCLUDING SHAD'S JUGS, HOUSE SPIRITS, AND RTDS.

SATURDAY

FIFA WOMEN'S WORLD CUP PLAY OFF FOR 3RD PLACE - LIVE AT 8PM WITH HAPPY HOUR 9-11PM

SUNDAY

UNFORTUNATELY WE WILL NOT BE OPENING TO SHOW THE FIFA WOMEN'S WORLD CUP FINAL

SHADOWS
YOUR STUDENT BAR

A TANGO WITH GENDER

Learning the steps is half the trouble.



MAIRĀTEA MOHI & GEORGE BROOKER

When we wake up in the morning we unknowingly prepare ourselves for the biggest dance of our lives; the societal respectability tango. We've got the 'how's the weather' waltz, and the tip-toeing around the elephant in the room two-step. And for many of us these steps come innately, an unconscious thought.

However as Maxine and Aeson point out, this dance is the result of many generations of socialisation. As a young trans couple, they've been on both sides of the dance floor. They've memorised the steps in and out and have found this dance to be a linguistic game of expression.

"As soon as you engage with the language, people begin to play the game with you." The game Maxine is referring to is the worldwide 'game' of socialisation.

"CIS-PEOPLE HAVE A LOT MORE IN COMMON WITH TRANS PEOPLE THAN THEY THINK..." STARTS MAXINE.

"IT'S JUST NOT AS CONSCIOUS OF A THOUGHT FOR CIS-GENDERED PEOPLE," ENDS AESON.

The two have been dating since 2019 and have gotten to a sound comfortability where they complete each other's sentences. Knowing each other since high school, they speak of how they've traversed through many milestones; from puberty, to adulthood to what they've categorised as a second 'delayed puberty.'

"When I transitioned I experienced a type of 'delayed socialisation' where I learned quite quickly that men don't cry, guys are tough and I have an image to maintain," says Aeson.

Referencing the age of social media, the two believe that concepts such as masculinity have become curated aesthetics. Where most are playing a clout game of hyper-virility and extreme machismo. Something Aeson said he tried hard to fit into when he first transitioned.

"I thought being a man meant being loud and taking up space. I've tried these parts of masculinity and I don't want them."

Dealing with a system of expectation, others expectations, Aeson says it wasn't until they were more confident in themselves did they start to feel less of a need to attract external validation. "What I've come to realise is being masculine isn't about the perception of the self, but the perceptions others have of you."

Maxine chimes in saying that these projections of the self are most obvious in interactions with transphobes "There's a video where Ben Shapiro

is talking about a Laverne Cox, and he can't stop gendering her correctly. He always does this nerdy 'I, I mean HE!' afterwards. He knows he's made a mistake, but the steps are in your brain. If someone passes, and they play the steps, you can't stop yourself from playing along with them."

"It's an interesting time to talk about masculinity and gender in general," she says.

THROUGH SHIFTING PARADIGMS OF GENDER, SEX AND ONE'S PLACE IN SOCIETY, MAXINE BELIEVES MASCULINITY ISN'T AS INNATE TO MEN AS PEOPLE THINK. "THE SCOPE OF MASCULINITY IS SO WIDE IF YOU WANTED TO DEFINE EVERY KIND OF MAN-- YOU WOULD HAVE WOMEN THERE TOO."

"Think, your butch lesbians and your flamboyant gay men." This couple sees masculinity as encapsulating a wide range of qualities that should be defined on people's own terms. These terms can be arbitrary lists, curated

alpha male instagram feeds or any form of outward expression.

Outward expression of the self isn't a phenomenon unique to the trans experience.

CIS-GENDERED PEOPLE, MALE AND FEMALE, GRAPPLE WITH THEIR OWN VERSION OF 'GENDER AFFIRMING CARE' EVERYDAY. THIS IS SEEN PARTICULARLY IN THE HEALTH AND WELLNESS SPACES.

PROCEDURES SUCH AS HAIR IMPLANTS, BREAST AUGMENTATION OR THE CONSUMPTION OF STEROIDS FOR MUSCLE GAIN, ONCE CONSIDERED EXTREME, ARE NOW ENCOURAGED TO ACHIEVE A BETTER SENSE OF SELF AND PERSONAL CONTENTMENT.

Maxine shares her own experiences with body dysphoria. "Before I transitioned my hair started to thin out, which brought on a lot of dysphoria. It only took me one doctor's visit to be prescribed hormone altering medicine, which also happened to shrink my prostate. [I was told] oh yeah it might affect your ability to conceive, but I didn't even have to sign anything; they just gave it to me. When I came to doctors for my transition it took me months of expensive therapy to get any medicine."

Aeson shares in the sentiments. His experience with the healthcare system also saw a lot of dismissal which he believed stemmed from the infantilization of young girls.

"I wasn't taken seriously until I started outwardly presenting as masculine. By then I was already committed—I was only taken seriously once I devoted myself to outwardly presenting."

As society has progressed so have the roles of gender. Something the couple had to challenge themselves at the beginning of their own relationship.

"Initially when I first transitioned, I would still only date guys. I knew I was bisexual, but I felt like I was still in the role of a female in a relationship," says Aeson; Maxine chimes in "Compulsory heterosexuality, even though I was bi at the time too, I still felt like I had to justify I was doing something masculine. I tried to be the most masculine one in the relationship; almost to say to my friends: look at me guys! I'm doing the expected thing!"

Coming to accept the feminine and masculine within each other, harmony has been at the forefront of their relationship.

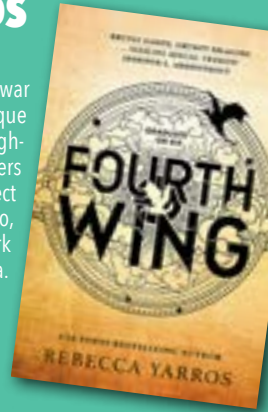
"Like any other relationship you get to know a person so well you don't have to play society's 'game' with them," says Maxine

"We can talk openly about our daily struggles. Dysphoria, self-doubt or even the unfortunate experience of getting 'clocked'...Being both trans and autistic we have an unspoken understanding."

Through the years, expectations and feelings of 'what ought to be' dissipated. Both Aeson and Maxine tell us of how what once was a precisely choreographed tango, has become more akin to the liberated white girl dancing most often found in Bar101. It's messy, shockingly uncoordinated, and sometimes genuinely frightening; but within this chaotic mess is a raw honesty. We're all dancing to the same song, but it's up to us how we move with it.

THE UBIQ TOP 5 READS

Fourth Wing - Dragons, war and Hunger Games-esque trials. Fourth Wing is a high-stakes, enemies-to-lovers fantasy romance perfect for fans of Leigh Bardugo, Sarah J Maas and dark academia.



The List - From award-winning journalist and bestselling co-author of Slay in Your Lane, Yomi Adegoke, comes The List, a sensational, page-turning debut novel about secrets, lies and our lives online.



The Hummingbird Effect - An epic, kaleidoscopic story of four women connected across time and place by an invisible thread and their determination to shape their own stories.



Sexual Revolution - Told with Laurie Penny's trademark urgency and candour, Sexual Revolution is a hand-grenade of a book- both a manifesto for social change and a story of how feminism can save us.



Ancient Magic in Greece and Rome - Ancient Magic offers us a new way of understanding the role of magic, looking at its history in all of its classical forms. Drawing on a wide array of sources, from Greek dramas to curse tablets, lavishly illustrated throughout, and packed with information, surprises, lore and learning.



ARE YOU A HIGH VALUE MAN?

Unpacking standards of masculinity within male self-improvement discourse



NANCY GUO

You don't need to venture far into YouTube or Tik Tok to come across content plastered aggressively with stock images of muscular men in suits and titles like "How High Value Men Get Women OBSESSED With Them." In certain areas of the male self-empowerment space, the idea of the "high value man" is held as the epitome of masculinity. Promoted by the likes of Jordan Peterson, Kevin Samuels and Andrew Tate, the concept is used to encourage men to aspire to a specific check-list of traits that will increase their "value" and "desirability" as a man.

However, the discourse surrounding the "high-value man" and the general male self-improvement space has garnered significant controversy. Critics point to its entanglement with misogynistic ideas and promotion of toxic masculinity, while advocates argue that the framework provides men with constructive and straight-forward guidance.

But what do men think about this divisive topic? This week, *Craccum* spoke to a range of male students on campus to find out their thoughts on masculinity ideals within the male self-improvement sphere.

WHAT DOES BEING A "HIGH-VALUE MAN" EVEN MEAN?

For Caleb, the concept is about working on the way men carry themselves, such as through "being confident and respecting people around you."

Similarly, Luke commented that being a "high-value man" is about being

someone who has self-respect, while recognising that "they're not always perfect but are working towards becoming a better person."

"A high-value man may not necessarily be where you are now, but it is [a representation] of where you potentially want to [reach], if you have the desire to be better."

Jack added that putting in effort is a key idea behind increasing your "value" as a man.

"Someone that goes to the gym, studies hard, spends time with important people in their life—that's potentially someone who is more ['high-value'] than drinking every weekend."

However, other male students were sceptical of the notion and critical of the masculinity ideals behind the concept.

William not only disagrees with the idea of the "high value" man but he also does not consider himself as "high value."

"People that think of themselves as 'high value' are, in my opinion, low value. Your inner qualities matter more than your physical appearance or status in life."

Nick feels that the concept is "stupid" because the "ideal" man that self-improvement creators promote is a "bit of an arse."

"It [gets you] to take yourself too seriously and prevents you from being open-minded."

Other male students also felt that

the concept of the "high value man" promotes a very narrow view of masculinity.

"The idea is quite close-minded. There shouldn't be a set idea of what a man should be," commented Cole.

"Every man should have his own set of goals."

Simon finds that aspiring to the notion of a "high value man" as toxic. Expectations like earning a high income and having many women surrounding them leads to a "detrimental lifestyle" as men are encouraged to chase "stuff that you don't really need or want."

HOW HELPFUL IS THE SELF-IMPROVEMENT SPACE FOR PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT?

The notion of the "high value" man is embedded in the broader context of the contentious male self-empowerment space. But do men find the messages propagated by this community empowering or harmful?

Ian feels that self-improvement in general is positive, regardless of "whether you're a man or a woman."

The prioritisation of fitness and taking on responsibility can be helpful for "making aspects of your life better."

For Charlie, aspects of the self-improvement space, like the promotion of health, is a "positive thing."

"I'm not a 'go-Andrew-Tate' person

but he is still the guy who encourages other guys to be better, to hit the gym, to focus on their fitness, and not just drink alcohol on the weekends."

Charlie also added that the space has the potential to be empowering as long as men find the right group where all members are "uplifting everyone."

However, he also emphasises the importance of keeping a critical perspective on masculinity.

"You should develop that yourself. That's something you should use your own head, rather than listening to others."

Damian criticises the space for being "toxic." In his experience, the content he has seen on social media tends to promote misogynistic ideas, or unhealthy expectations like having a "crazy body."

On the other hand, Isaac finds the content from self-improvement content creators to be "cringey."

"The whole alpha male thing is just bullshit. Live your life the way that you want."

Similarly, Kenneth feels that the standards of the space promoted are centred around a very narrow and Western view of masculinity.

"They say you have to be the best, the strongest, the biggest guy—all of this shit if not what being a man is. There's much more to [masculinity] than just going to the gym and picking up as many women as you want to, or can."

Instead, he sees masculinity as encapsulating a wide range of qualities that should be defined on people's "own terms."

WHAT ADVICE SHOULD MEN INTERESTED IN PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT FOLLOW?

Kenneth's advice for those looking to

improve themselves is to carve your own definition of what it means to be a man.

"Don't both listening to what social media personalities say. Your definition of [Masculinity] is unique to you and your situation."

Similarly, Tom commented to "not care what other people think" and to work on yourself on your own terms.

Peter suggests having a more open idea of masculinity.

"You don't have to be less 'masculine,' but it's good to avoid following the advice of creators who promote ideals rooted in toxic masculinity."

Others echoed the sentiment that simply being a man is masculine enough. In Finn's words, "if you're a man, you're a man."

The bottom-line seems to be that

there are certain aspects of the male self-improvement space that can be unhelpful, such as its promotion of a very specific and narrow view of masculinity.

However, some of its messages, like the prioritisation of health and fitness, or taking on responsibility, not only resonates with men who are looking for personal development guidance, but can have a positive impact on their lives.

Whether you subscribe to the idea of a "high-value" man, or feel iffy about the idea of humans having standards that determine their "value," it's important not to impose your views or expectations of gender, or put others down because they don't fit that subjective, constructed set of criteria.

**All names have been changed for anonymity*

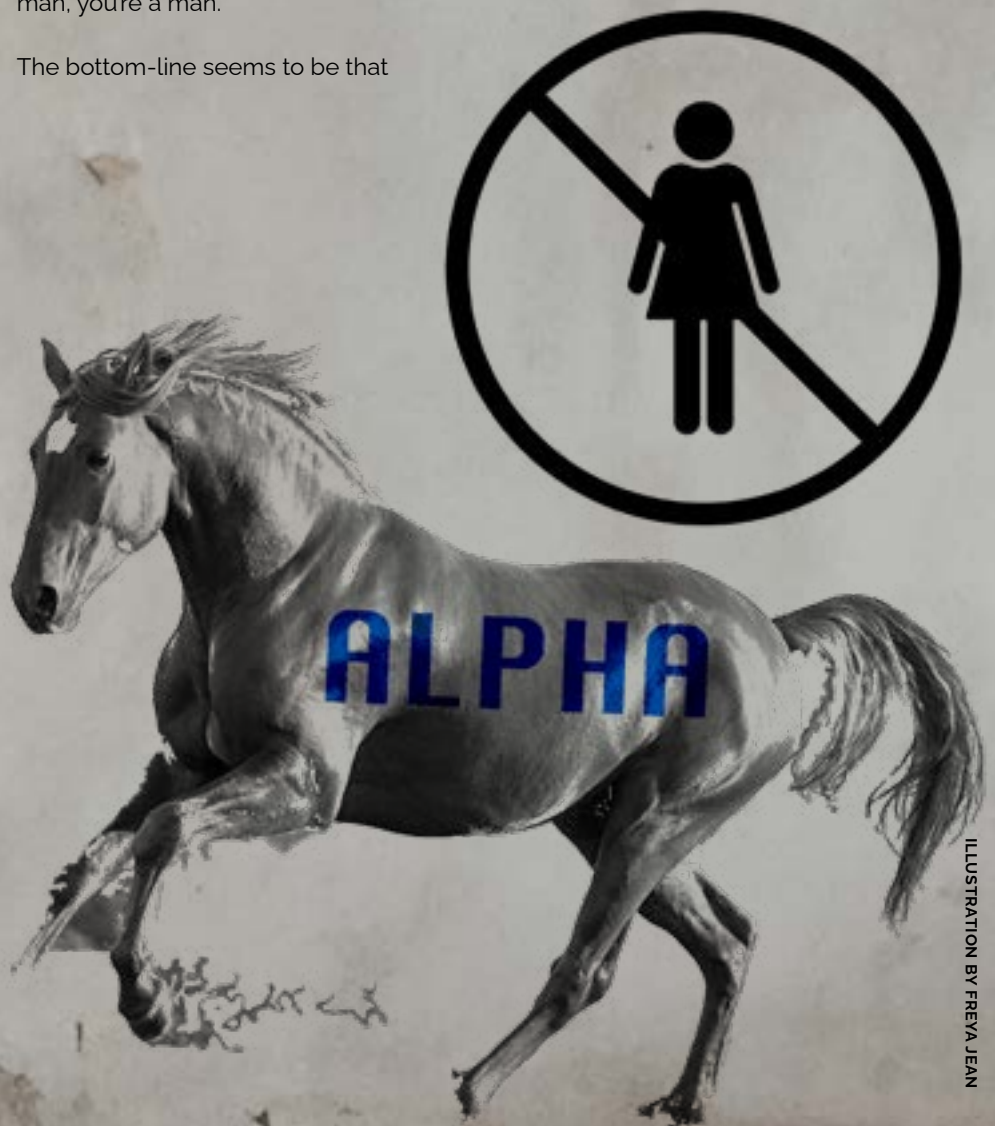
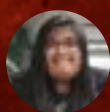


ILLUSTRATION BY FREYA JEAN

MOVIES, MASCULINITY, AND HEGEMONY

Friendly fire from a reformed filmbro



TREVOR PRONOSO

Contemporary movie discourse has just been Ken-ning all over the place since the neon pink, nuclear double-barrel that is "Barbenheimer" dropped its radioactive kenenergy in theatres last month. Whether you're a glowing 5-star stan for Barbie and Oppenheimer, an anti-capitalist, anti-Hollywood ½-star doomer for both, or prefer one over the other at varying degrees.

What my kino eyes are interested in are those of chronically online, overwhelmingly male cinephile

types, who've remained suckling at the teat of "Christopher Nolan" supremacy since (their) *Inception*, pun intended.

These are types who've probably bought tickets to Barbie just to rant about its woke liberal agenda. These are types who've probably listed 1-4 of their favourite films within the top 250 highest-rated movies on Letterboxd. These are types whose favourite directors are probably all men with names that all start with the letter "K": Kubrick, Kurosawa (both of them; afflicted cinephiles will understand), Kaufman, Kaurismäki, Kieslowski, Kiarostami, Klimov, Kitano, Kore-eda, and the list goes on...

They are types who base their whole social personality/demeanour around Taika Waititi-isms in hopes of finding their own Ramona Flowers or Manic-Pixie-Dream-Girl-adjacent partner to sit and binge watch the entire Lord of the Rings trilogy + deleted scenes with. These types of people are what we call "filmbros".

To lay out a very dry, quasi-anthropological definition, "filmbros" refers to a specific group of cinephiles who can predominantly express their passion for movies through bad-faith pseudo-intellectualism and misogynist textual analysis. Their socialising tactics rely on flaunting their "film tastes" as a means

of discriminating amongst individuals who either 1) share their same tastes and/or 2) carry a neophytic naivete towards movie knowledge and unfortunately become targets for the filmbro's inflated ego and superiority over them.

Naturally, filmbros are drawn to certain heteronormative, toxic masculinist movies that legitimate their place within patriarchy. Ignorance is the filmbro's M.O.

Orthodox Filmbro canon:

1. **The Dark Knight (2008)**
2. **Drive (2011)**
3. **Pulp Fiction (1994)**
4. **Se7en (1995)**
5. **Punch-Drunk Love (2002)**
6. **Whiplash (2014)**
7. **The Usual Suspects (1995)**
8. **Parasite (2019)**
9. **Birdman or (The Unexpected Virtue of Ignorance) (2014)**
10. **The Wolf of Wall Street (2013)**

You've probably already seen or heard some of these movies; some of these follow a lone, soft-spoken, antisocial male protagonist who's got some inexplicable chip on his shoulder that manifests within incredibly violent, misogynist and masochistic activities. Whether these actions justify their ends does not matter to the filmbro so long as said transgressions in their journey to a higher purpose do not disrupt their

position in the patriarchy.

In other words, movie violence good if man get woman and man feel macho. And if that fails, just have a buncha edgy bros hash out their locker room talk filled with racial epithets, foot fetishes, and lame-ass references to old exploitation movies (Quentin is the poster boy of filmbros).

I mention all this sardonic targeting of the filmbro's masculinity because I want to contextualise the filmbro within a wider crisis at hand regarding the forward trajectory of what "masculinity" actually entails and why filmbros are the way they are. If one were to compare the filmbro to the 6-foot, Andrew Tate sigma male-type, one is quick to point out that the Tate-ist holds much more "power" and "authority" over the spineless filmbro.

Thus, a hierarchy is born, and whenever there's a hierarchy, there's always hegemony, a dominant class/trait/masculinity that reigns over the rest. Raewyn Connell calls this **Hegemonic Masculinity** which, in her own words, is the "configuration of gender practice which embodies the currently accepted answer to the problem of the legitimacy of patriarchy."

Even then, the filmbro does not necessarily embody your ideal Tateist patriarch. Instead the filmbro benefits from what is called "patriarchal dividend", which are general advantages men have within the existing systemic subordination of women. And in true sigma male fashion, Hegemonic Masculinity self-perpetuates utilising the same masculine traits that define them: violence, aggression, emotional suppression, sexism, homophobia, individualism and competitiveness.

But is that really it? Are men really that inherently despicable?

It's often easy in our contemporary culture to brush off masculinity the spawn of Satan, as inherently evil, as the scapegoat for women and feminists to conveniently blame the cause of complex systemic inequality towards

the opposite sex that make up 50% of the world's population.

They're not entirely wrong, of course, but to whole-heartedly believe that is to admit that entirety of "masculinity" as entirely toxic—ignoring the soft masculinities, the empathetic masculinities, the non-sexist masculinities—and is inseparable from subordination and forceful coercion.

That's too nihilistic and defeatist for my taste. Abolishing hegemony is one thing, but to equate a set of gendered traits, to equate men, as just inherently "power-hungry" in need of annihilation is just Travis Bickle-levels of cyclical violence.

In reality, what should be happening is making a clear demarcation between "Masculinity" and "Hegemony". Instead of envisioning a static, misogynistic framework of masculinity, one should see masculinity as it really is, a set of fluid, ever-changing "masculinities" that contain a plethora of traits men can adopt and embody for the betterment of their well-being.

There are "good" masculinities and "bad" masculinities, and negotiating between the two is still an ongoing process that should strive for positive egalitarian outcomes. The tricky part is to now see "Hegemony" not as an extension of masculinity, but rather a tool for sociocultural change.

If one harkens back to Antonio Gramsci's original interpretation of hegemony, then the fact that the majority of men can see through Tate's bullshit, a minority within masculinity, means that you're not consenting to the force being applied to you. One has to engage in a war of position, a war for a new masculinity—a positive masculinity—via institutional power rather than masculine aggression.

Hegemonic Masculinity is just a placeholder, a name given to the top "masculinity", and the goal is to fight for the right masculinities through the creation/revision of rigorous structural systems that oppose the dominant minority's interests. To do away with

systemic change is to disarm the revolutionary capabilities of masculinity.

My Reformed Filmbro canon:

1. **The Young Girls of Rochefort (1967)**
2. **Beau Travail (1999)**
3. **Right Now, Wrong Then (2015)**
4. **Lingua Franca (2019)**
5. **Ngati (1987)**
6. **Tongues United (1989)**
7. **Cléo from 5 to 7 (1962)**
8. **Stalker (1979)**
9. **Orlando (1992)**
10. **The Wolf of Wall Street *again (2013)**

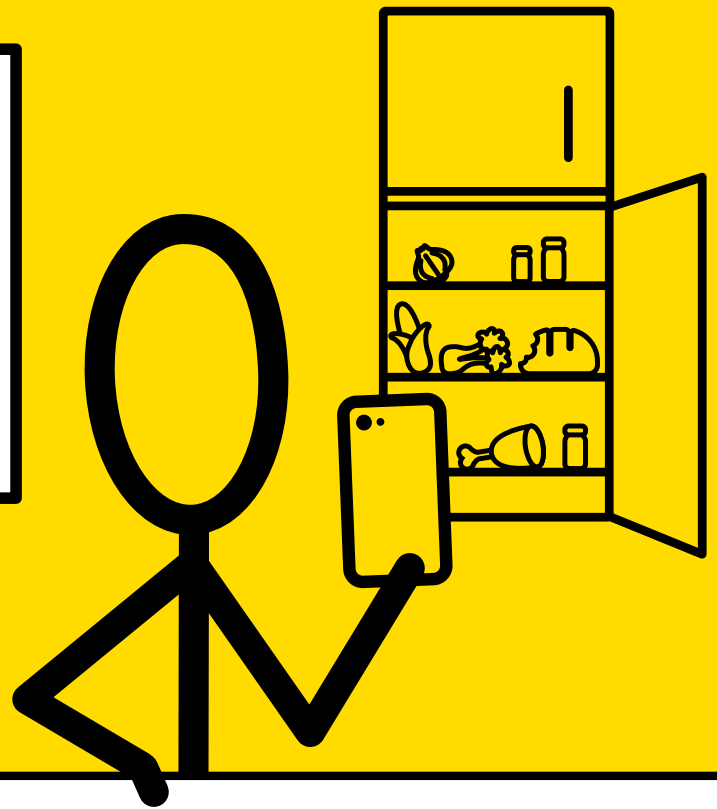
As for the non-denominational filmbro, I present thee with a new gospel, a new decalogue, the Reformed Filmbro canon. In this list you will find that these entries move away from the orthodox toxic masculine movies of yore, and into more progressive realisations of masculinity that will aid in our future cinephilic enlightenment.

Some of these films embrace more lighthearted, campy energetic forms of masculinity (The Young Girls), some absolutely eviscerate and lambast the defacing, misogynist, "nice guy" tendencies of men (Right Now, Wrong Then) some explore the potentialities of queer male and trans relationships (Beau Travail, Lingua Franca, United Tongues, Orlando), some try to reconcile the folly of male hubris with the quest for spiritual enlightenment (Stalker), some explore the manifestations of masculinity within colonial/diasporic contexts (Ngati), while others operate on such a chameleonic level of interpretation that sees itself both indulging and condemning capitalistic masculinity, so long as you're not a filmbro (if you find Jordan Belfort inspirational, then Scorsese is just Fortnite-dancing on your stupidity).

Now go and spread the new word! The filmbros of yesterday don't have to be the filmbros of tomorrow. In the words of Ryan Gosling—according to memes still circulating around on a movie still in its theatrical release that I've yet to watch—"I am Kenough."

PAK'nSAVE

SAVEY MEAL-BOT



BE IN TO WIN A \$250 PAK'nSAVE GIFT CARD!



Sick of 2 minute noodles? Fed up of floppy broccoli? We know making affordable and delicious food when you're a student is hard! So we've come up with a savey, and less wastey way to create a meal using food you already have in the fridge, or at the back of the kitchen cupboard.

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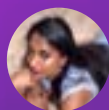


T&Cs Apply. Competition ends Monday 4th September 2023. Visit www.paknsave.co.nz for more details.

**JUST HEAD TO
SAVEYMEAL-BOT.CO.NZ**

I can't help it, I love how men love

In the words of poet Ada Limon; "[we] can't help it, [we] love the way men love"! In honour of Men's issue (what, like they only have one??), Craccum celebrates the unique ways in which the men of UoA show love to their partners, friends and family.



AMANDA JOSHUA

In 1890, a nurse (soon to be Mrs. Halsted), told Dr. William Halsted that the strong antiseptic used in the surgery room burned her skin. He invented rubber gloves, not to protect patients from infection, but to keep her hands safe. The goldfish cracker was invented by Oscar Kambly in 1985, not for profit, but to celebrate his wife on her birthday (she was a Pisces!!) Wordle was created for Josh Wardle's partner because she loved word games and he didn't want her to be bored during the COVID lockdown. Interviewing UoA's finest (and inadvertently ruining some relationships in the journalistic process), I asked you guys how the men in your lives show you love. The results are in; for every Tinder dude who "hates starsign chicks" there is one who will make you a cheerful fish-shaped snack—just because you're a Pisces!

Boyfriends of UoA Rise Up

"I'm doing a balancing act with a stack of fresh fruit in my basket. I love you. I want us both to eat well" - Christopher Citro

Rachael (23, BA/LLB): "My boyfriend keeps my favourite fruit in the fridge

whenever it's in season. He always lets me have the most crispy chips."

Liz (24, BA/LLB): "I mentioned on the second date that I was a light sleeper, easily startled awake by small sounds. My partner told me later that he bought snoring tape on the way home. He practised sleeping with it over his mouth because he didn't want to wake me up in case he ever spent the night".

Hayden (22, Bcom): "My boyfriend always packs a spare phone charger for me when we travel because he knows I'll forget mine. Once I caught him watching YouTube videos on how to wrap presents so he could give me a wrapped Christmas present—I'm a hoe for that man!". (Note to self: well-wrapped gifts get you ho, ho, hoes)

Hayley (23, BA): "On a particularly rainy and cold night we ordered Maccas. Attempting to satisfy a PMS craving, I couldn't wait to dig into my Big Mac combo with no sesame seeds. But when our order arrived my worst fears were realised, I was given seeds! So amidst sniffles and tears my boyfriend picked off every single sesame seed. He can give me his (sesame) seed any day."

In my DILF era

"My dad once confessed to me that he became a shoemaker because they buried my grandma shoeless. I can't help it, I love the way that men love" - Ada Limon

Liam (20, BCom): "Dad never lets mum chop onions. He knows she hates to do it. She hasn't chopped an onion since they started dating 23 years ago."

Nelson (23, BE/Bcom): "My dad cried when I told him how my ex treated me during our relationship. I've been trying



to date kinder people because I know that anyone who hurts me will also hurt him".

Bros-in-arms

"Of each other, we should be kind. While there is still time" - Philip Larkin

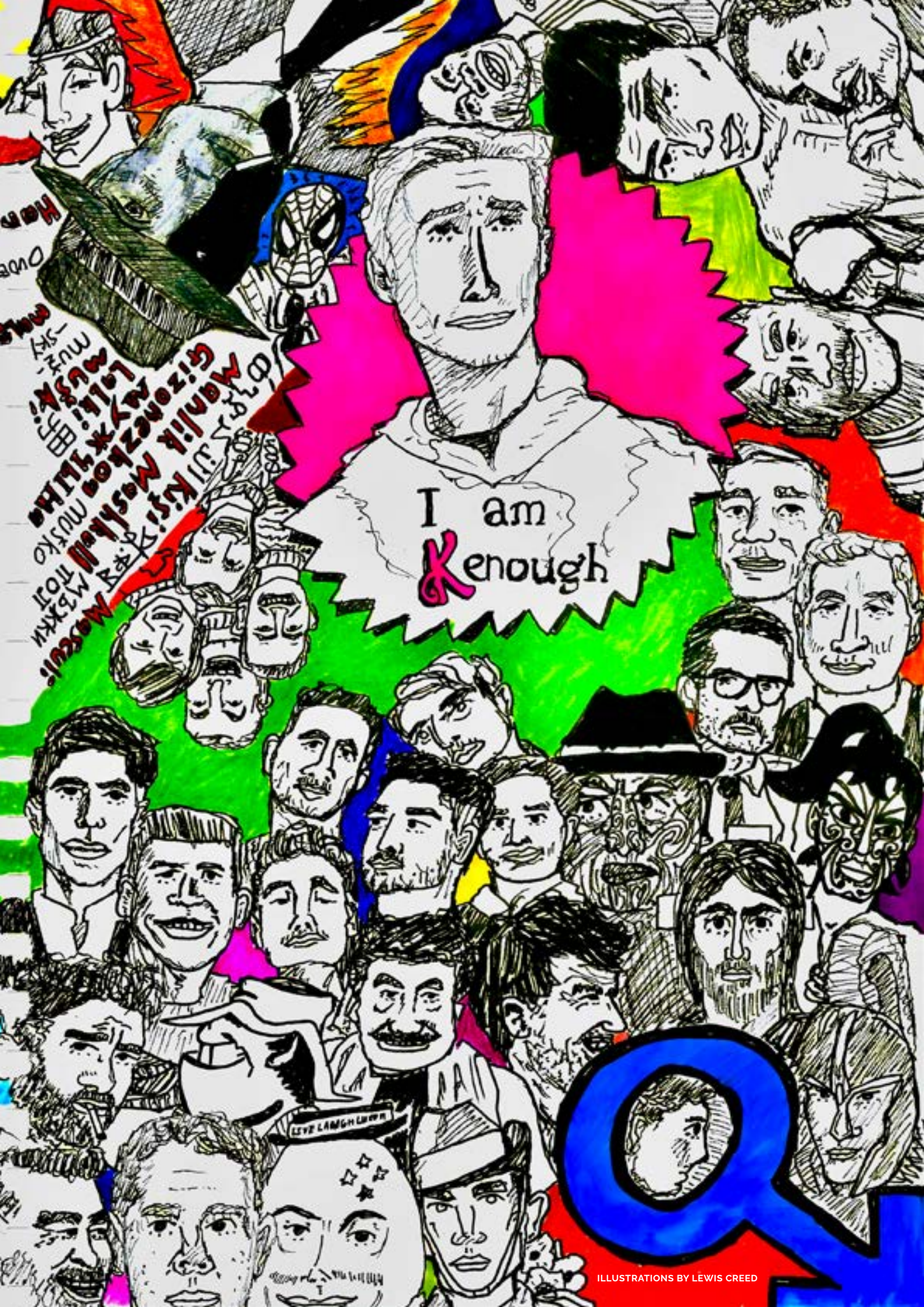
Michelle (21, BA): "Anytime it's dark, my friend Josh insists on walking me to my bus stop—even though it is 15 minutes away from his own, and in the complete opposite direction."

Abby (23, BSc/Bcom): "My younger brother is 4 years old and watches K-dramas with me for hours. Because he's too young to read the subtitles I asked him one day what he likes about them. He told me he 'just likes to sit next to me on the couch'."

There was once a very great surgeon named Halsted. He loved a nurse immeasurably. One day Halsted noticed that her hands were chapped and red from assisting in surgery. And so he invented rubber gloves. For her. It is one of the great love stories in medicine. The difference between inspired medicine and uninspired medicine is love. When I met Ana I knew; I loved her to the point of invention". -Sarah Ruhl, *The Clean House*







I am
K enough

No Country for Nice Men

TUPOU BECKS, PASSIONATE ABOUT MEN AND MEN'S RIGHTS

I had two dreams last night. The first was a little blurrier, but still weighs on my mind. I was 9 years old again, sitting in a cafeteria, doing my civil duty of pointing out people's issues so that they could work on themselves. While performing this duty I was called an asshole. This was very shocking to me, as this was completely untrue—I'm actually a really nice guy. Despite the crude remarks I received, I continued my efforts, but over the duration of the day I ended up with less and less people around me.

This dream eats away at me because I fear if I don't figure out what's wrong with society, there will come a day where manners will die, and we won't talk to each other anymore. I simply can't live in a world like that, where being antisocial is the norm.

I will save the world, even if the world doesn't realise it needs saving.

The second dream I remember very vividly. I was walking through the dark, and this big pink thing started chasing me. I didn't know why it was there, but I knew that if that pink thing got me, I wouldn't be the same. So I started running, running... but despite my best efforts, it caught up to me—fused with me, leaving a fruity taste in my mouth.

No matter how much meat I ate (as part of my Alpha diet), no matter how good the pump I got, I just couldn't shake this feeling that I was slowly changing. Little by little, I'd find myself doing things that just weren't me: Using my hands more when speaking, showering daily, changing my bedding.

I then blacked out—when I came to, I was twerking in the middle of Family bar. I knew the pink thing that had entered me was in control.

I finally gave in and just went with it, booty popping to the beat of the music, sweating in an ocean of bodies. I felt the pink thing slowly leave me... I was left there, on the stage, muscle cramps from throwing it back. But the weird part is that under it all, the makeup, the fishnet top, the lipstick from the dude I had been hooking up with, I felt good. For the first time in my life, I didn't feel like I needed to be somewhere else, I felt like I was exactly where I needed to be.



Dear Masculinity. I love you.

Masculinity has always been safe. Not physically or socially, but somewhere deep in myself. It's disgustingly cliché to be a transsexual man obsessed with the colour blue, but blue was my first comfort. A love affair before the one testosterone initiated with me. Blue masculinity has been a spa weekend I never wanted to leave. Something uncomplicated away from the real world. I have so much to say about masculinity, the simplicity and comfort of it. How my relationship with it has healed more than I ever knew needed attention.

Thank you masculinity! I love myself when I'm with you!

Thank you for my hands, my first trace of paternal masculinity, the same knuckles and fingernails as my grandad. The same scarring from DIY projects as my father. I do metal working with chipped grey nail polish. My first Christmas on HRT my dad still bought me nail polish. They did not question my masculinity regardless. Femininity has always sat awkward with me, I never quite understood the truth others found in it. But masculinity was instant love.

I refuse to see this as the flaw I was made to feel it was. I refused to feel like a traitor to feminism, femininity, or feminine power. Maybe this narrative isn't a dominant one, I know we understand masculinity as oppressive. I wish we can move past this, I wish you could see masculinity how I do, how a butch does. How the potential for non-normative masculinity gives us a new key to everything.

I'm surrounded by the strength of gentle men. When I became a son there were no questions, just the expectation that I would help to put up the gazebo before family dinner just as I had done before.

To my father, my masculinity is a

question that doesn't need an answer. I think he got it more than I did initially. Maybe this is what I have to learn from the men in my life, as I become a man. As a daughter he taught me to throw a punch and to care deeply for those around me, as he showed me all the solutions to any broken pieces of our house. After I came out I found Chaz Bono's biography on his nightstand. He accepts me with the same ease with which he loves David Bowie. His masculinity isn't afraid, he expands to fit my frankenstein masculinity. My masculinity will not be afraid.

As a lesbian my grandad never acknowledged what my friend really was to me, but after we broke up I called him and we talked at length about it. He doesn't understand at all who I am, but he always calls me Jude and asks me how I am when we talk on the phone. I'm cloaked in his hand-me-downs—I don't think he realises the gifts that he's given me. Even as a young girl, he bought me 3XL mens t-shirts I wore religiously. I think he understood more about me than he let on.

I live with a man who knew what I was before me. His queer masculinity led me forward. Without him I wouldn't have the courage to shapeshift. He came with me to my first testosterone appointment, kicking my feet when I was nervous. At dinner each night he declares "boys table!", and we eat together.

I'm made from the men that surround me, their masculinity shaping the body I create for myself. I hope now as I am older, openly masculine and visibly transsexual, I can give this gift to someone else. I hope my masculinity can help give form to another person's desires.

I hope we can build a new masculine, as we could build a dinner table to share food at.

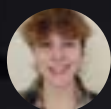
*Dear Masculinity.
You've given me
everything.
Thank you!
I love you!
Yours truly,
Jude.*

P.S. This letter was written over a year ago, before I began to visibly embody my masculinity. I am much more at peace with my femininity now. I understand both facets of myself, but masculinity will always be my first love and most essential building block. I will always be in love with and in awe of what masculinity has given me.



The Twilight Effect

The Dark Underbelly Of 2023's Hottest Fictional Bachelors.



PHOEBE ROBERTSON (SHE/HER)

As I enter Whitcoulls, I am met with a new "BookTok" display, showcasing authors like Hannah Grace, Colleen Hoover, and Elle Kennedy. The prominent romance novels feature hyper-masculine bachelors intended to sweep both the protagonist and the reader off their feet. However, after browsing through some of these novels and watching numerous book-tok recommendations, I cannot help but notice disturbing similarities among these eligible bachelors. Specifically, I observe that toxic and abusive traits are portrayed as masculine and attractive by the authors.

The 'Twilight Effect' is a term I use to describe the phenomenon in which certain male characters in fiction are portrayed with toxic and abusive traits that are somehow romanticised and deemed attractive. This effect takes its name from Stephenie Meyers's "Twilight" series, where the two male leads, Edward and Jacob, exhibit such behaviours, and yet, are portrayed as desirable romantic partners. These traits are dangerously normalised and presented as a hallmark of masculine attractiveness, leading to their perpetuation in other works of fiction.

Within this 'Twilight Effect,' there

are two main categories of male characters:

1. The Edward Type: These characters display a lack of consent and autonomy over their female counterparts. They may exhibit possessive and controlling behaviours, ignoring the boundaries of the women they are involved with. Ryle, the male lead in Colleen Hoover's "It Ends With Us," falls into this category, as he shows jealousy and aggression towards Lily, the protagonist, thus perpetuating a toxic image of love.

2. The Jacob Type: This category comprises characters with violent temperaments and excessive jealousy, often portrayed as passionate and protective, but at the expense of emotionally healthy relationships. Characters like Zade from "Haunting Adeline" belong to this group, as they engage in stalking and assault while still being idolised by some fans.

It is essential to recognize and challenge the 'Twilight Effect' in modern literature, as it normalises harmful behaviours and sends the wrong message to impressionable readers. By understanding the impact of such portrayals, we can promote healthier narratives that encourage

mutual respect, consent, and positive relationship dynamics.

Allow me to elaborate on some examples. One such instance is the upcoming movie "It Ends With Us," starring Blake Lively, based on Colleen Hoover's famous novel promoted on Book Tok. I want to say I'm disappointed in this, but then remembered I could write a whole article on Gossip Girl's portrayal of masculinity and only talk about Chuck Bass. So, no, I'm not surprised really. But I am disappointed.

The story revolves around Lily Blossom Bloom, a florist, and Ryle, a brain surgeon (you can't make this shit up). Lily meets Ryle after graduating college and being ready to start her life post graduation. She falls for him. But as she is developing feelings for Ryle, Atlas, her first love, reappears and challenges the relationship between Lily and Ryle.

As the plot unfolds, it becomes evident that Ryle, the male lead, is actually a domestic abuser, driven by jealousy. What troubles me the most is the amount of praise the book receives; Ryle's abusive behaviour is disturbingly accepted and sought after by some readers. Even the casting of the actor

for the movie caused discontent among fans who believed he wasn't attractive enough for the role.

The discourse surrounding this abusive behaviour varies, with some blaming Lily and others granting Ryle another chance, all under the premise that his anger and jealousy are signs of his love expressed through a hypermasculine lens. I find it difficult to reconcile the glorification of abusive traits with the reality of domestic abuse being that one in three women (or even one in two considering psychological abuse) have experienced it in our country.

I struggle to situate those statistics with this book being on window displays and (soon to be) on our screens. Even if you make the argument that the book itself doesn't excuse the abuse, you do have to recognise that some readers have. And if you're writing about a domestic abuser, I think you've failed if you get this reaction out of your readers. And you know, Atlas is never critiqued despite the fact that he, an 18-year-old, waited for a girl to turn 16 to sleep with her.



In the text, Ryle's abuse stems from jealousy, and it's portrayed as a reasonable response. The jealousy comes from Atlas, Lily's childhood groomer (Keep in mind that he's 18 and she's 15; I refuse to believe that's not grooming) whom Lily reconnects with while in a relationship with Ryle. Anyways, this text all loops to finally Lily deciding to ask Ryle for a divorce to break the cycle of abuse, thus the title "It Ends with Us." Then the book ends with Lily and Atlas running into each

other about a year and a half after her divorce from Ryle.

Taking the example of "Haunting Adeline" from the Dark Romance genre, the book's content is deeply troubling, with trigger warnings galore. The male lead, Zade, exhibits behaviours akin to stalking and assault, yet some fans romanticise and idolise him. While I understand that fiction can explore immoral characters and scenarios, we mustn't overlook the young and impressionable audience on platforms like Book Tok, who lack the capacity to grasp the nuances of these discussions. For these vulnerable individuals, witnessing the glamorisation of abusive characters can blur the lines between fiction and reality, leading them to believe such behaviour is normal or even a display of affection.

A common counterargument that comes up in this discussion is that books don't have to be good and that characters don't have to be moral. Actions can happen in books that are simply fantasies. It's a work of fiction. And I do agree with this. After all, what's the difference between most of these characters and a Game of Thrones episode?

But we also must remember the young and impressionable audience that gathers in communities such as Book Tok. Those who do not have the capacity to hold the duality or nuance required for these discussions. If a 14-year-old logs into Tiktok and sees nothing but fan edits and glamorisation of Zade, she may never believe his actions to be wrong. This sets her up for failure. She'll go through life with the impression that abuse is normal, and simply means that her future partner cares about her. It's a display of affection. In reality, this couldn't be further from the truth.

Research conducted by Dr Emma Sleath and Dr Natalie Elphinstone from Monash University has delved into the impact of media portrayals on adolescent attitudes towards relationships. Their findings reveal that exposure to fictional characters with possessive and controlling traits influences young readers to

perceive such behaviour as a desirable expression of love. This alarming trend calls for responsible storytelling that steers clear of glorifying abusive behaviours.

But it's not just young women negatively impacted by this. The portrayal of toxic masculinity in fiction reinforces harmful gender norms, painting an idealised picture of dominant, aggressive, and possessive men. This perpetuates the notion that men should exhibit these traits to be considered "real men," putting pressure on men to conform to these toxic standards of behaviour. In turn, it can lead to a negative impact on men's mental health as they struggle to live up to unrealistic expectations and may suppress emotions and vulnerability.

Colleen Hoover's books pose an even greater danger, as they are marketed as Romance texts. She's an author who in 2022 sold more books than James Patterson and John Grisham combined and outsold *The Bible* by more than three million copies. Who, in one of her novels, "November 9th," describes a sex scene involving the female character explicitly saying no, and a male character continuing without consent. The scene is presented romantically, potentially misinforming young readers about consent and boundaries. Another glorious moment from "November 9th" (and yes, these are real lines from the book.) "I've never wanted to use physical force on a girl before, but I want to push her to the ground and hold her there until the cab drives away." I'm sorry but what? In a romance book? It's giving not okay.

While fiction allows for the exploration of complex characters and situations, it is crucial to recognise the impact these portrayals can have on impressionable audiences. Glorifying abusive traits and behaviours as masculine or romantic perpetuates harmful stereotypes and can lead to dangerous misconceptions about consent and healthy relationships. As creators and consumers, we bear a responsibility to promote narratives that foster understanding, empathy, and respect, especially in a world where domestic abuse remains a significant issue.



INKY PINKY PONKY

The first of its kind in Aotearoa television.



IATUA FELAGAI TAITO

Amanaki Prescott-Faletau's vision of *Inky Pinky Ponky* is a dream come true for any writer and theatre practitioner. From solo piece, to a theatre show with ensemble cast, to winning the Playmarket NZ award for Best Teenage Script. Being performed in high school productions across Aotearoa, and at Manukau Institute of Technology through their performing arts programme—To now, a professionally-filmed-hour-long-episode which aired on Whakaata Māori and MĀORI+2, and is now available to stream around the world on The Coconet TV!

The story goes—a fakaleitī/leitī (transgender woman or gender and sexual diverse identity in Tonga) high school student is annoyed at Mose, the captain of the first XV rugby team, but then gradually falls in love with him. Whilst she is traversing discrimination and intolerance on the journey to find her happiness and sense of belonging at home and at school, Mose also starts developing meaningful feelings of love and compassion for her. This is so major because in the history of Aotearoa television, there has never been a Tongan queer led show where the main protagonist and lead actress is a fakaleitī/leitī woman. It amplifies the intersectionality of Pacific queer experiences of finding love and a sense of acceptance in high school.

I remember watching the latest version of the theatre show *Inky Pinky Ponky* for the F'INE Festival at Ngā Tohu o Uenuku/Māngere Arts Centre in 2021, and feeling—as many queer Pasifika people have felt in a big or small capacity—represented by what the themes of the show entailed. The themes of queer love and queer love struggles, Prescott-Faletau's performance as a sassy, unapologetic but thoughtful teenager attempting to find her place in school is spectacular! In only an hour, this show manages to encapsulate the Tongan culture, themes of Christianity and queerness, teenage banter and breaking the fourth wall. And it depicts a vulnerable truth of Prescott-Faletau's experience: "My heart and soul went into this, so it's like bearing and giving out a piece of yourself and having it open to the world to judge and have a spin on," she said to Pacific Media Network. *Inky Pinky Ponky* highlights authenticity and richness for an audience to enjoy and receive openly, especially for those that are not a part of the rainbow community. It allows the audience to have sympathy, share a few giggles and feel the pain and heart of the story being told through our screens.

This story had many breakout stars—like Sesilia Pusiaki who plays



Faletau-Prescott's character's mother, and who had one of my favourite scenes around her complex navigation of dealing with her child, their amalgamated Tongan-Christian faith, and gender identity. I do not want to give too much away, but it was so significant and emotional as their scenes together are so prevalent and relatable to so many Pasifika queer people.

This show was trending number 1 on YouTube in Aotearoa when it was released on July 20th. It really is a special story that has island humour, shade (of course), theatrics, glamour, truth, love and understanding too. A timeless show that hopefully inspires young intersectional Rainbow voices to tell their truths and to find their happiness.

You all need to watch! On Whakaata Māori, MĀORI+2, and The Coconet TV website.



ONE OF THEM

The new memoir by Shaneel Lal that you won't want to put down.



IATUA FELAGAI TAITO

I remember walking into Lynn Mall and seeing *One of Them* at Whitcoulls—and thought, because I have been following Shaneel's Instagram for quite a long time now, why not get the book, right? But should I really spend \$36.99 on a book? I've been in the position before where I'll buy a book and then instantly come to regret that I bought it, so I was hoping that this would not be the case with *One of Them*.

Well, I then ended up buying it, and once I had read the first few pages of Lal's book I knew I was not going to regret the purchase one bit. This book is so powerful yet vulnerable. When you see Lal's media presence and what they do for the Rainbow community—especially for the Pacific Rainbow community—you see them as very strong, aggressive or passionate (depending on who you ask) in their activism, and being unapologetically authentic. But when you read their book, it truly humanises them in a way where their true essence and being comes out.

You see the gentler side of Lal, in such a way that they don't feel as intimidating due to their accolades and intellect. You see the personal memories that have been etched in their bones, forming their why—why they are so strong and why they have this responsibility to not be complacent, to fight to ban conversion therapy practices, and fight for queer rights in Aotearoa.

This book delves into their trauma, their queer identity, their ethnic identity, their journey into politics, their love life, their vulnerabilities, their triumphs and most importantly their truth.

I remember as I was reading I was crying, taking deep breaths and pausing, sympathising, giggling and getting giddy, feeling empowered and liberated—because their book truly takes you on a journey.

**IT WAS ESPECIALLY
A JOURNEY FOR
MYSELF WHO HAS
BEEN THROUGH
(SELF-AFFLICTED)
CONVERSION
THERAPY,
UNDERSTANDING
THAT TOXIC
MASCULINITY THAT
IS ATTACHED TO
A COMPULSIVE
HETEROSEXUAL
ORDER WHICH
MAKES ANYONE AND
EVERYONE THAT
SITS OUT OF THAT
HETERONORMATIVE
PARADIGM INTO
A SUBSPECIES OF
HUMAN.**

It is such an exhausting feeling when you are dealing with people who are ignorant and androcentrically White that sometimes the intersection of being queer and Pacific is nuanced and hard. Hard to the point where you are not dealing with just homophobia (or in Lal's case, transphobia) but racism too. This book is so raw that once I read it, I needed time to put the book away and think about something else, as it is such an intense but truthful read. It is a book that is so important for people to read in order to understand why Lal is the way they are... it humanises their public persona. And when you read the book

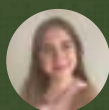


in its entirety, you will look at Lal and have immense respect for them, for what they've achieved so far, and what they've done to make queer people safe and represented.



MEN WHO HATE WOMEN AND THEMSELVES

How modern day men's rights movements harm the men they claim to help



TALIA NICOL

"It's hard to point to something specific," says Harry*. As a young man he says factors such as age, impressionability and a lack of critical thinking skills led him down a path towards the men's rights movements.

"You'd get these [men's rights activists] come along on YouTube [and now TikTok] and say things like, 'if you divorce a woman, there's an 80% chance you're never seeing your kids again,' and that feels scary, when you're twelve and don't know that's not strictly true."

It wasn't discussed at home, either, so his ability to discern "fake arguments"

posed by the right was limited. "My household has always been pretty progressive, but my parents weren't revolutionaries in any respect, and they didn't really discuss these issues."

These issues began almost fifty years ago. In the 1970s, men's liberation movements, as they were then known, began to pop up around the world. These groups stood alongside feminist values—fighting for substantive equality in the workplace and the homes—and argued for a reconsideration of gender normative roles.

However, from the 1980s, several men's rights groups began to suddenly turn in opposition to feminism: blaming the women they had once sat alongside for the pressures they faced. These groups have become popularised in the age of social media, and have become highly intertwined with radical manosphere online movements, which seek to return to the age of "traditional familial values" through racism, misogyny and forced violence.

When asked about this radical shift in ideology, Associate Professor in the School of Psychology Dr Danny Osborne says that, "the same things that motivate progressives to pursue collective action are the same factors that motivate conservative movements: identity (identifying with the group and/or issue), efficacy (feeling like your group can make a difference and change the system), and perceptions of injustice."

The men's rights movement gives young men all three, without asking them to deal with the baggage of patriarchy. As the movement has aged, its rejections of patriarchy have only become more explicit. Ironically, the movement's roots in feminism mean this appears to be quite a contradictory position, but as Harry notes, it doesn't really matter. "Realistically we're dealing with a conspiracy theory here. Any conspiracy starts out as 'do your own research' and then eventually they're talking about the blackpill."

Dr Kris Taylor, a research fellow also in the School of Psychology, is quick to qualify this. He adds, "I find it interesting in speaking with young men about the issues that they care about as the pressures that they feel to behave in ways that limit their emotional expression, pressures to pursue sex, and pressures to conform to a masculine status quo are all well explained in feminist theory. In this sense, I think that one of the biggest issues that young men face is a limited repertoire for making sense of themselves."

Max* echoes this. "People have been taught since birth to think about themselves as individuals. So when you talk about systemic issues often a response is 'well I haven't done anything wrong'. Most people aren't equipped to have these conversations and it can often be quite upsetting."

Harry agrees, adding, "I was twelve and I thought, 'well I haven't done any of that'. I've done a lot of thinking about my place in patriarchy now; but I don't think



I'd have been able to do that without getting my foot in the door first."

It's certainly clear that traditional notions of masculinity are hard to escape from, and have dire consequences: in the 2021/2022 period, the Chief Coroner ruled that men were more than twice as likely to die by suicide in New Zealand than women.

Men also continue to be disproportionate victims of physical assault, and compulsory conscription for young men and boys continues to impact several nations in periods of war, among other issues.

This is where men's rights recruitment comes in: exposing vulnerabilities in young men, and capitalising on their fears. Dr Osborne believes that, "people like Jordan Peterson and Andrew Tate have... done a disservice to young men by radicalising (even further) what it means to identify as a man."

"So, rather than it being seen as a normal or healthy thing, strong identification as a man has a rather radical and counter-progressive association with it. In that sense, it's become even more confining and rigid to strongly identify as a man."

As men's rights recruitment trends ever younger, Harry notes that, "it's very important for privileged people to educate their children properly on systemic issues. It's really easy to

say sexism is bad, but we often don't talk about the systemic component. Without a systemic understanding, kids are defenceless to a lot of men's rights arguments".

Fortunately, there are men's liberation movements seeking to plug these gaps in understanding. Dr Osborne is an advocate for these types of movements. "We need to see more structural and cultural change to occur in order to break down traditional masculine values. Rigid gender roles are ultimately confining for men, women, and non-binary people, thereby limiting everyone's potential. At the end of the day, I'm a strong believer in the personal being political. The decisions we make every day will eventually change society and make the world a little bit better, more inclusive, place."

Take, for example, Shifting the Line, a project run by the University's School of Psychology and supported by Dr Taylor. The project started life as a study about how boys and young men would respond to a 'change-oriented' methodology that introduced questions about gender and sexism and online ethics."

When asked about how they're helping young men, Dr Taylor comments that they use a process of gentle enquiry, in which, "we engage young men in long discussions about gender [and] sexism... as boys become aware of the ways that these gendered norms constrain their

lives, they are more able to recognise the ways that the status quo of rigid masculinity isn't really beneficial to anyone."

Harry is positive about the future. "The internet makes everything more visible, while that does mean more people are exposed to negative content in the first place, it also makes the shortcomings of movements such as men's rights more obvious. It's easy to lose perspective on the internet, but I do think we're heading towards a more equal society."

'All names have been changed for anonymity



ILLUSTRATION BY ELLA ROWE



HASJI BOZ



MONGA.MY



LEFT HAND LOZ



KIERAN TAHIR



CARV



BIRKENTHOT

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INVOLUNTARY CELIBACY IN 2023

Remember when Incels were feared, and not just a catch-all for the guys who don't enjoy getting drunk and hazed at law camp?



ISAAC LAM

2018 was my first year at university, and it feels like eons ago now that I'm on my way out. It's surreal to recall a time when the Marvel Cinematic Universe was solving racism, Blackpink was still known for making music, and we thought Taylor Swift was on her way out after Reputation's lukewarm reception.

It was also a drastically different time for me, negotiating my masculinity. Trying to fit in with all the cool kids at halls while figuring out the norms of a new country, I found myself weighed down significantly by an omnipresent awareness that, by the decree of some invisible forces I couldn't understand (hint: patriarchy, white supremacy), I was not quite enough man.

So when the western world started worrying about the emerging Incel online subculture that year, I paid attention. I'd heard of the term before, but 2018 was when the term first made global headlines, after the Toronto van attack. Many feared that the attack could lead a revolution of terror, spurring a new wave of misogynistic mutinies. I found myself embroiled in several heated Facebook comments section debates on this issue; people talked about this enough that Incel was shortlisted for Oxford Dictionary's Word of the Year.

Yet now in 2023, it feels like those concerns may have been overblown. Only one subsequent terror attack has been linked by authorities to Incel ideology, and only Canada has taken substantial steps towards addressing the movement by formally declaring Incel attacks acts of terrorism.

There is some doubt over how accurate this narrative is, with the inconsistent and high thresholds for determining that an attack was Incel motivated. But at least Incels have not proven the worst we thought they could be.

Perusing academic literature discussing Incels from the turn of the decade, you get the sense that counter-terrorism experts feared the emergence of a threat like nothing they had seen before. They feared a vile, violent ideology that had the potential to radicalise a militia of sexually frustrated white men from their parents' basements, who would fight to the death in the crusade against multiculturalism and feminism. They called for quick action to quell this terror threat, with the lives of countless women and minorities at risk.

Contemporary literature paints a slightly different picture of the average Incel. More psychologists have taken an interest in the Incel subculture, and their work suggests the motivations of most Incels are much less valorous, seeking out the movement simply for a sense of community and validation amidst masculinity's crisis of loneliness. It has also become apparent that the movement is not as ethnically heterogeneous as originally thought, with a significant number of minority men drawn towards Incel ideology for its creative critiques of the racism they experience.

Nowadays, we understand that the threat of violence comes from a small, fringe group of extremist Incels. Most men who brush with the movement don't stick around it for long, eventually growing out of it and realising there's much more to life beyond the blackpill.

A big victory since 2018 was when the largest Incel communities were de-platformed off Reddit. There are concerns that this has only pushed the extremist Incels further, but I think this overlooks a more concerning development we've seen since – the embrace of Incel lingo by the 'normies' the Incels despise so much.

It wasn't long ago that you could pick out

an Incel from their use of the subculture's buzzwords. Nowadays, their jargon and memes have permeated the mainstream. I want to believe that no sane person is out there calling women 'femoids', but it's hard to browse social media these days without encountering mainstream memes that reference the Chad, Virgin and Stacey caricatures – once a secret language of the subculture.

The term 'Incel' itself also sees more liberal use in the mainstream, as a result. It's now not uncommon to see it thrown around to pejoratively refer to any male failing to conform to hypersexual standards of ideal masculinity, or as an irrebuttable ace in the hole against any male online expressing a view not fully aligned with liberal feminist ideas. I've seen it especially often in the Subtle Asian Traits Facebook group, in ad hominem attacks—often from women—whenever Asian men speak out on the touchy subjects of sexual racism and their emasculation.

How Incel doctrine has so seamlessly permeated common discourse worries me. The danger of the ideology never came from its roots—not the crisis of loneliness plaguing men, not the frustration that can come from feeling unworthy of love, and certainly not just from daring to go against the grain, questioning society's superficial standards of value and attractiveness. Incel ideology is dangerous because it dehumanises and scapegoats women, making it easier to justify misogyny and violence against them.

The societal issues that birthed the misogyny infested Incel movement still exist, and are arguably more prevalent than ever before. The pandemic has birthed a generation of awkward and isolated young men, who missed crucial, formative years to explore and develop relationships. We're also seeing

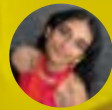
the increased normalisation of online dating, which can easily perpetuate harmful stereotypes about women if you don't realise how heavily their algorithms and business models are rigged against lonely men. There is also more online content than ever before that feeds and thrives off these sentiments, with figures like Andrew Tate eager to hustle away at male frustration.

The integration of Incel jargon into mainstream discourse risks normalising the ideology's solutions to these problems, which is bad news. Even if it doesn't spur the high-severity violence experts initially feared, Incel-esque attitudes can cause lasting harm if manifested in personal and intimate relationships, with the violence they encourage against women.

But as 'I'm Just Ken' repeats for the 27th time this writing session, I'm reminded that there's still hope for a better future. We're starting to see the celebration of healthier critiques of patriarchal norms, in a manner that directs frustrations away from women without disempowering men, towards the broader societal structures which ensnare us all.

TOXIC MASCULINITY

BE A MAN. You must be swift as the coursing river, with all the force of a great typhoon, with all the strength of a raging fire. . .mysterious as the dark side of the moon. As Li Shang once sang in 'I'll Make a Man Out of You.'



SANSKRUTI BANERJEE

WHAT IS IT?

Toxic masculinity is a set of attitudes and beliefs which we 'typically' tend to associate with men. OR in other words, what society expects of men. Of course, this doesn't have a good impact as men are conditioned towards acting in certain ways and doing certain things. By speaking to a range of different men over the past week, we've gathered some information about toxic masculinity and how it's affecting them. In fact, even feminism's stance towards men often states that toxic masculinity is a problem that has to be dealt with because men deserve better. Let's take a look at three pockets of toxic masculinity that need breaking:

'BE MORE DOMINANT! THIS MEANS YOU'RE MORE POWERFUL!'

The ideas and stereotypes around toxic dominance have made many men into insufferable narcissists with the emotional ranges of teaspoons. Men are expected to 'look strong' or 'be more dominant' than their partner's to be considered as worthy and there are

feelings of shame or guilt associated if they don't cater to these expectations. The problem with this ideal is that men psychologically turn this into things like unconditional physical toughness, physical aggression or even anti-feminist behaviour. But what does it REALLY mean to be a man? Is there a definition at all? Can't we let individuals live for themselves and express themselves in the ways which make THEM comfortable and happy?

'STOP BEING SO SENSITIVE. STOP CRYING!'

Traditionally, we face the age-long concept of men not crying. While overtime this has slowly broken, we still see so many young and older men trying to hold back tears or not show as many emotions 'as a girl would.' Even little boys are taught to hold back their tears and not to cry. But why? Cry it out babes. Healthy tears are so attractive and as one of the guys I spoke to said "it's a way of letting all the bad and heavy stuff come out." The fact so many men are conditioned to believe they need to put up this tough-front is heartbreaking. All humans should be

allowed and entitled to feel emotions. This, if anything should be encouraged and honestly a lot of this conditioning can blame patriarchy. Let it out!

'WHY ARE YOU ACTING SO FEMININE?'

So many men are afraid to embrace their inner feminine energy. They're like Ken from the new Barbie movie thinking they need to build a 'MOJO DOJO CASA HOUSE' with huge horses and embellishments. Paint your nails, wear whatever you want and express yourself however you are comfortable. The world is moving towards a space that is accepting of all individuals and how they wish to live but we have incredibly far to go.

So what is healthy masculinity? Realising that men too have it rough because of toxic masculinity. Helping the guys around you break down these barriers piece by piece and just letting them know as Barbie did to Ken; you are enough!



MACROS FOR YOUR MIND

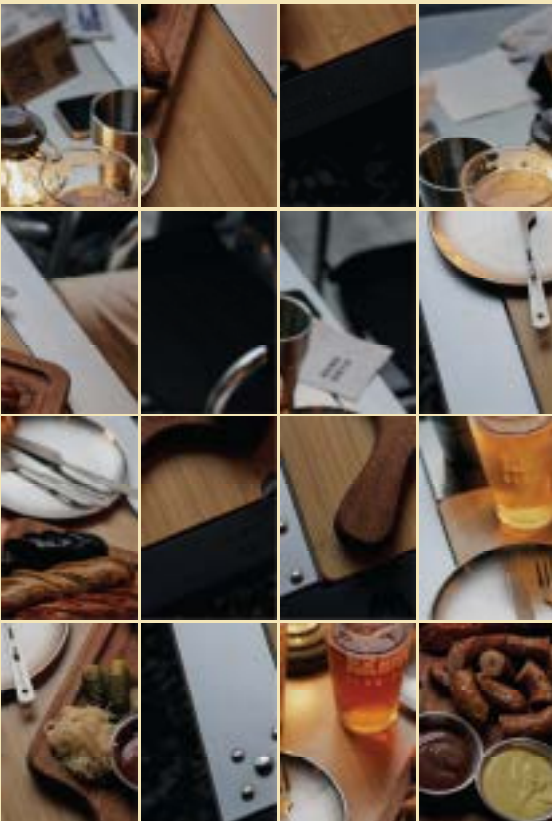
R	U	E	I	S	N	O	M	I	T	H	D	Chappie
R	A	S	F	E	L	L	O	W	B	U	E	Fellow
S	E	Y	O	B	E	N	A	B	D	U	S	Guy
M	W	T	Y	G	R	E	Z	E	E	G	F	Lad
A	E	A	S	U	U	W	W	E	E	K	G	Monsieur
N	S	S	I	A	Y	B	O	R	E	R		Boy
Y	F	O	R	N	M	E	T	R	N	H	E	Chap
C	H	A	P	P	I	E	B	T	O	P	R	Esquire
E	R	B	M	O	H	C	H	A	P	J	O	Gent
D	R	E	H	T	O	R	B	B	L	O	E	Joe
M	A	E	R	I	U	Q	S	E	S	E	P	Mister
M	D	L	R	O	N	G	I	S	R	L	F	Swain

MASCULINITY ISSUE IS
MADE POSSIBLE WITH
THE SUPPORT OF:



Oh no! Woke vegans have scrambled
Not Sweet Baby Rays smoked meats!
Fix everything (like you always do king).

Hint: Consider using a tool, such as an angle
grinder, to cut out and reassemble the meal.

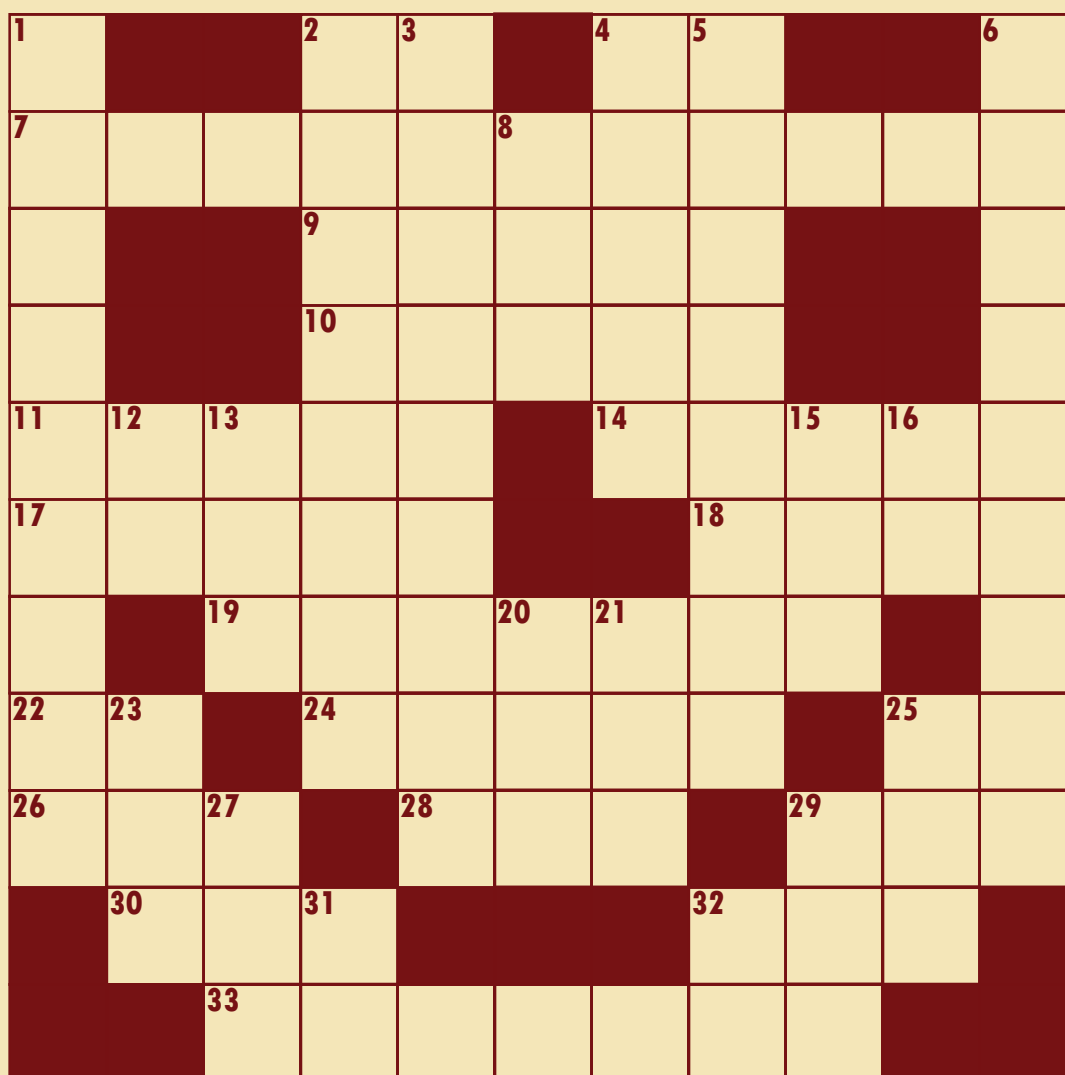


Smoke some meats!

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



#HBCYNU



Across

- 2 Opposite of North East
- 4 Member of Parliament
- 7 Fish Eater
- 9 Words of defeat
- 10 Casino machines
- 11 Frock
- 14 Drawn-out fight
- 17 Jazz genre
- 18 Way in or out
- 19 Cooks, in a way
- 22 Mother
- 24 Burn with steam
- 25 Full length album
- 26 With 27 Down, Cheerio!
- 28 Angsty Subculture
- 29 Autumn Month
- 30 Missing in battle
- 32 'The Da Vinci Code' author Brown
- 33 Space distances

Down

- 1 Traffic slower
- 2 Won't ever beat paper
- 3 Where to hang a picture?
- 4 Sail supports
- 5 Was in control
- 6 Getting help, maybe on the couch
- 8 As well
- 12 Concerning
- 13 ___ and flow
- 15 Dawn Goddess
- 16 Monopoly Home Square
- 20 Descartes conclusion
- 21 ___-mo replay
- 23 Intention
- 25 Data-sharing acronym
- 27 See 26 Across
- 29 Lots of 22 Across
- 31 Roadside Assistance
- 32 A band with AC



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MEN OF TINDER: A STUDY

THE HUNTSMAN



BRET, 22

Look At All of my DEAD THINGS & LET ME MAKE YOU FEEL ALIVE!



IDK CAUSE HE ONLY USES EMOJIS



ETHAN, 26



THE LIAR



LIAM, 21

LITERALLY HATE THIS APP 🙄
DELETING SOON 🙄 PROBABLY
WON'T EVEN REPLY 🙄



AGGRESSIVELY NOT INTO HOOKING UP



NOAH, 24

NO HOOK UPS. You NEED To BE THE ONE. NO EXCEPTIONS. NO GAMES.



KIDNAPPER???



AIDAN, 23

NOT MY KID. THE ONLY HUMAN I HAVE PICTURES WITH BUT NOT MY KID. I ACTUALLY HATE KIDS.



THE JETSETTER



ADAM, 25

LEAVING 4 OZ IN 2 WEEKS! LET'S MEET UP! (I'M PROBABLY NOT GOING TO OZ I JUST DON'T DO COMMITMENT)



FOR SURE WHITE



JAKE, 21

WHICH ONE AM I? NOBODY KNOWS. NOT EVEN MY MUM. BUT I'M THERE. WATCHING. WAITING. WHITE.



TOXIC INDIE BOI



ROMAN, ^{wise beyond my years}

IF YOU DON'T LISTEN TO RADIOHEAD I WON'T LISTEN TO YOU. AND IF YOU LISTEN TO RADIOHEAD I DOUBT YOU UNDERSTAND RADIOHEAD.



SO LITTLE PERSONALITY HE MIGHT BE A BOT?



CALEB, 23

PINEAPPLE ON PIZZA. YAY OR NAY?



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