

# CRACCUM

magazine 18



a fraction more friction

ISABELLE RUSSELL ON THE MODERN  
CREATIVE PROCESS. PAGE 18.

ask me if i'm fashion

SAIA HALATANU EXAMINES CAMPUS CLOTHING  
FOR NZ FASHION WEEK. PAGE 22.

stanley who-brick?

JACK CALDWELL TAKES US THROUGH THE  
DIRECTOR'S ICONIC FILMS. PAGE 30.



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and get yours  
today.





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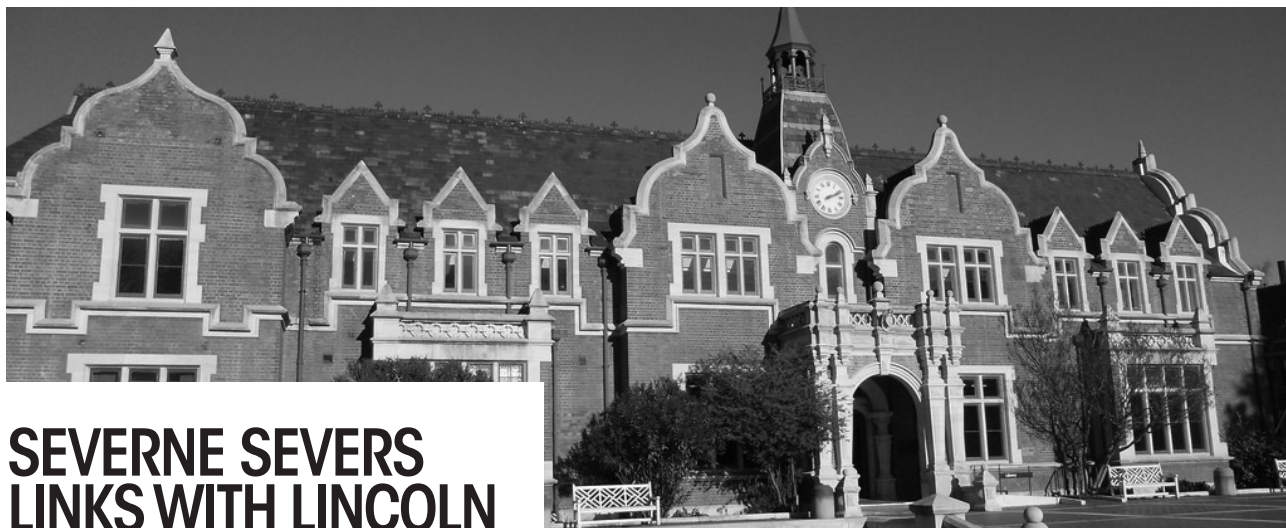
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# here's why the rio olympics have been a highly worthwhile and meaningful experience

CAITLIN AND MARK  
EDITOR@CRACCUM.CO.NZ



## SEVERNE SEVERS LINKS WITH LINCOLN

Lincoln University has lost yet another senior staff member with Deputy Vice Chancellor Dr Charlotte Severne stepping down after only six months in the position. Dr Severne has been the fifth Deputy Vice Chancellor to resign from the University this year.

It is the latest in a long line of endemic problems facing the University – problems which University staff are struggling to fix.

Lincoln University Vice Chancellor, Dr Robin Pollard, says he is not particularly surprised by the resignations – saying that staff members have “been through a very tough time”.

“There were a number of inputs made to the senior management and they came from Council members and from the Tertiary Education Commission and that’s a very difficult thing for people in senior management positions to cope with.”

“There was the Christchurch earthquakes, the University’s had poor finances for some years, there’s been a lack of internal investment, the departure of the former Vice-Chancellor shook everybody.”

Previous University Vice Chancellor Andy West, who stood down midway through last year, has become the centre of a small financial scandal. It was reported last month that Lincoln had paid more than \$3.4 million dollars on consultancy fees accrued under his administration.

The University has commissioned an “options report” from Ernst and Young, in order to help deal with some of the problems it is currently facing. Delivered at a cost of \$220,000 to the University, the report is sealed until University and Tertiary Education Commission staff are able to give it an “in depth” view.

Deputy Vice Chancellor, Māori and Communities, Severne took over the position from Professor Hirini Matunga, who had spent 12 years in the role. Professor Matunga has since returned to a teaching role at the University, working in Māori and Indigenous Studies.

Dr Severne has not commented publicly on the reasons behind her resignation. However, sources from the *New Zealand Herald* claim that she “could not get anything done”. ■

## NIGHTMARE ON HYDE STREET

Students at the University of Otago have voted to reject a potential ban on offensive costumes at the Annual Hyde Street Keg Party. The decision comes after students attending this year’s event were given a long list of costumes to be “avoided” by all attendees.

Among other recommendations, students were told not to pretend to be disabled, not to come dressed as “mocking caricatures” of the LGBT community, not to wear costumes making fun of racial minorities – including, specifically, not dressing up as an “Arab”, or coming in blackface

– not to dress up like individuals associated with sexual violence [*news ed: bill cosby, chris brown*], and to avoid dressing up in costumes that made light of “culturally sensitive issues”, [*news ed: nazis, isis*]

The recommendations sparked an immediate campus-wide debate, with some students vowing to deliberately wear the most offensive costumes possible, while others decried the “completely predictable response” of those who felt that they had a “god-given right to offend people”

The list was a collaboration between OUSA and Otago University’s Feminist Collective, who have said that they released the strictly

optional list over concerns that the annual event was becoming increasingly hostile to minority or disadvantaged students. The binding referendum, passed by a majority of 61.67 percent, prohibits OUSA from making following any such list compulsory for students attending the event.

The Hyde Street Keg Party is one of the largest events on the OUSA social calendar. The event, which attracts more than 4000 university students each year, has faced repeated criticism by local residents and landlords, who say that it encourages property damage and anti-social behaviour. This year’s event featured eight arrests, and ten hospitalizations. ■



## TEACH FIRST



The National Government will be funding Teach First NZ, a fast-track graduate development programme, for another three years.

The scheme is designed to attract top university graduates, putting them through an intensive training programme – with the goal of eventually putting them into a two-year paid teacher position in low-decile secondary schools.

So far, the programme has been hugely popular with prospective teachers, with the 2016 programme receiving 300 applications for just 20 spaces.

The three year extension means that the pro-

gramme will have time to process another 50 new teachers, who will enter the workforce by 2018. Ten of those places will be specifically allocated to address teacher shortages in science, technology and maths.

Education minister Hekia Parata says that the pilot programme has been “very effective in attracting high-achieving graduates into teaching.”

The Teach First programme faced legal action from the Post Primary Teachers Association (the PPTA) earlier this year. The programme was found to have violated employment law by the Employment Relations Authority, placing teachers developed through the scheme into positions that had not been publicly advertised.

An agreement was initially struck between the

two groups, with a commitment from the Ministry of Education that future positions would be advertised in concert with ERA guidelines.

However, an amendment made by Parata to the Education Legislation Bill this year would allow schools to follow the banned process. Both the PPTA and the New Zealand Education Institute have decried the law change, calling it “shrouded in secrecy”.

Act leader David Seymour said the decision to extend Teach First was a good one.

“If programs like Teach First are producing better results than traditional teacher training, then so be it. The purpose of teacher qualification should be to improve outcomes for students, not to protect the status quo.” ■

## UOA HAS HALF-ASSED RESPONSE TO HOMOPHOBIC HARASSMENT

Students staying at a University of Auckland hall of residence have complained about the University’s reaction to an “aggressively homophobic” student.

Speaking to GayNZ, students living at the hall in question said that they had spent months trying to get some kind of help, but had found it impossible to do so. They spoke on the condition that they stay anonymous.

The attacks allegedly began early this year, with the [male] student in question asking a short-

haired female student if she was a lesbian, telling her that he used to “beat up” gay students while he was at school.

This behaviour then developed into a regular outbursts. At one point, he reportedly “shoved” a bisexual male student down into his room, and started to yell at him. At another, he allegedly began loudly arguing about gay rights with another student, while they were both standing in a common area. One night, he even reportedly walked up and down the halls of the building, shouting “let’s kill some gays”.

Complaints about the discomfort that the student’s behaviour was causing to queer students living at that hall were laid as early as March and April this year. However, despite a number of University representatives being contacted about

the issue, including the manager of the hall of residence in question, the interim Queer Rights Officer, and AUSA advocacy services.

Ultimately, the case was brought in front of the University Proctor – the highest authority when it comes to evaluating student complaints. However, four months after the Proctor’s investigation began, the student in question still lives in the hall of residence.

The University’s Residential Rules state that “Any serious incidents of harassment may lead to the immediate termination of your residency.”

Harassment, in this case, includes “intimidation”, making “offensive jokes”, “assault” or “expressing stereotypes (assumptions about an individual’s behaviour/values or culture based on a group they belong to) in an offensive or insensitive manner.” ■



## DEJA V-UNITARY PLAN NEWS ED ROLLS OUT HIS FAVOURITE TOPIC, AGAIN

Auckland City Councillors have voted to pass the Unitary Plan – essentially approving the development of as many as 422,000 new homes around Auckland city over the next thirty years.

*[News Ed: For those who don't know, the Unitary Plan is the "rulebook" by which property developers have to operate. A functional unitary plan encourages healthy, stable, coherent urban growth. Considering Auckland's long term housing, public transport and traffic problems, having a competently designed Unitary Plan has been a must].*

The 7000-page document took more than three years to prepare, and had two draft copies (both of which would have provided drastically fewer homes) rejected. The final version of the document was developed after internal squabbling between council-members meant that the council withdrew its own recommendations to the Independent Hearings Panel that oversaw the plan's final shape.

In the short term, it makes provisions for as

many as 131,000 new dwellings to be constructed over the next seven years. These new houses are designed to help relieve the immediate pressure on Auckland's housing market.

In the long term, the plan allows for greater urban intensification – which ultimately means more effective public transport and public services, cheaper and more affordable housing for University students, and a lower infrastructure spend.

64% of the new capacity will be developed within existing urban areas – through the development of apartment blocks and multi-level housing on already developed pieces of land.

'Mixed Housing Suburban' – zoning which allows for the development of up to two houses of up to two storeys, per section – will increase in geographic size by 5%. 'Townhouses and Apartments' – zoning which permits four to six storey buildings – will grow in geographic area by more than 25%. The largest increase is to 'Mixed Housing Urban' – which permits up to two houses of up to three storeys without resource consent – which increases by almost 48% in total.

The remaining 36% will be developed by expanding the Rural-Urban Boundary. The Boundary will be expanded by as much as 30% to accommodate that growth.

In order to encourage development, the plan massively simplifies the residential zoning system, reducing the number of residential zoning types down to six, total. This in turn has the effect of dramatically shrinking the minimum sizes of individual sections – by an average of 22% across the city.

The document doesn't contain provisions guaranteeing affordable housing – in fact, such provisions were eventually removed by the Council relatively late in the process. It is hoped that by providing enough houses to meet demand, and by providing dwellings that are appropriate for a number of different social needs (such as apartments), house prices will deflate and people will be able to access properties that are appropriate for their lifestyles.

The document has received near-universal political support, and is being lauded as being the first time that Auckland City has had a coherent, sensible, enforceable plan for urban development. ■

## UCSA FORCED TO CROWDFUND

The University of Canterbury Student's Association has been forced to begin a crowdfunding campaign in order to repair damage to their central office.

The fifty-year-old building is scheduled to be demolished next month – a casualty of the 2011 Christchurch earthquakes. The building intended to replace it will cost around \$25 million dollars to build. The organisation is

looking for a total of \$5 million in donations in order to fund that project, with the rest coming from insurance payouts on the old building, as well as from the University of Canterbury itself.

The new, Architectus-designed building will include 3490 square metres of floor space, and incorporate a performance venue, as well as dedicated spaces for meetings, clubs, and the new UCSA offices.

Donations have already begun to flow in, according to UCSA President James Addington. "We know a lot of people have memories

associated with the existing UCSA building and are keen to see future generations of UC students have those same opportunities and experiences. Now is the time for every former, current student, and staff member to donate to this worthy cause, to own a piece of the building which is so vital to the UC campus and our student experience."

USCA hopes to have the building open by Orientation Week 2019. The demolition and rebuilding process is being recorded on University of Canterbury's website. ■



## ART OF THE DEAL



Contract negotiations between Victoria University and the Tertiary Education Union (TEU) have reached an impasse, after more than four months of bargaining.

Discussion began between the two parties in May of this year, after the University moved to extend a range of new benefits to non-TEU staff members – benefits that included new pay scales, improvements to long service leave, and \$500 cash for staff members entering into individual employment agreements.

According to a release sent to all TEU Vic branch members, the University “has withdrawn their new remuneration model from the negotiations.”

“Although we had agreed to it conditional on the union being able to negotiate the ranges of pay rates and on staff being guaranteed a minimum pay rise for performance,”

The TEU have organised a stop-work meeting, set to be held on the 23rd of August, in response.

Victoria University have stressed in a statement that “the University has not walked away from

pay negotiations” and that negotiators “remain available to meet the union representatives at any time to try to conclude bargaining.”

“The University has made what it considers is a fair pay offer, including a mechanism for the inclusion into the collective the new remuneration ranges available for non-union staff earlier this year.”

“To date the parties have not been able to reach agreement in terms of the principles for the introduction of the new ranges. The University has tabled an alternative position, which is exactly the same offer but without the inclusion of the new ranges.” ■

## WOMEN SET TO TAKE OVER THE PLANET IN WORLDWIDE GYM CONSPIRACY

Students at the University of Canterbury are complaining that new “women-only” hours at the on-campus gym are “inconvenient” for other students.

The “women-only” block, currently undergoing a limited trial period, runs from Monday to Saturday, from 1pm-3pm. Women are invited to exercise in special male-free classes and gym areas.

Some students at the University of Canterbury have complained that holding the initiative in the mid-afternoon is unfair to the wider student body, as it makes the gym inaccessible during what is typically its busiest period.

UCSA president James Addington has said

that while he thought the programme was “awesome”, he had received complaints that the trial was too exclusive. He also argued that if there were “male-only” hours at the gym, it would be seen as sexist.

The UC trial began on July 25 and will run until the end of the year. ■



## COMMUNICABLE DEGREES

The University Of Auckland is introducing a new dedicated Communications major, beginning in 2017. The major will be offered as a part of the Bachelor of Arts programme.

The course will offer a specialized academic pathway for students looking for jobs in broadcast and journalism feeds, as well as in marketing, advertising, public relations, corporate and financial communication and digital communication.

The course will be comprised of a series of dedicated first-year Communications papers, as well as Māori Language, Pacific Studies, FTVMS, Marketing, Politics, and Fine Arts papers.

The course announcement comes after a mass exodus of FTVMS teaching staff over the last twelve months. Certain FTVMS courses, notably Indigeneity and the Media, have had to be discontinued because there are no staff available to teach them. ■

## WHAT'S ON 22 - 28 AUGUST

If you suddenly find yourself noticing more and more stylish people on the streets of Auckland, you can thank **New Zealand Fashion Week**. The massive annual event has heaps going on – and it's only \$20 for a day pass over the weekend, so if fashion is your thing, why not!? Check out [nzfashionweek.com](http://nzfashionweek.com) for the lowdown on all that's happening.

Objectspace and Auckland Museum are joining forces this weekend to present the **Objectspace National Craft, Applied Art and Design Symposium**. On Saturday, from 10am-4pm, some amazing speakers from around the world will be at the Museum discussing ideas within this field. Entry is free.

A legendary local, the **Grey Lynn 2030 Car Boot Sale**, is on this Sunday, from 8.30-11.30am. Make your way to 1 Francis Street to buy, swap or barter at this community-led event. The market is for second-hand items only so your chances of finding treasure are high!

Bits and Pieces ensemble presents **Flaps**, a theatre show that, in their words, both explores and celebrates the way in which wild, vagina-laden humans experience the world around them. With a huge list of collaborators this show has many stories to tell and perspectives to share. Showing at the Basement Theatre from Tuesday to Saturday at 6.30pm, student tickets are \$15. It's gonna be visceral. ■

## FASHION ON CAMPUS



## IN DEFENCE OF WATER

My aunt always makes me cry. She has never spoken a mean word to me but she always makes me cry. Because she speaks the truth, and I fear it. Not the truth, but my tears that betray its magnitude. They make me feel weak.

Pushing your tears back with the palms of your hands makes snot spurt out of your nose.

But tears are not weakness. When the truth spoken is on the edge of being unspeakable, tears are the other edge of the tipping point, where words can no longer express what needs to be known. Tears are those unspeakable truths pouring out, responding to the spoken ones.

Saying you've got a cold is never going to be believed.

I read somewhere that tears could be, biologically speaking, a call for help, like we used when we were very young. When we acquire speech, we stop using tears to communicate everything, but they continue to occur for that purpose. For the hope that someone will save us from the overflow.

Leaving to go to the bathroom is fine, but they'll probably start again when you come back.

Catharsis is the process of releasing repressed emotions. The root of catharsis is related to the idea of purging or cleansing. Aristotle used the word to describe the desired effect of tragic plays. One would view the play, cry tears for the staged world, and leave feeling much better. No tears left to cry about the real one. Tears can lie too. But those tears are not quite lies, just displaced truths that are easier to leave behind.

Thinking dry thoughts is just never going to work.

Whether for fiction or fact, the act of crying makes one more solid, better linked between an inner and a spoken self. Better linked to that mysterious, unknowable, unseeable world of the really real.

Just cry. ■

By Casey Carsel

THE EXTENDED VERSION OF THIS TEXT, ENTITLED CRY, WITHOUT WORDS, IS PART OF WINDOW'S CURRENT EXHIBITION AND CAN BE FOUND ONLINE AT [WINDOWGALLERY.CO.NZ](http://WINDOWGALLERY.CO.NZ).

## THE EASIEST ICE-CREAM YOU WILL EVER MAKE

*Two ingredients, no added sugar and takes 5 minutes – I think we just discovered your new flat party trick!*

2 LARGE FROZEN BANANAS  
½ CAN OF COCONUT CREAM  
STICK BLENDER (OTHER BLENDER WILL PROBABLY DO THE TRICK)

You will need to freeze the bananas for at least 2 hours before serving. It's best to peel and chop up the bananas before you freeze them but if you forget or already have some frozen bananas lurking in your freezer, microwave for 10 seconds or soak in hot water for a minute and they should be an easy peel. Even the very sad, brown bananas you discover in your fruit bowl are good to go – the older the sweeter! Put the pieces of frozen chopped banana in a bowl with half the can of coconut milk and blend until smooth. It should resemble soft serve consistency.



This ice cream is super rich, so depending on your sweet tooth it will serve 2-4 people.

If you get bored of the classic coconut-banana combo here are some other flavour ideas! For a slight spin on the classic simply drizzle with some runny honey and chopped nuts. Not a big banana fan? Try adding a handful of frozen berries or preferred fruit with half a teaspoon of cinnamon. For absolute decadence try triple chocolate: add one tablespoon of cocoa and a few squares of roughly chopped dark chocolate, then melted chocolate to top. ■



## AGONY AUNTIES

*Dear Agony Aunties,  
I'm more than halfway through the first year of my degree, but I'm still finding it hard to make really good university friends. I live at home and I've found it hard to bond with my classmates when I only see them for a couple of hours of sitting and listening to the lecturer. What should I do?*

*Friendless Freddy's Drop*

Dear *Friendless Freddy's Drop*,  
Ironically, you are not alone in this issue! We sometimes think it must be nearly impossible for students to make friends, when classes are so big and learning so self-directed. However, there are definitely things that you can do to make friends more easily! It's a really good idea to join a club. There are so many groups at UoA (find information on them by typing "club listings" into the UoA website's search bar) that it hopefully shouldn't be too hard to find something that suits your interest. Clubs give you a better chance to get to know people, as it is a more social environment than lectures and tutorials, and you already have your shared interests to bond over. You could also try a sports team, an activity outside of university, or, if all else fails, you might have to find a nice person in your tutorial to loiter around until they take notice!

Love,

*The Agony Aunties xox* ■

PLEASE SEND YOUR PROBLEM IN 50 WORDS OR LESS TO [LIFESTYLE@CRACCUM.CO.NZ](mailto:lifestyle@craccum.co.nz), ANONYMITY GUARANTEED.



## THE UOA FAIR TRADE CLUB PRESENTS: SAMPLING SQUAD @ CAFFE PRIMA

Sampling Squad Session #3 of 2016 explores the Christchurch-based Fair Trade coffee business, Caffe Prima, which in Italian literally translates to "first coffee". It has achieved a world first with its Eiconic-certified compostable coffee bags made from wood pulp and corn starch, which break down in composting conditions after sixteen weeks.

The business goes full out when it comes to sustainability as they offer discounts for customers bringing reusable containers for beans and reusable cups for coffee. They don't even charge more for the Fair Trade coffee they use and sell!

Jesse, their roaster (and expert of all things ethical-coffee-related) rocked up with his Chemex filter. What looks like a pretty simple design for a coffee filter is actually specifically designed to draw out a strong and smooth taste from the coffee beans. It essentially gives

the coffee an incredible rich taste by enhancing the desirable parts of the coffee bean.

Most coffee is processed by hand, and inspected individually. The coffee itself is amazingly good value for the amount of the work that is put in. The organic and fair trade Verde blend tasted earthy, with an incredibly long finish. It makes up a flexible type of beans that is suited for your hipster coffee connoisseur and your average person who enjoys his cup of Joe.

We would like to thank Caffe Prima for being a sponsor of groups like the UoA FTC to promote better purchasing practices in New Zealand. ■

LIKE THE UOA FAIR TRADE CLUB FACEBOOK PAGE AND FLICK US A MESSAGE TO JOIN OUR MAILING LIST IF YOU'RE INTERESTED IN AN UPCOMING 30% DISCOUNT ON CAFFE PRIMA'S FAIRTRADE BLENDS VERDE AND DIVA, AND THEIR SINGLE ORIGINS PERU AND COLOMBIAN BEANS.



## News from AUSA

### EXECUTIVE CHANGES AND DEMOCRACY SAUSAGES!

THE QUAD, WEDNESDAY 24TH AUGUST, 1PM

We couldn't get quorum for our Special General Meeting intending to change the eligibility requirements for a few of our executive positions, so we'll be bringing those back for the Winter General Meeting. In addition to that, we will be making some changes to the rules regarding our Student Forum, to ensure that club affiliations run more smoothly, and are more secure.

As usual, we will also be appointing the AUSA solicitors and auditors.

And to make it worth the trip, we'll also be throwing a free barbecue for you all to enjoy a nice #democracysausage ■

### UNIVERSAL BASIC INCOME PUBLIC MEETING

CONFERENCE CENTRE LECTURE THEATRE/423-342  
WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 21 AT 12 PM

Ever heard about this thing called a 'Universal Basic Income', but not sure how it works? AUSA is thrilled to welcome Basic Income New Zealand to campus in September to hold a public meeting to answer some of the question about the concept of a UBI! BINZ President Lowell Manning will be explaining the concept, and taking questions from the audience. ■



### WELCOME BACK THE BUDGIE MEAL...

Access to nutritious and good value meals on campus is so important when you're working and studying.

When diving back into the archives, staff from Campus Life learnt about the "Budgie Meal", a concept used at the University of Auckland in the early 1990s. It offered students and staff on a budget the opportunity to purchase a substantial meal from an array of cuisines across campus.

And now, the Budgie Meal is back! Campus Life has initiated, with the help of AUSA, on a programme which currently being rolled where the majority of retailers will offer a "Budgie Meal". This meal will be \$6.50 or under, and designed to settle hunger pains, consisting of protein, vegetables and carbohydrate.

You will start to see a little image of a budgie around the retail outlets on campus. The budgie will indicate the meal that the retailer is offering as their Budgie Meal option.

For more information, please contact: retail@ Auckland.ac.nz ■

### NEW USERS GET \$20 WITH AUSA AND UBER!

If you're a new Uber user, just enter AUSAUNI as a promo code to receive \$20 off your first ride! ■

### SUBMISSIONS FOR KATE MAGAZINE OPEN NOW!

KATE is an annual magazine published by AUSA which contains student-written pieces and artworks which express student perspectives on women's issues. It will be launched during this year's Womensfest in Semester 2. We welcome all sorts of opinions and commentaries. If you think that you have something interesting to say about women's issues, then feel free to write an opinion on a topic of your choosing, design an art piece, or write a poem expressing how you feel about feminism! You do not need to be female-identifying to submit :) Please send submissions through to wro@ausa.org.nz. Submissions will close August 31st. ■

### AUSA BATTLE OF THE BANDS!

SHADOWS BAR (WHERE ELSE?)  
WEDNESDAY AUGUST 24TH, THURSDAY AUGUST 25TH

The AUSA Battle of the Bands is coming up this August and September. Watch as the best student up-and-coming bands face off against one another across two sweaty heats for a place in the grand final and a shot at the giant prize package. There can be only one. Or maybe two if we have a 2nd place prize. Think you've got what it takes? Wash your skinny jeans, warm up your vocal chords and come ready to rock. Sign up using our online form at [www.ausa.org.nz/battle](http://www.ausa.org.nz/battle) by the 22th of August. ■

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

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

Deadline for other agenda items: Noon, Tues-  
day, 16 August 2016.

Association Secretary

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present

# BATTLE *Of the Bands*

**ENTER NOW - [WWW.AUSA.ORG.NZ/BATTLE](http://WWW.AUSA.ORG.NZ/BATTLE)**

**24TH & 25TH AUGUST (HEATS), 15TH SEPTEMBER (FINAL)**



[www.ausa.org.nz/battle](http://www.ausa.org.nz/battle)

ausa

## 125th Anniversary Function

For one night in the Fale Pasifika, the past and present of AUSA got together to celebrate the history of AUSA, and look to its future. We were joined by previous Presidents and other alumni, staff and stakeholders. Old friends reunited and new friendships were made. Thank you to Nikki Kaye, Vice Chancellor Stuart McCutcheon, Peter Goodfellow and Dr. Ella Henry for their wonderful speeches, and to Invercargill Mayor Tim Shadbolt for giving one of the greatest speeches in the history of this country!







## The HUB

### DID YOU KNOW WE CAN HELP YOU WITH

If you get a letter from UoA alleging you've plagiarised or cheated in your assessment or exam, contact us straight away. We can work with you to provide support, explain the process and accompany you at any meetings or hearings you're required to attend. Or: If you do find yourself in the position of having to face a Disciplinary Hearing, contact us straight away. We can help by advising you of your rights, the process and consequences, and we can attend the hearing with you as your support person.

### TENANCY

**Key facts to know:** The landlord is required by law to give you a written tenancy agreement. If they do not, you are still covered by the residential tenancy act 1986 (rta). Even if you do sign a different tenancy agreement, you still have the rights that the rta provides. The landlord can only ask you to pay up to the equivalent of 4 weeks' rent as bond. You are required to pay the rent, keep the place reasonably clean, inform the landlord if something needs to be fixed and be a good neighbour. Work out what you can afford to pay before you become committed.

### EMPLOYMENT

**Key facts to know:** If an individual is legally entitled to work in NZ, their employer is under a legal obligation to provide them with a written employment agreement. Employers may also face a fine if they do not retain a signed copy of the this employment agreement.

# Notice of Constitutional Changes for WGM

The following Constitutional Changes have been put forward for the Winter General Meeting to be held on Wednesday 24 August 2016.....

## 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 deleting 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'

## CHANGES TO STUDENT FORUM

THAT Rule 53(iv)(a) be REPEALED, and the following be INSERTED in its place:

"For the avoidance of doubt, in exercising its power under Rule 53(iii), the Student Forum may, in granting an affiliation, determine that affiliation should expire on a particular day in the future."

AND THAT the following be INSERTED as Rule 53B:

"(i) Subject to sub-rule (ii), any affiliation granted by the Student Forum, prior to the entering into effect of this rule, that has expired, lapsed, or become void by reason only that the Student Forum did not determine that the affiliation should not have so expired, lapsed, or become void on the first day of May in the Financial Year following the Financial Year in which such affiliation was granted, is deemed not to have so determined, expired, lapsed or become void, and shall be deemed to have continued continuously since the time that affiliation was granted.

(ii) Sub-rule (i) does not apply in the case of an affiliated body where, at the time of this rule entering into effect, that body did not fulfill the conditions for affiliation provided for by these Rules.

(iii) This rule enters into effect at midnight of the day after the day on which it is registered by the Registrar of Incorporated Societies in accordance with the requirements of the Act." ■

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# a fraction more friction

isabelle russell teaches you a thing or two about blending creativity with social “friction” in content platforms

Ever since the momentous occasion when Ugg the Neanderthal fumbled with some rocks and grunted at the glowing embers, humans have been obsessed with creating. The wheel was revolutionary. The Industrial Revolution rolled out railroads for more efficient transport. Uber provides convenience without the blow to the bank account. Facebook gives GIFs for when words fail and only a red panda will do. The 2016 Met Gala celebrated “Manus x Machina”, where Kanye looked sullen in denim and Zayn threw clever interpretation to the wind by literally wearing a metallic robot arm.

Semi-Permanent Auckland 2016 continued the conversation. Where do humans fit in a rapidly changing digital environment? Headline speakers from Facebook, Twitter, Airbnb, tech start-ups and graphic design consultancies

converged at the conference to offer their musings on the intersection of design, technology and business.

The common link across all of the symposium talks was on the importance of coming up with new, better, human-centred ideas that facilitate interaction between people in the face of increasing automation. While the event was reasonably industry-specific, for the uninitiated (i.e. me) the takeaways are universally applicable.

Creativity is making, forming and producing something new. With every passing second, new content is being generated: a text, Instagram post, student magazine feature, blog post, post-it note, words spoken in conversation, data visualisation graph, doodle, app, phone calendar entry, essay for a course. In the most general sense, every person on the planet is constantly adding new content to the world, whether it is deliberately crafted or simply a by-product of day-to-day life. Everyone is inherently a creator, so keeping creative is crucial. It doesn't matter if you're specifically a creative or someone more like me, who attended a design conference on a whim; we all have ideas to share, problems to solve and things to produce.

It seems like quite a fun and empowering concept to see yourself as your own creative director. Creativity isn't just about canvases or code of course, but rather an openness to change, innovation, improvement and growth. Time keeps ticking and humanity keeps moving forward. Whatever our profession, a mindset of being a lifelong learner who asks how something can be made better is no doubt critical to professional and personal success.

The majority of us enter university excited about what we can make of our futures – not only with finding what profession will hopefully allow us to make a living and pursue individual betterment, but also excited about the positive impact we could make on society – and ideally leaving the institution with this sense of optimism intact. Every significant or miniscule piece of content we create and put into the world has some kind of direct or indirect positive or negative flow-on effect. Since nothing occurs in a vacuum, this means human-centred development is key. If everyone is a creator and we're always creating, our contributions should tap into a sense of shared social responsibility to help, not hinder, others.

When we graduate, it is up to us to create our



*Creativity isn't just about canvases or code of course, but rather an openness to change, innovation, improvement and growth. Time keeps ticking and humanity keeps moving forward.*

own opportunities. Our grandparents would have had a single career track, perhaps our parents too, but we are told that switching careers several times is now the norm. Not only that, but many of our future jobs haven't even been invented yet. Creating something new is nothing novel, but newness happens at a much quicker pace than ever before. The result is that we could be the ones to create the very jobs we want to perform, whether that means pioneering an entirely new role or moulding an existing position.

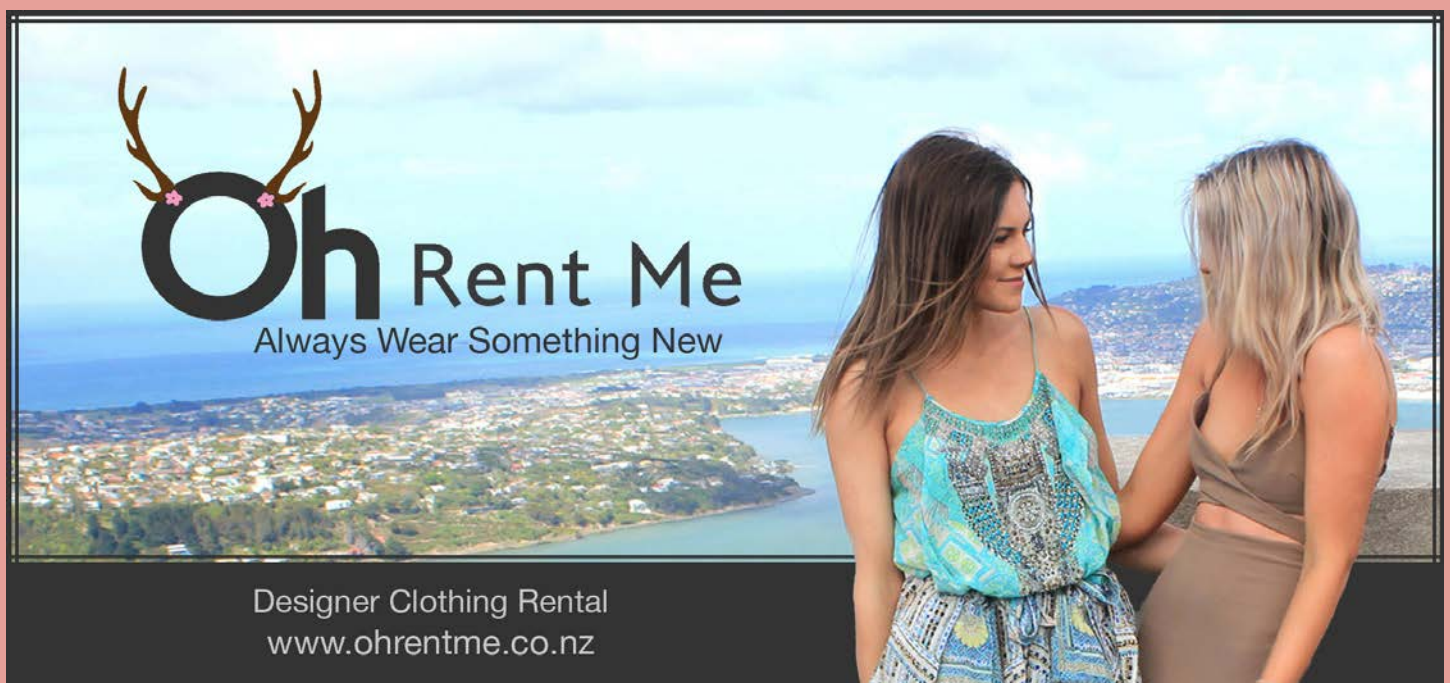
The future of content is about finding innovative new methods, or going into uncharted territory to do what has never been done. Rebecca Carrasco (Facebook), Shana Inge (Twitter) and Duncan Shand (Young & Shand) say brands are realising that they can't use old advertising techniques on new consumers, who are becoming increasingly picky with the myriad of options presented to them. To be relevant and successful, brands have to stand out and, most importantly, be liked. For students soon to be full-time workers, standing out with our own individuality is a way to

sell ourselves to the world, just as brands sell to us. By trying to approach situations in creative ways, we keep improving and creating room for more opportunities.

New technological developments generally offer products and services to make some area of our lives easier and more convenient. The brands that sell us new products and services are primarily in the business of making money, but as increasingly savvy, disinterested consumers with too many options, we expect value. In this context, companies who earn customers are the ones that offer the best value, most entertainment or convenience, however we individually perceive value.

Companies like Uber, Airbnb and My Food Bag are just a few illustrations of business models in touch with people's needs. Airbnb's Experience Design Manager, Steve Selzer, uses the word "friction": people rubbing up against each other, forced to interact. Given the technology available to us, total automation seems logical. Friction could be smoothed out, but deliberately keeping some human involvement and room for human error in an otherwise seamless process actually makes our overall customer experiences more meaningful. People still have to put in a bit of work themselves, collaborate with others, join and be engaged in a community.

My Food Bag, for instance, provides convenient home



The advertisement for 'Oh Rent Me' features a scenic background of a coastal town with a bay and mountains. In the foreground, two women are shown from the waist up, looking at each other. The woman on the left is wearing a vibrant, patterned blue and white top, while the woman on the right is wearing a beige, draped top. The logo for 'Oh Rent Me' is positioned on the left, with the word 'Oh' in a large, bold, black font, the word 'Rent' in a smaller, black font, and the word 'Me' in a large, bold, black font. Above the 'Oh' is a graphic of antlers with small pink flowers. Below the logo, the tagline 'Always Wear Something New' is written in a smaller, black font. At the bottom of the advertisement, the text 'Designer Clothing Rental' and the website 'www.ohrentme.co.nz' are displayed in a white font.

Oh Rent Me  
Always Wear Something New

Designer Clothing Rental  
[www.ohrentme.co.nz](http://www.ohrentme.co.nz)



delivery of portioned ingredients with a tested recipe, but retains some human friction by making the consumer wear the chef hat, empowering them through upskilling their cooking. Similarly, Airbnb trialled two models for guests to receive help and measured the enjoyment of their trip as a whole afterwards. The guests who were directly connected with their host instead of sending their queries to customer support reported a greater level of satisfaction with their trip overall. Friction makes an experience more meaningful by encouraging interaction.

Creativity is not insular; it's an output of ideas which needs to be shared and experienced by others. There's limited joy in creating something purely for yourself. An author writes for others to read and songwriters desire to share their art with an audience. Constantly evolving technology in our on-demand economy pushes the limits of human creativity out wider and wider, but it can also create a social disconnect. Connection to other people and communities through human-centred thinking makes an idea meaningful, not just progress for the sake of progress.

Equally, being around others is a fundamentally creative experience as every interaction is a collaboration and exchange of thoughts, feelings and ideas. Selzer believes that instead of instantly accessible, effortlessly convenient faceless experiences, we still want faces. Airbnb offers tourists a unique way to see a city and a relationship with a local host over a sterile, cookie-cutter hotel.

It sounds counterintuitive, but we need friction to stop ourselves from becoming too isolated and living overly simplified lives. Think of the astronauts in *Wall-E*: over-fed, over-stimulated, passively consuming advertisements and aimlessly orbiting the space station on individual hovercrafts supporting their bulk. Pixar's vision of a dystopian future is one in which technology serves our needs so well that it actually does humanity a serious disservice. The astronauts' lives are perfectly convenient, easy and simplified, but instead of being empowering, it creates slavery to technology. They are constantly connected but completely disconnected from the physical, social, mental and emotional realities of life. The missing element is friction. It's not about stopping the development of new technology, but zooming out to see the big picture – whether our ideas will benefit society. Easier is not necessarily better.

We are all creators, not just products of our environment, and as our creative capabilities rapidly expand through constantly evolving technology, it is up to us to use it to connect us to more meaningful people-centric experiences. ■

*Think of the astronauts in Wall-E: over-fed, over-stimulated, passively consuming advertisements. Pixar's vision of a dystopian future is one in which technology serves our needs so well that it actually does humanity a serious disservice.*

# PHRESH OUT THE RUNWAY

saia halatanu tries to find  
the dedicated followers  
of fashion on campus

It's New Zealand Fashion Week and for many, the mention of fashion immediately triggers notions of overpriced, high-end designer clothing, catwalks and disproportionate slim-to-none women. The industry itself has a well-established history that isn't entirely "Gucci". Fashion and beauty magazines are increasingly coming under fire for unrealistic beauty standards and their steady retouching of models in pictures. Although these aspects of the industry are uniformly undesirable, the fashion industry and all that has come with it are a product of the modern age. Practice of textile fashion and ideas of style and aesthetic remain a timeless and fascinating subject.

So how important is fashion? As far back as humanity can remember, the adorning of our bodies with decorations has been a form of expression. In most cultures, a certain status or social position can be identified by what someone is wearing. In others, dress is a form of communicating a societal rule or social norm. And while styles and forms have changed with time, the underlying ideas appear to have stuck around. Modern Western fashion is still an extension of self and expression of social identification.







Insofar as one might try and be objective about it, here is what one can expect to observe at the University of Auckland, Winter 2016. Initial review suggests two general archetypes – your basic male and basic female – and each might possibly be split into a further two or three categories.



Most subcultures throughout the twentieth century were (and still are) accompanied by a certain style of dress. American greasers of the 1950s styled leather jackets and tight denim pants with white t-shirts; the UK skinhead movement of the 60s featured button-up shirts, braces and Dr Martens boots; the 70s brought about hippies and bell-bottoms and the 80s brought androgyny in the form of New Romantics and Goths. It might be too large a task to attempt to encompass the essence of contemporary fashion, but an observant feature-writer might take a stab at a description on campus.



The basic male often adorns a pant that invariably lacks material enough to cover the ankles. Where the pant ends on the lower leg is usually found an elastic taper or, where the material has come close to contacting the top of the shoe, a fold or roll of a kind. The display of ankles is believed to be a show of dominance. Above the pant: always a hoodie of grey or similar color. Below the pant: GPA.



The basic female comes more varied but still narrowly so. She always manage to wrap a smaller-than-functioning material around her lower half, the two main textiles being denim or a form of spandex. The spandex pants are more commonly known as “yoga pants” – suspiciously lacking any evidence of having been to actual yoga. Covering the torso might be one of the following – basic down jacket (of the Macpac or Kathmandu variety), Glassons cardigan or make-up that has slid from face. On feet: a variation of either a modern Nike or vintage Adidas sneaker. During summer these are substituted for Birkenstocks.





Of course, there is nothing wrong with the functionality of these items and a student can be forgiven if their concern is just to get through their lectures with the minimum standard of appearance, but it is interesting how long it takes people to get out of the habit of wearing a “uniform” after leaving high school.

It's true that, as a daily function, one can choose to ignore fashion completely and still maintain a long and unhindered life, but others might argue that fashion is one of the many spices of life and should be considered for the sake of living. A well-crafted outfit spotted amongst the masses gives the eye respite from the austerity that is basic male/female dress code.



Christian Louboutin said that a good pair of shoes had the ability of lifting you emotionally and transforming attitude and body language by lifting you physically. The late, great New York photographer, Bill Cunningham said that fashion “is the armour to survive the reality of everyday life.” Both men echoing the old sentiment: “look good, feel good”. More profoundly, 94-year-old style icon, Iris Apfel sees great personal style as a guide to knowing yourself, staying curious, and maintaining a sense of humour.



So how important is fashion? It seems that fashion adds to life as much as any other form of art or expression – however important that is. ■

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## Comic, but not all that funny

ARTS EDITORIAL BY SAMANTHA GIANOTTI

Since 2008 when *Iron Man* kicked on-screen comic book adaptations up a gear, Marvel Studios and the DC Extended Universe have released a cumulative sixteen films. Within these sixteen films, seven heroes have had their own franchises established. All of these seven heroes have been men.

As a fan of men over six-foot named Chris, I am not complaining. But overwhelmingly, the same super strong/fast/sturdy dudes are receiving pride of place - and honestly, how many *Spider-Man* movies do we really need? *Spider-Man: Homecoming* is Marvel's first chance to take the webslinger out for a jaunt since 1999 when Sony purchased the rights, but if I have to watch Uncle Ben die again, I'm going to claw my own throat out. The thing is - there are a heck of a lot of rad women in comics. Rad women that have their own complex lore and mythology that would more than support a franchise of their own. Marvel's recent announcement of the *Captain Marvel* casting, the recently completed treatment for *Ant-Man and the Wasp*, and the trailer for *Wonder Woman* are certainly cause for a feminist fist pump, but these three women have a single film each among a slated seventeen between the two studios. In the words famously attributed to Patrick Henry back in 1775: give me more on-screen female superheroes, or give me death.

On-screen iterations thus far have been far from perfect - Harley Quinn in DC's recent version of *Guardians of the Galaxy*-but-way-fucking-worse serves as an all too apt example. *Suicide Squad* has been zinged by critics far and wide, most honing in on the fact that it's an absolute hot mess, with a soundtrack that, while lit, feels like a middle-aged dad in 2007 shuffling through the iPod Video he got for Christmas. Its flaws are many, but its treatment of Harley Quinn, aka Doctor Harleen Quinzel, aka Margot "for the love of god stop objectifying me pls" Robbie, is pretty bloody crap. At one point, the director uses her thigh gap and butt cheeks to frame a shot; she wears a pair of sequinned knickers throughout the film's action scenes, and is generally posited as the manic pixie girl of Woody Allen's wet dreams. The film does little to investigate the toxic relationship between Harley and the Joker, a former patient she treated during her time at Arkham Asylum, with whom she fell in love (and, in the film, tossed herself into a drum of acid for, at his request). Since her introduction in *Batman: The Animated Series*, the relationship between Harley and the Joker has been characterised by belittlement and manipulation. To skirt around this is a great disservice. But, in the words of Winston Churchill: success is not final, failure is not fatal; it is the courage to continue adapting female superheroes' stories that counts.

DC and Marvel should tread with considerable care as they move forward. Marvel Studios has Carol Danvers on the books, the eponymous Captain Marvel, former Air Force and NASA

employee, leader of The Mighty Avengers, half Kree super-human bona fide badass. But they should look to the dearth of detail they have given to the backstories of the super women they have already made fixtures of their films. Black Widow's time in a Soviet training facility, and the emotional and physical trauma she sustained received a frenzied flashback in *Avengers: Age of Ultron*, but for an integral member of the *Avengers* on-screen core six, this shouldn't cut the mustard. Beyond their resident expert in espionage, Marvel also has the power to turn to the newer slate of women they have amongst their ranks: Kamala Khan as Ms Marvel, or America Chavez as Miss America, empowered women of colour with superhero sigils emblazoned across their chests. DC, in turn, should not be readily let off the hook. While rekindling the filmic flames beneath the most famous super woman is a dandy place to start, they should build on the momentum brought about by Diana Prince, introducing recently revamped Batgirl Barbara Gordon into the fold, or the Black Canary Dinah Drake Lance, who inherited and carried forth her mother's enigmatic mantle.

With great amounts of money, influence, and a swathe of fans desperate to see themselves among the heroes they religiously pay to see, comes great responsibility. Studio heads and decision-makers must recognise the weight of this responsibility - as Edmund Burke once said, the only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is for good men to do nothing as another *Black Widow* script passes over their desks. ■





## No Man's Sky

GAME REVIEW BY EUGENIA WOO

Disclaimer: this is a review by someone who has occupied prime real estate on the hype train for *No Man's Sky* since 2013. Surprisingly, this reviewer didn't absolutely hate the game.

*No Man's Sky*, at its core, is a game about isolation and exploration. I'm not going to go so far as to label it *Minecraft* with better graphics, despite the fact that almost everyone else who rode the hype train with me is slinging shit at the devs. The game immerses you right off the bat with an unskippable intro that is beautiful and thought-provoking. It was also incredibly frustrating if you played it on the PC and the game crashed multiple times. Once the game's restarted for the fifth time, you don't care about the wonders of the solar system and all you want to do is angrily shoot stuff with a resource-gathering missile.

*No Man's Sky* is undeniably beautiful. It procedurally generates a new world for each planet that you warp to, generating flora, fauna, the temperature, and the music. Against this unique backdrop, you are alone, with only the guidance of an interstellar AI to gently push you in the direction of self-preservation. You can mine rocks, craft parts for your spaceship, or simply get to know every single raccoon-dinosaur hybrid on the planet. If you fancy, you can chip along with the storyline, which is supremely underrated and incredibly unsettling. What you do is entirely up to you, and that's the kicker with *No Man's Sky*. If you're tired of hacking down trees, then stop. Take a leaf out of my book and make the most out of your freedom – I'm looking forward to another 20 hours sequestered away in my room, giggling as I catalogue yet another fruit-shaped alien and call it "Dat Boi 3". ■



## No Man's Sky: Music for an Infinite Universe

65daysofstatic

ALBUM REVIEW BY JEAN BELL

65daysofstatic is an instrumental post rock, or for the more genre-meticulous, math rock band. This latest release marks the band's move into new territory – video game soundtrack scoring. The game *No Man's Sky* is massively complex, being algorithmically composed as the game continues, allowing for an incredible 18 quintillion potential planets for the player to discover.

It has clearly been made as a soundtrack as the work feels incomplete at times when listened to on its own. The epic tone of the work is vaguely teasing, but without the game in the foreground there is no outlet or direction for the energy synthesised. The leading track "Monolith" builds upon ominous and abrasive guitar resonances punctuated by jagged percussion before exploding with disjointed synth that quietly retreats, leaving you feeling like you've just won a boss battle but passed out during the peak of the action. As with any soundtrack, a range of sound is employed, offering a dynamic and engaging listening experience. Shril yet echoing ambient notes characterise "Hypersleep," offering a moment of respite after the intense finale of "Red Parallax".

To produce a soundtrack that could equal the seemingly limitlessness of the game might appear to be an impossible task, but 65daysofstatic have created a soundtrack that will provide an excellent cinematic-like accompaniment. While it is certainly impressive *No Man's Sky: Music for an Infinite Universe* illustrates how a game soundtrack can be a bit hit or miss for standalone listening. If you were actually playing the game and shit was about to get real then the intensity of the work would be perfect, but on its own it feels excessive. Having said that, game soundtracks supposedly make excellent study music as they encourage you to concentrate, and I admittedly did feel pretty on point writing an essay with this in the background. ■



## Harry Potter and The Cursed Child

BOOK REVIEW BY NICOLE BLACK

*Harry Potter and the Cursed Child* is one of those weird things where no one really understands what it is or why it exists but we go along with it anyway. Unfortunately, just about every aspect of this play is truly cringeworthy.

The plot reads like fanfiction. And not good, well thought out fanfiction, but trashy fiction and that's not what I would expect from professional playwrights. How this is performed for money on the West End every night is honestly beyond me. It's like the writers wanted to answer every single 'what if?' question they could possibly think of without considering how that would affect the existing characters and story. Manipulating characters and relationships to the point where they're barely recognisable.

Speaking of the characters. The portrayal of the original characters we have all loved for years absolutely ruined the whole experience of this play for me. Taking their worst traits and exploding them to the point that it was all I could see. It was just so disappointing to see how a terrible plot forced these characters into these two-dimensional niches. I will say though that the characterisation of the newer characters was quite refreshing, particularly Scorpius Malfoy, one of the few redeeming qualities of the play.

And the writing, oh god the writing. Every few pages there would be a line so poorly written all I could do was cringe and groan about how awful this book made me feel. They were that bad. In the infamous words of Dumbledore, "It is our choices, Harry, that show what we truly are, far more than our abilities" - and the choice to further the *Harry Potter* universe may not have been the best one. ■

# Ten Books Every Good Human Should Have on Their Shelf

BY NIKKI ADDISON



## To Kill a Mockingbird Harper Lee

Call me cliché, but there's a reason this novel has sold over 30 million copies worldwide: it's really, really good. Good story, good characters, good message. Told from the perspective of six year old Scout Finch, this book will have you feeling all nostalgic for your own childhood, while also get you thinking about some very real-life issues. The Museum, Library and Archives Council (MLA) in England put it at the top of their "books every adult must read before they die" list. Now, it's a book every adult must *own* before they die. ■



## 11.22.63 Stephen King

I would argue that King's best works are those that stray from the horror genre he is so often categorised in: *The Body*, *Under the Dome*, *Joyland* and *Rita Hayworth and Shawshank Redemption* to name a few. *11.22.63* also sits outside of the horror genre, and it is truly great. The story follows high school teacher Jake Epping as he travels back to 1958 and works to prevent the assassination of President John F. Kennedy. It is gripping, funny and also incredibly tense. Like many of King's novels, it's a hefty volume – but don't let that put you off – it's very quick reading. Whether you're a King fan or not, this book deserves a read. ■



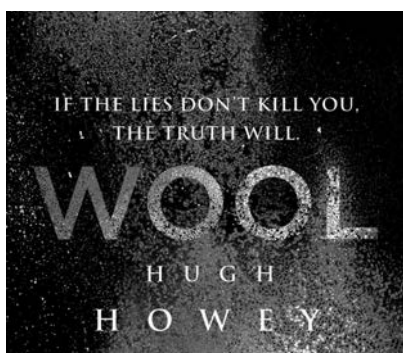
## Half-Blood Blues Esi Edugyan

In late 1930s Berlin, African American jazz musicians Sid and Chip and their African-German friend Hiero are banned from playing live music by the Nazis. When war is declared they flee to Paris where Hiero, a Nazi target because of his mixed race, is arrested and presumed dead. The story, narrated by Sid in a witty African American vernacular, moves back and forth between the war years and 1992, where Sid and Chip reunite and uncover some secrets and betrayals to do with their not-so-dead friend Hiero. A unique and captivating novel that looks at things in a fresh perspective. ■



## Tortilla Flat John Steinbeck

What's your favourite book? Ugh. That's one of those annoying questions where you then have to mentally sift through everything you ever read and attempt to select one extremely notable novel. I can't answer that question, but I can rate *Tortilla Flat* as a definite top five. I may be a bit Steinbeck-biased (only because everything he writes is great), but one can't help but like his very normal writing style and the realist aspect of his stories. *Tortilla Flat* is one of Steinbeck's more comic novels, focusing on a group of *paisanos* (countrymen) drinking wine and having a good time in the aftermath of World War I. The detail Steinbeck puts into his characters and setting are what make *Tortilla Flat* such an enjoyable read, a characteristic which likewise defines his many famous novels to come. ■



## Wool

Hugh Howey

The first in Howey's 'Silo' series, *Wool* is seriously a great read. As someone who isn't usually into science fiction novels, I can fully say that this won me over. You know a book is good when you actually look forward to going home and reading it. Set in a post-apocalyptic world where humanity survives underground in an enormous silo, the story follows a handful of characters who take a stand against the silo's dictatorship and begin to uncover its (very grim) secrets. This is one fast-paced, can't-put-it-down read which you will definitely not regret buying. ■



## A Clockwork Orange

Anthony Burgess

How does one describe *A Clockwork Orange* to one who hasn't read it? Dark? Fascinating? Genius? All of the above, I suppose. Set in dystopian England, the story follows complex teen Alex as he embarks on a stream of rather violent activities. After being sent to prison he becomes subject to an immoral form of aversion therapy in an effort to reform him. I would go so far as to call this book a masterpiece. It raises a lot of big questions about society and humanity, which makes for some darn good thinkin'. Plus, Alex narrates the story in Burgess' invented argot, 'Nadsat', which only makes things more intriguing. Moloko plus errday. ■



## The Beautiful and the Damned

F. Scott Fitzgerald

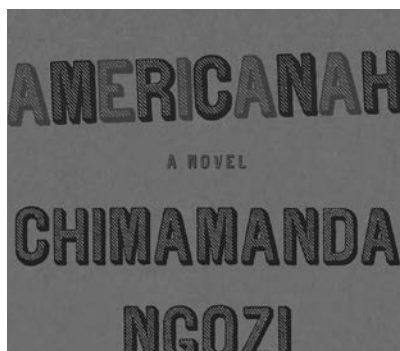
If you call yourself a reader, there has to be at least one Fitzgerald on your shelf. Maybe you're more of a *Great Gatsby* or *Tender is the Night* fan – that's cool. I like *The Beautiful and the Damned* for its portrayal of life both before and after World War I. Fitzgerald captures the Jazz Age and sense of post-war disillusionment in New York with this complicated love story, creating a work that we can now use as a kind of historical window into the lifestyle and attitudes of the time. Not the easiest read, but a good one nonetheless. ■



## Montana 1948

Larry Watson

Like Steinbeck, Watson has a knack for detail and places great significance on setting. *Montana 1948*, technically a novella rather than a novel, is your classic coming of age tale. Our narrator David Hayden looks back at his childhood in the small town of Bentrock, Montana and the events which irrevocably changed his life. David's father Wesley is the town sheriff and his uncle Frank the doctor, so when Frank does some not-very-nice things to the local American Indian women, Wesley's response throws into question young David's ideas of justice. There's some serious tension in this book. Bonus: you can finish it in about two hours. ■



## Americanah

Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie

Adichie's third novel, *Americanah* centres around two young Nigerians, Ifemelu and Obinze. As teenagers in Lagos the two fall in love, only to be separated when Ifemelu emigrates to America after winning a university scholarship. With Nigeria under military dictatorship, Ifemelu views America as a sort of promised land – only to find herself living in a racist culture very different to her home. As an adult, Ifemelu returns to Nigeria and her relationship with Obinze, now a married father, is thrown into question. Adichie's novel is unique and fresh, compelling and probably unlike anything else you've read. Give it a go. ■



## The Catcher in the Rye

J. D. Salinger

Yeah, another stereotypical classic. Some people hate this book, some people love it. Regardless of what end of the stick you're on, I think it can be agreed that this is an important book, if not an enjoyable one. Yes, Holden's narration is unreliable and at times annoying. That's the point. He's a kid going through all that angst and confusion and lostness that comes with being a teen. We're just along for the ride. So maybe it's just me, but I find wee Holden's disillusionment pulls at the old heart-strings just a little. ■



# The 5 Essential Stanley Kubrick Films

For those who look outside the top ten films on the Event Cinemas website, you may have noticed that Event, who regularly show film classics, have a selection directed by the great Stanley Kubrick ready to once again hit the big screen.

Kubrick died in 1999, meaning there may never be a consensus as to what some of his most complex works actually meant, but he would insist that leaving his films open to interpretation is the beauty of cinema; a beauty that he expressed across multiple genre.

## 2001: A SPACE ODYSSEY

This 1968 sci-fi epic divided critics in its time and still divides audiences today. The film's plot is in three main parts: a tribe of apes competing for a water hole, a manned mission to a base on the moon, and most notably astronauts Dave Bowman and Frank Poole fixing their untrustworthy AI, HAL 9000, on a mission to Jupiter. These three parts are unified by the characters' discovery of and interaction with a strange black monolith, the meaning of which Kubrick offers no clear explanation. *2001* loses some audiences due to its incredibly pacing, but it's a mysterious and ambitious film that

questioned where our intelligence may take us in the future.

## DR STRANGELOVE OR: HOW I LEARNED TO STOP WORRYING AND LOVE THE BOMB

The second essential Kubrick film is, unfortunately, the only one on the list that isn't showing at Event. A silly title like that is fitting for a Cold War satire that would later define black comedy for decades to come. Captain Lionel Mandrake (Peter Sellers) is locked in an air force base by his General named Jack D. Ripper who believes Russia are using fluoridation in the US to "pollute our precious bodily fluids", while US President Merkin Muffley (Sellers again) and former Nazi and scientific expert Dr. Strangelove (also Sellers) are in the tense 'War Room' preventing General Ripper's order for a nuclear strike on the Soviet Union. This setup is a gigantic 'fuck you' to the US's Red Scare and embraces the comedic side of a potentially catastrophic nuclear war.

## FULL METAL JACKET

Kubrick certainly had several attempts at making more serious war films, the most well-known of which is *Full Metal Jacket*. It follows a team of US Marines in two parts; their training for the Vietnam War and their eventual deployment and ground combat in Vietnam. It's the first part of the film that earns most of its cultural significance, although the hilariously misplaced use of "Bird is the Word" during conflict will never be forgotten. This is due to R. Lee Ermey's legendary performance as the drill sergeant, for which Ermey had no trouble improvising virtually all of his lines since he was a real, retired drill sergeant for the US Marines. His beautifully profane insults,

with highlights like "5 foot 9? I didn't know they stack shit that high", have been immortalised in pop culture (and in *Toy Story*: now you know who voices the toy soldier).

## THE SHINING

From sci-fi or black comedy to war drama and horror, we can't talk Kubrick without *The Shining*. Jack Nicholson plays Jack Torrance, a writer and recovering alcoholic who takes a caretaking job at the Overlook Hotel with his wife and son. The son, Danny, has psychic abilities and senses a dangerous ghostly presence in the hotel, which the three of them become trapped in as a snow storm hits. You may know the famous "Here's Johnny!" line, but *The Shining* has many creepy and complex undertones to it. It's now well known, after a gamer attempted to map out the Overlook Hotel to make a custom Duke Nukem level, that the hotel is deliberately impossible to navigate, which the average viewer of the film wouldn't even notice. Kubrick divided critics again here, before they later realised his mastery of psychological horror.

## A CLOCKWORK ORANGE

The last of Kubrick's best is his most controversial, *A Clockwork Orange*. Banned in the UK for 27 years and rated X in the US for excessive sexual violence, *A Clockwork Orange* follows Alex DeLarge and his team of 'droogs' as they commit acts of "ultra-violence" in a dystopian future Britain. The film closely examines the morality of the government's psychological conditioning on DeLarge to control his criminality. It's not for the faint of heart, but it's a deeply political and visceral film worthy of discussion, and it's Kubrick's best example of how far he was willing to go to make powerful art.

■ JACK CALDWELL

## The Soothing Seduction of Suffering

Some of the greatest stories are the most depressing. Winston never triumphs over Big Brother. Sophie had to make a choice. Augustus Waters didn't beat his second round of cancer. These art forms give us a form of escapism from everyday life, so it begs the question: why do we choose to escape into a world that is utterly bleak and upsetting?

One view is that these stories provide a much needed cathartic response. Our society celebrates the rational actor and patronises the emotional. Those who release their emotions are seen as weak or incapable of tasks. This creates a culture of repression, where our sadness is hidden away. However, this sadness does not escape and it lingers under the surface unresolved, penetrating the other emotions experienced. Therefore we need a story so woeful in order to release all these built-up feelings, so we can feel rejuvenated. *Inside Out* is a (beautiful) film which perfectly encapsulates this narrative – Joy cannot function properly by ignoring Sadness, but by working with her. *A Little Life*, by Hanya Yanagihara explores this as well. Jude, our mysterious protagonist, keeps his traumatic history a secret which only causes him continual harm. Both stories effectively show the effect of repressed emotion, providing an emotional solace for a reader or viewer.

It is also possible that we need these tragic stories to feel better about our own lives. If we look to stories to escapism the mundanity of everyday life, then one way is to go to a place which reminds you that mundane isn't actually that bad. *12 Years A Slave* shows that no matter

how much you feel like you're a slave to the man, it's nowhere as bad as being a *literal slave*. It helps us contextualise our problems in the greater scheme of the world and provides a refreshing perspective on the issues we face. These stories act as a pseudo-public service announcement or are necessary to remind ourselves about the problems others face on a regular basis. *Requiem For A Dream* is probably the greatest advertisement against drug use in history. *Once Were Warriors* demonstrates the alienation of Maori from their cultural heritage in modern-day New Zealand and how this breeds abuse. They are created as a call to action, to incur change, or simply provide a warning as to where society is heading. The viewers then use their depression as inspiration to better the situation of others.

It's worth noting that enjoyment of upsetting content may be something relished by those who do not experience such moments in their own lives. Some don't have the luxury of experiencing these struggles through another medium, through a detached framework, but instead live it day by day. This raises issues of trauma porn, where people latch onto the sadness of others for their own enjoyment, forgetting that these are genuine emotions that others experience.

But if we only have positive, happy-go-lucky stories, then our stories are not truly reflective of the human condition. Everyone experiences sadness, some more profoundly than others, and these stories offer ways to connect with that part of the human experience. If these stories provide enjoyment, support, inspiration or catharsis, then it shouldn't matter that their content is depressing. Perhaps, like in *Inside Out*, we need to experience the depressing stories so that we can enjoy those upbeat and exciting stories at a deeper level. ■ MATTHEW DENTON

MOVIES TO TALK ABOUT AT PARTIES

# The Hunger

(dir. Tony Scott, 1983)

It's my birthday (week) so settle in while I tell you about my favourite movie, possibly even at my own birthday party. By sad coincidence, my birthday is also the anniversary of the director's death.

By no coincidence, I have watched this movie at least once a year since I was 15. It's a vampire flick, with David Bowie, Susan Sarandon, and Catherine Deneuve. It involves an immortal bisexual lady who only wears designer clothes. This movie will change your life. I have nothing bad to say about it. The end. Actually, I'm never able to stop talking about *The Hunger*, so here is what you can expect to hear from me if you are seated at a table near me when I'm on my second hibiscus debutante.

**1. Catherine Deneuve, your new French actress icon:** Forget about that horrible

bigot Bridgette Bardot, align your adoration towards a woman publicly politically aligned with world class second waver Simone de Beauvoir. If you need further convincing: Deneuve was a longtime friend of designer Yves Saint Laurent, to the extent she was the first customer through the doors of his boutique, Rive Gauche, and Deneuve's character Miriam wears exclusively Saint Laurent in *The Hunger*. Even if you believe solely in aesthetics above ethics I encourage you to just look at her.

**2. Lesbian vampires:** Technically bisexual vampires, which is even better in my opinion due to a) playing with an overused vampire trope b) personal *bias*. Putting aside the erotic appeal, queer representation is important especially if those characters are literally the coolest immortals to stalk the planet. Sure, there is an anti-queer angle to be made where you equate the transmission of vampirism as analogous to disease (and therefore Sapphic desire as disease) but consider this: vampires are treated as stupidly desirable across modern pop-culture and especially by 15-year-old girls who watched this movie in 2008 when it was only

available on the internet in two parts on Megavideo.

**3. Whitley Strieber:** Please if you only read one section, make it this one. In 1981, *The Hunger* was published as a novel. It was rather an unconventional vampire novel, pointing out how being a 6000-year-old serial killer must have a very particular *modus operandi*, but also suggesting the vampire as a predatory co-evolution of humanity. On Boxing Day, 1985, Whitley reported he was abducted by aliens. His Wikipedia page provides an incredible account of his personal experiences with aliens, but basically it leads to him pioneering ecocritical science fiction - as in he wrote the source material for *The Day After Tomorrow*.

Literally everything surrounding this movie is incredible and I could write an entire series covering a different aspect every week, but instead I'm going to settle for watching it again followed by at least an hour of lying on the floor wondering how I got so lucky that everything in the universe aligned so such a movie exists in my timeline. ■ ASTRID CROSLAND



# Debating the Healthiness of High Schools

At the start of my final year of high school, I was called into my dean's office. I was seventeen years old. The reason for the meeting was my completion of my first year of International Baccalaureate, something of a miracle to both my parents and myself.

For those of you who aren't familiar with the IB Diploma, it's an alternative to NCEA – with 6 compulsory subjects, on top of a class called the Theory of Knowledge (read: first-year Philosophy), and a requirement to complete 150 hours of community service, sport, and creative activities.

For those of you who *are* familiar with IB, you'll know the nickname "survivor" is one well earned. To do well, one has to typically sacrifice any vestiges of a social life, as well as most of your sleep. To put that in perspective, IB students who go on to enroll in first-year Med have said they actually find it *easier* than undertaking the Diploma.

So – I'm seventeen, bespectacled and nervous with it, edging into the office of my much-feared Dean to talk about my predicted IB results. She peers at me over a sheaf of stacked papers, the angle unfortunately giving her the appearance of a vaguely stressed mole. "Er... Hello." She grabs an open register book. "... Is it Eloise?"

"Yes, Miss."

"Sit." She instructs me, wetting her thumb to flip through a file.

I sit. There's an awkward silence as she scans the information on the page before her. "Your predictive grades aren't too bad, are they?"

I'm unsure how to respond to this. "... No, Miss?"

"Well no, they're not." She stretches. "We just have to run through a few things before you prepare for your finals."

"Yes, Miss?"

"Do you have a boyfriend?"

I'm taken aback by the question. "... I'm sorry?"

"Simple question. Do you have a boyfriend?"

"No, Miss, not currently."

"Not currently? Are you planning to get one?"

"I don't – I don't think so?"

"Good." She nods approvingly, and makes a mark next to my name.

I flush, immediately self-conscious. She looks up. "Oh, hush, it's just a question. Right. You're not to get a boyfriend."

"I... Miss?"

"These exams are all that should matter to you." She says, as if she can't believe she has to explain this. Her pen clicks furiously. "You understand?"

"...They do matter to me Miss, of course, they do –"

"You understand." She concludes, and moves on. "A couple of years ago we had a girl who had a boyfriend taking these exams, and they broke up... Bloody fiasco. You understand, you can't leave the exam early. You sit there and you finish it. No matter what."

"Yes Miss." I mumble, still bright red. Satisfied, she dismisses me with a cheery – "Remember your priorities!"

Later, I'd find out that every IB student in the school had been asked the same question. Our Dean, for better or worse, had a complete register of the relationship status of every girl in my year group – and how that related to their predicted grade.

This wasn't even a one-off occurrence. I've had the great fortune to go to two of the best private girls' schools in Auckland and Wellington – an opportunity for which I'm immensely grateful. I had a phenomenal education, and don't mean to sound at all hard-done-by for the fact that I was lucky enough to go to them in the first place.

However, that doesn't mean that either of these schools couldn't be downright horrifying. I remember an RE lesson in Year 9 where all the girls were made to write down their "deepest, darkest anxieties" on a piece of paper. The next day, we returned to school to find our pieces of paper stuck up around the classroom.

We were made to read all of them.

The purpose, apparently, was "to bring about more sensitivity and kindness with each other." With us being Year 9s, however, I think this

painful exposition did a lot more harm than good. After all, we knew each other's handwriting. Memories such as this make me reflect on how appallingly unhealthy my high school culture really could be.

That's not to say either of the two schools I went to were inherently bad. For some of my classmates, their high school years were the absolute best of their lives. Both were encouraging environments that tried to push girls to reach their academic and social potential – damn, they were *prestigious* environments that my parents worked immensely hard to get me into.

But to go to the University of Auckland after five years of academic pressure, strict adherence to many rules, compulsory afterschool activities, nascent homophobia (My Physics teacher telling me openly in Year 11 that "homosexuality is wrong"), and quietly tolerated bullying – well, it felt like a massive relief.

It's really not OK to tell girls to "dump your boyfriends" so they can focus on their academics. And it's really not OK to make a class demonstration out of a bunch of Year Nine's anxieties. I really hope these aren't practices that are still part of either of these high school's policies. Sure, the teachers I had that maintained this culture left a long time ago. Yet I have a feeling the environments are still exactly the same.

And if that's so, then we really have to ask – is that a setting that should be just tolerated as "part of growing up" for students? ■ ELOISE SIMS





# It's All a Lie: a nihilist's sermon

WITH ADITYA VASUDEVAN

Michael Phelps won some more shit at the Olympics – a 23<sup>rd</sup> gold medal, that's what it was. And for what? Short legs, enormous paddle-like feet, and a torso 3-D printed from a scan of Michelangelo's David.

He won the lottery – born with a perfect genetic cocktail. He may have worked incredibly hard, but he didn't even make the part of him that has the tendency to work hard. We shout. We scream. We applaud. A camel licks its lips, a fruit fly breathes its last breath, and I sit at a laptop writing nonsense.

What sets an athlete apart? Roger Federer is often praised for his effortless grace on the court, Lionel Messi for his wizard-like touch. Usain Bolt may have spent a lot of time training, I don't deny that, but what makes him faster than the rest? It's not his training. It's a perfect confluence of factors – genetic, social and circumstantial. Very often, the x-factor that takes you from good to great is pure luck. It's something that gives you just the right build, an unusually large heart, or a scary concentration of midi-chlorians – hardly the stuff of motivational self-help material.

This morning I saw a bird fly into a glass door. The poor thing didn't stand a chance – all it saw was reflected blue sky, the prospect of freedom, a barrel-roll, a bank left, a dive bomb. The guy next to me said, "sometimes they get up, sometimes they don't." The bird had no more control over its fate than Phelps.\*

Forget getting from good to great, getting from A to B is no less a matter of predetermination. What kind of squares go to B these days anyway?

It is at this point we must pivot from honest inquiry into dead-eyed polemic. You've already learnt from *Fight Club*: "you are not your job, you're not how much money you have in the bank. You are not the car you drive. You're not the contents of your wallet. You are not your fucking khakis." Chuck Palahnuik for some reason also thinks, "it's only after we've lost everything that we're free to do anything". That's where he's wrong. We are free only to do what we were always meant to do.

What was the body of Michael Phelps becomes a hollow vessel for undeserved praise, and so, in turn, do you. You can't enjoy your own success because it's just the weather on the day, what you had for breakfast, your family's weird decision to strap a table tennis racquet to your wrist in the crib (Andre Agassi's parents actually did this, and, by all accounts, they succeeded in creating a hell of a tennis player). Worse still is the failures. What mortal can move heaven and earth to their will? The weight of cosmic inertia is unfathomable and wraps itself around you like a majestic straightjacket. When you don't even know it's pulling, how do you change it? I certainly don't have that power.

At least the future's uncertain. ■

*\*Didn't think I'd be able to tie that bizarre story back to the point, did you...*

# Out

WITH RAYHAN LANGDANA

## 1. The Night Before

The first drink is always the best part of the night. Everyone is clustered around the bar, their arms flailing over the sticky counter as they try to be the first to get the bartender's attention. EFPTOS cards slip from sweaty fingers and their owners plummet downwards as though a trapdoor has opened up beneath them, chewed fingernails desperately scrabbling for the plastic edge. The idealists wear white shirts. I, on the other hand, know that gregarious hugs and splashed drinks are inextricably linked and as such, am wearing black. The windows are steamy. The night is cold. Eyes meet and instantly flit away. It's too early.

The first time "Started from the Bottom" plays, eyes roll and the necessary wry comments ("*Drake didn't really start from the bottom*", "*Funny how all these private school kids are singing this song*") are made. By the fourth play, everyone's rapping along. By the sixth, most people have stopped auto-bleeping the N word.

A glass slips. Smashes everywhere. Ice cubes and shards of glass are indistinguishable, as the first responders quickly realise. One guy's eating an orange from the bowl full of free fruit by the bar. He's got blood on his hand. A tired waiter emerges from the kitchen with two bowls full of sweaty onion rings. I eat one. I eat another. The first I just dip in the aioli. The second is dipped in both aioli and tomato sauce. Who knows what will happen to the third.

Ice cream is ordered and smeared on a man's chest. His shirt is unbuttoned to his abdomen. I am pulled into a hug. I am not prepared. My glasses become smeared. I try to clean them with a tissue. My fingers are still greasy from the onion rings and the oil soaks through the tissue onto the lens. One of those nights.

The bouncer looks bored. We try to ignore him because he reminds us that we're still children. The bartender looks unimpressed when someone orders a round of house spirits. It's hard to be impressive when you're ordering house spirits. Someone's girlfriend is here. He leaves, but not after weighing up whether or not to say animated farewells to everyone (he doesn't). Some strangers arrive. Cut off the hydra's head and two grow to replace it.

Ubers are called. Fare splits are promised but never eventuate. No one who says "Skype soon?" ever Skypes soon. There's an awkward realisation that someone's going to be Ubering alone. Everyone ignores this fact and pretends not to realise that it isn't going to be them.

There's a cover charge at the bar. We loiter on the street and decide it's not to be. We dissipate like smoke.



## 2. The Morning After

You have not truly known fear until you stare death in the eye. You have not truly stared death in the eye until you wake up with your headphones tangled around your face and neck, and hear your entire Red Hot Chili Peppers discography playing softly.

I have truly known fear.

My right foot is sticky and my left shoe is missing. My phone screen is smeared with aioli. I chisel at this delicious, tangy crust until I feel smooth glass once again. I have somewhere to be at 10am. It is 9:23am. I must make a series of snap decisions: breakfast or coffee? Shower or brush teeth? Change or stay the same? Change is good. Change it is.

The shower is either too hot or too cold. My face contains 4 litres of snot. My Uber arrives before my toast is done. I donate the toast to my flatmates and run out to greet Saleem.

Saleem is pissed off that I'm late, but doesn't say anything because he worries I may give him a low rating. I apologise profusely and attempt to engage Saleem in conversation. Saleem uses monosyllabic replies! It's super effective!

I roll down the window and stare at the traffic, hoping the faint breeze wakes me up. My phone buzzes – I am late. Traffic is either an unforgivable inconvenience or forced meditation. Today, I choose forced meditation. I turn my phone to silent and close my eyes. Saleem is honked at. I awaken. So begins the day. ■



## SEX, DRUGS & ELECTORAL ROLLS

# On The Vast Right-Wing Conspiracy To Take Back Auckland

WITH CURWEN ARES ROLINSON

The late, great Terry Pratchett had a number of choice things to say about conspiracy theories. One of the best was a slightly-skeptical sounding paragraph which basically boils down to asking the key question: if governments are generally questionably competent pretty much everywhere else, then how do they manage to keep the really big stuff – like the existence of aliens – such a successfully guarded secret?

This is a fairly legitimate question, and one which we can equally apply to just about all areas of public life when some great, vast and leviathanic Conspiratorial Agenda (tm) is implied to both exist and be running a fairly large swathe of our political affairs. In the New Zealand experience, at least – and particularly as applies the quagmitic morass of Local Body Politics – there are often two answers.

First is, that when it comes to keeping grand and sweeping secrets, "they" don't. Most of the Cthulhean hidden agendas and clandestine initiatives of our recent past have, eventually and one way or another, come out. We know, for instance, that Roger Douglas conspired with business elites to crash the value of the New Zealand Dollar in order to make his hard-right economic reforms all but inevitable. One of the nation's best-read political bloggers was caught out red-handed working with members of a failed Mayoralty campaign to attempt to force the occupant of the largest executive office in the country without its own army to prematurely resign. The Office of the Prime Minister refuses to supply compelling information to prove (or otherwise) that John Key isn't a shape-shifting reptilian overlord.

The general response to any of the above of semi-sullen or actively-aggressive indifference from the body politik brings us on to the second way by which these sorts of overwhelming conspiracies are kept in the main 'submerged' from view within the public consciousness. This means that when information which reveals what's actually going on in our country seemingly inevitably comes to light ... the impact of such disclosures is so sufficiently diffused that it hardly seems to make any serious sort of difference.

Consider: did the Fourth Labour Government find itself rolled in 1987 for daring to implement a secret and scurrilous economic agenda for the previous three years? How about voters failing to punish National in 1993 for harboring a clandestine cabal responsible for Ruthanasia in direct violation of their electoral promises in 1990. In both cases, nothing happened. If there was a perceived gun held to the head of the governments of the day, when the

polling-trigger was pulled, all that happened was a small flag emerged bearing the legend "BANG!".

A similar thing has happened with each conspiracy that the present party of Nats has been caught out in. Dirty Politics, trading laws for flashy foreign elites, and conspiring to bring down what had otherwise been a reasonably popular Mayor – in all of these instances, the only people harmed were the intended targets, not the blue-hued perpetrators.

But at least in local body politics, something may finally be changing.

Consider the instructive example of Auckland Future. A rebranding exercise for the Nat-ACT satellite group "Citizens and Ratepayers" (or, as it's now known, the slightly more cuddly-sounding "Communities & Residents") turned into a somewhat frenetic splinter-group effort as the result of competing-faction powerstruggles inside its parent National Party.

The net effect of this has been arguable utter electoral chaos on the (center)right here in Auckland going into the 2016 Local Body Elections. First you had the complete lack of co-ordination which saw both National-aligned tickets seeking to stand competing candidates in the same tight battleground electorates. Then Auckland Future got a bit sloppy and announced it was standing C&R stalwart Christine Fletcher as one of its own candidates. Needless to say, this came as unwelcome news to Fletcher, who moved to clarify her longstanding C&R allegiance. It is presumably the mark of a highly questionable campaign ticket when 'victory' apparently consists of contesting candidates rather than constituencies.

Matters continued to complicate as the hunt was announced for a right-wing Mayoral candidate. Mark Thomas, an ill-starred National candidate in the 1996 General Election, immediately put his hand up. He got no support from his erstwhile comrades, and appears to be running a principled, highly competent independent bid for Mayor. John Palino, the National-backed candidate from 2013 is also attempting a comeback, a Ghost of Meddling Past. Victoria Crone, meanwhile, a businesswoman with an evident dearth of political experience, found herself in confederation with National Party power-broker Michelle Boag (herself one of the driving forces behind Auckland Future and, in an earlier life, John Key) to try and take the mantle of "official" Right Wing candidate.

What this effectively created was arguably even worse for the Right than the three-headed counter-race it initially appeared. Crone threw political tantrums at anyone else daring to contest her anointed territory, and started threatening to refuse to turn up to debates which also gave Thomas a panel speaking slot. In other words, the Right Wing was beginning to actively pour far more

energy into savaging its own ideological cohorts than it was into seriously contesting the Phil Goff juggernaut and their comparatively straight line to the Mayoral Chains.

The Shadowy Tendrils of National, in other words, are all tangled up – rather than fixed about our collective throats.

This worrying (or, dependent upon your perspective, highly enjoyable and entertaining) trend has continued with the finalization of nominations. Now, not only are Auckland Future candidates going head to head with C&R candidates in a number of wards, but thanks to an arguably imbecilic Auckland Future errant local board contender filling out the wrong nomination form, Auckland Future is now running against ITSELF for a single Council position in the Maungakiekie-Tamaki ward. Ex-United Future, then-National-C&R, now-National-Auckland-Future candidate Denise Krum narrowly took the seat with a tight margin of 900 in 2013. With this seat now a three way contest – and two of those contending for it from Krum's own ticket – it would seem fair and safe to say that the Natellites' already-precious position in local body politics may very well become almost entirely untenable.

This is a pleasing irony, given Auckland Future was set up in the first place for the explicit purpose of aiding and availing National in taking back the control of Auckland's local democracy which it haltingly lost after instituting the changed apparatus of the SuperCity (which, itself, was created and empowered for much the same reason in 2010).

All of this together leads me to a potentially uncomfortable realization. We can't rely upon the righteous wrath of voters to recoil in anger against an exposed conspiratorial agenda at the polls. This has not historically worked. Instead, the best antidote to conspiracy – the thing which appears to keep the clandestine, smoke-filled back-rooms of this country in at least somewhat of a check – is, perhaps surprisingly, other clandestine operations stepping on each other's toes. Indeed, one could argue that this is exactly how electoral party politics appears to work to begin with.

I've previously heard it said that much of what happens in New Zealand Politics (or, for that matter, politics the world over) is fairly invariably the direct and calculated result of clandestine conspiracy. Perhaps this is accurate. Maybe voters and general phenomenal chaos also get a say.

Either way, the definitive thing about houses of cards and tiddlywink towers of Babel is that fairly inevitably, when they reach a certain height and complexity, they implode.

That appears to be what we're starting to witness with the Vast Right-Wing Conspiracy To Take Back Auckland. ■



# The Departing of the Party

WITH NATHAN "THE PONSE" PERRY

Eyes fly open. Head cracks open. Too much is open. I am not receptive. Two o'clock in the afternoon, why am I awake for this? Two o'clock in the afternoon, why haven't I got any cigarettes for this?

The cranium calls out for water but the heart wants only sleep. It's no good. Sleep will not come. A stumble through the room. A fumble at the door. Water is far away and there's too much going on in my head. By the time I get to the kitchen all I can do is take a side-ways turn and fall on the couch. Last night had been a good night, I know that for a fact. I know it was a good night because it didn't end until seven in the morning. "Good value" I whisper to myself. Sleep comes to me no easier on the couch than it did in bed. I lie. I look to the ceiling and I lie. And in that lie a shudder runs down my spine. "Last night was a good night" I tell myself again.

The previous night had been nothing more than some friends of the pseudo-intellectual variety getting together, talking some wank and hooning some fluid. It had been fun and good and life had been filled with toxins and that made us all smile. Not one of us had mentioned the health risks of anything or exclaimed that our bodies were temples, no, we had simply been good value. Great clouds of smoke had risen up from head height to the sky itself to join the other bodies of gas that wafted over us in the night sky. Five of us. There were five of us and six bottles of wine. There were five of us and sixty cigarettes. There were five of us and infinite good value. An endorphin rush. A smoker's rush. The rush of friends in the night. We were good value. On the couch I can see it all and resent my former self for having been so foolish as to greedily smoke everything it could, leaving nothing for the future but a pile of ash. Five friends talking and a few bottles of wine. The first time I had been sated, perhaps the only time I would be sated, all year. I am compelled to stand. "It was a good night," I lie. God, but it was fun and for once the cigarettes didn't burn as they went down, for once I didn't gag on the amount of fluid I took in, for once it was all ok. But there was a snag. I stand. My lying is finished. There was a snag. We were snagged. We all were. Five people talking. Just five people talking. What trouble could come from this? By ten o'clock our party had fallen to four, by half past twelve we had become three. At three we had become two. What damage could two people do?

Two people talking. Two people squarking. Two people hawking. Lights in the driveway. Two people squinting. A man arrives. Two people are confused. He stands in the light. It's difficult to see him but even with the lights blaring at me I can see something in this man. The tell tale sign of bad value. An evil look is in his eye. He wears a high-vis jacket. "We've received a complaint.

You're neighbours have stated that there have been two people. Two people talking. In their own home no less. Two people talking at night, in the home that they pay rent for. What say you?" He spat on the floor at the end of his opening statement. I rise, I fall back again, legs won't work right. "I'm under what?" My companion replies, squarks and is off like a shot.

"Sir, we meant no harm, sir we were merely being good value, I hope that's all right? You see we've been drinking and talking and all manner of things, we were having a good night."

"A good night!" He barked. "You received a complaint! From your middle aged neighbour. They're wealthy and middle aged and somewhat middle class. That makes them a saint. How dare you call this a good night after what you've put them through. The fact is you're evil, the two of you."

At the kitchen sink I pour myself some water, wonder why my memories are beginning to rhyme. That must be what happens when good value is forced to turn inward on itself. But of course, the high-vis man was right. There was no good value. Just two young people having the gall to behave like young people. We were in Morningside, the most student of the central suburbs. We had acted like students there, in a house in Morningside. Five people had got together, got drunk and talked. No one had *respected their bodies* no one had been *nice* no one had been bad value. This was the price.

After the high-vis left we stayed up having whispered conversations about the power of the middle aged over the young. About the fact that we paid exorbitant amounts to live here and were not even allowed to live here. We whispered to each other about the injustice of things until the true and honest morning of the next day. This day. Now I realise last night wasn't good at all. We had whispered. We had lost. The last bastion of student protest had been ripped from us and we had capitulated. And I don't even have a fucking cigarette. ■



the people to blame.

**Editors**

Caitlin Abley and Mark Fullerton  
[caitlin@craccum.co.nz](mailto:caitlin@craccum.co.nz) [mark@craccum.co.nz](mailto:mark@craccum.co.nz)

**Subeditor**

Hannah Bergin

**Designer**

Nick Withers

**Section Editors**

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**Writers**

Aditya Vasudevan, Andrew Winstanley, Astrid  
Crosland, Curwen Ares Rolinson, Eloise Sims,  
Eugenia Woo, Felixe Laing, Isabelle Russell,  
Jack Caldwell, Jean Bell, Matthew Denton, Na-  
than Perry, Nicole Black, Nikki Addison, Patrick  
Newland, Rayhan Langdana, Saia Halatanu,  
Samantha Gianotti, Winifred Edgar-Booty

**Cover Artist**

Nathan Wood

**Artists**

Holly Burgess, Jasmine Lim, Jessica Thomas,  
Lily Worrall, Mandy Chan, Nathan Wood, Pat-  
rick Umbers, Saia Halatanu, Shmuly Leopold,  
Tania Fu

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**Contributor of the Week**

Jack Caldwell



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**Editorial Office**

4 Alfred St, Private Bag 92019, Auckland

**Advertising**

Aaron Haugh  
Ph 021 813286 [advertising@craccum.co.nz](mailto:advertising@craccum.co.nz)

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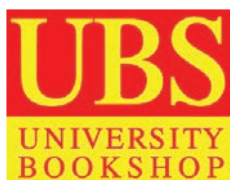
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