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Quis custodiet ipsos custodes?



## May 17, 2010 **DELEGATE-GATE**

**A**t last Monday's Executive meeting, a proposed piece of policy was introduced as part of the late papers. The Delegated Powers (External Contracts) Policy allowed for the creation of an *ad-hoc* committee that would have the ability to enter into contracts without the approval of the AUSA Executive. This power extended to any contract with any external body. This was put forward by AUSA Administrative Vice President Joe McCrory and seconded by Education Vice President Alex Nelder.

Over the next couple of days, a few issues came to light with the legitimacy of the Delegated Powers Policy. Firstly, the make-up of the *ad-hoc* committee violated the third schedule of the AUSA constitution (which governs all committees) by not including the Maori Students Officer by default. It also appeared to conflict with fifth section of the third schedule which states that a "...committee shall not make any expenditure or incur any liabilities on behalf of the Association in any way whatsoever without prior approval of such expenditure in detail by the Executive." It also breaches Admin Policy RN/676/81, which states a Chair or convener must be named when any committee is formed. While the terms of reference for the document mentioned negotiation and a formalised reporting structure, the actual wording of the policy extended to the committee the powers of negotiation, signing, execution and delivery of contracts. It also delegated the power of the Executive to approve contracts to the committee, who only then had to report that the power had been used, with the option to report confidential or commercially sensitive information in "a strict committee." It was not clear whether this was the Executive as a "committee of the whole" or to another separate committee that would operate in strict. Regardless, the Executive voted this through with no dissenting votes and three abstentions.

We're not lawyers. We won't pretend to be, but as students who have brushed with basic commercial law (and lived to tell the tale), there are some questions over the Delegated Powers Policy and the concept of agency. The policy also defers decisions to the Finance Committee to consider before the Executive can execute contracts, but the *ad-hoc* committee also has the power to execute those contracts. This policy may have been important, but it's also confusing and vague - something that is not good enough given the scope of the powers involved and regardless of whether it just formalises what the Executive say already takes place.

Are we making mountains out of molehills? For a start, not one portfolio holder referred to their constitution for guidance when voting on this piece of admin policy. Whenever admin policy is proposed, the first step everyone at the table should take is to reach for their constitution and check its legality. Even more so when that policy is as far-reaching as the Delegated Powers Policy was. The Executive are trusted to not only represent the interests of students, but to do so in a way that is in keeping with the constitution that governs the organisation.

As a proposal, the Delegated Powers Policy left a lot to be desired. Starting off with terms of reference that your proposed policy exceeds isn't promising, and ignoring the constitution to make binding admin policy would be ironic if it wasn't so dangerous. Sure, the constitution is old, awkward and out of date in places, but there are provisions to change the constitution. What's the point in having one if you pick and choose which bits of it you ignore and which ones you don't? Thankfully, everyone involved seems to be open to discussing the matter and addressing the issues that have arisen. There are a lot of intricacies involved in the negotiations procedures at the AUSA, and changes apparently do need to be made. Policy that formalises negotiations would be most welcome. But such a policy should be given the attention and respect it deserves, both from those who draft it and the Executive as a whole.



Craccum  
Issue #10  
2010

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SUBMISSIONS: **SEE PAGE 37**

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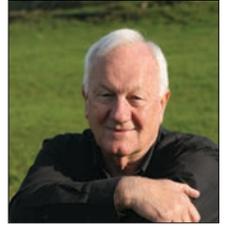
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# Sir Roger Douglas

IT IS MAY once more, and my younger staff members inform me that this marks the beginning of New Zealand Music Month. New Zealand Music Month is an idea dreamt up by the New Zealand Music Commission, in a nationalistic attempt to support New Zealand music.

It is no surprise that we can find the Government behind this initiative. This is because it is a good chance for politicians to show off how in touch with youth culture they are. Now, I must confess that my knowledge of modern music is limited. But there are many things that strike me as odd about the justifications for Government subsidising the music industry.

Often the justification for Government to spend our money on music is because we need to stop the influx of American music. We need New Zealand music. The problem is, if New Zealand consumers demand American-sounding music, they will get it in one form or another. In reality, the need for "New Zealand music" often just means that we need New Zealanders who play American music. It does not matter that the bands that the Government spends lots of money on just mimic successful American ones, it is just important that they are New Zealanders in the band. I am told that bands such as Elemeno P and Goodnight Nurse are such examples – both receive Government funding.

It is not surprising that Government picks bad bands to fund. I have never understood why people believe that a government bureaucrat will be good at picking winners in the music industry. A Wellington-

based bureaucrat will not be any better at picking out successful bands than I would be – and if it were up to me, you'd be much more likely to see Beatles tribute bands thriving. I have no idea what you want to listen to – the big secret that Government does not want you to know is: neither do they.

The Government's approach to finding a new band is all about laying down criteria and filling in forms – this will determine whether you are a good band or not. I know of no band that has revolutionised the music industry by meeting some preset criteria and has filled in Government forms. If this were the case, that formulaic criteria could determine 'good' bands, then record labels would never pick a band that failed. The reality is it cannot be done. Therefore, the Government are always caught subsidising yesterday's music.

Another supposed benefit of New Zealand Music Month is that it encourages new and younger bands. While there is no doubt that this was the intention, it has not turned out to be correct. Whenever any new agency is set up, the do-gooders tend to move on to their latest project, and the establishment then tends to take over the agency. That is why most money ends up in the hands of already successful musicians.

If you look at the May Hit Disc, the overwhelming number of tracks were already receiving radio air-time. In other words, the Government's resources tend to just end up promoting music that is already popular, and so they never really tend to help the next generation or the next interesting sound. It is

the fact that the music establishment dominated Music Month that led Stephanie Cairns, a music writer, to conclude that: "New Zealand Music Month smells suspiciously like one of those government-sponsored cultural things where they congratulate the people who have already basically made it in their chosen field by giving them an award or something and then sit around feeling all smug because they're supporting 'emerging' artists and 'local culture'."

Moreover, some people would rather go without Government help, but these people are then typically excluded from the events sponsored by NZ Music Month. In other words, Government money is crowding out other New Zealand music. As Sarah Chadwick, a Wellington-based musician, told media a few years ago, "I am proud that we never got grants though, because at least now we can say that we have done everything we have off our own backs, we've earned every dollar ourselves at our shit jobs, and that makes me proud. It feels good to not owe anyone for what we have done so far."

If you like New Zealand music, that's fine – I have no problem with that. But just as I should not force other people to pay for Beatles' tribute bands, you should not force other people to subsidise the music that you like. The best kind of art is always produced in response to consumer demand and the artists own passion, and not the whims of some bureaucrats based in Wellington.

**SIR ROGER DOUGLAS IS AN ACT PARTY MP AND AN ACCOUNTANCY GRADUATE OF THE UNIVERSITY OF AUCKLAND.**

## AUSA PRESIDENT

WHEN WRITING THIS piece I am thinking about the future of AUSA. There is always not enough money around to do all the things we want to do, especially so in a cash strapped Students' Association. Since the inception of Voluntary Student Membership we have lost a main source of our income, and in turn have cut many things out of the services we used to provide. The services that remain have been cut back. Overall, regardless of the politics and who was involved, the current situation is probably to the detriment of student life at this university.

Dredging up facts from the past, however relevant and important, do not help us move forward. At the moment we are in this position and must make the best of what we have. I heard the South African rugby coach the other day saying this, "Life is not about what you want. It's what you get and at the end of the day you just have to make the best of it." What I would add is that, at the end of day, we as people are always judged on what we did with what we had, rather than what we wished we had.

Looking to the future, I would like to see AUSA take the opportunities that present themselves and do

the best we can. We can fight and lobby for what we believe to be right, fair and just for students. But when you get down to the doing of what is right, we should be putting what we desire to one side and concentrate on doing the best damn job we can. We as an organisation should be striving for that ideal.

At this university I see so many great ideas, events, and research being undertaken. Can these be better? Of course. I personally don't mind when something can be improved, so long as people have given it their best shot and are willing to look back at the results, take constructive feedback, and are willing and determined to do better next time. Our goal should be to always strive to improve on what we do, to be more effective, and to learn from our mistakes.

I know there are many things that can be done better here. Better events, increased sporting involvement and an increased willingness to give new ideas a go. At the moment I am dealing with things that need to be changed - issues from the past, problems with the present, and opportunities in the future. Ideally, my goal is get AUSA into a position where we excel at what we do, a position where we can look more into the future. I want AUSA to concentrate more on what you, the students, want. Just as importantly, I want AUSA to have clear systems in place to help or facilitate the ability of students to do what you

want. Do your thing - AUSA will have your back. We should not be getting in your way when you want to do something.

There will always have to be rules; AUSA, as a legal entity has to follow the law. But at the end of the day, if AUSA forgets why it is here (to serve students) it becomes irrelevant. Part of the elected Executive's role is to keep AUSA relevant and make sure we are doing is what you want. We are here to serve students – not ourselves. That's why I am writing this column, for I want you to hold us accountable. Don't be afraid to question, to inquire, to investigate. What we do should never be hidden from students, and what we say should always be for students.

For that very reason, I am starting a forum open to all university students and staff, where you can bring your ideas along as to what you want to see happen on campus or with AUSA. A forum where we the Students' Association, and hopefully the University as well, can take what you want to see and start putting it in place. We need your help and criticism to improve. I will name a time and place for this forum next week.

**COME AND SEE ME IN AUSA HOUSE ON ALFRED STREET, OR EMAIL PRESIDENT@AUSA.ORG.NZ. I WANT TO HEAR EVERYTHING. YOUR IDEAS, FEEDBACK, CRITICISM AND VISION FOR THE FUTURE OF AUSA, STUDENT LIFE AND THIS UNIVERSITY. MY DOOR IS OPEN TO YOU ALL.**



# Gareth Hughes

OK, SO I'M a geek. Politics can be pretty un-cool. For years I kept my secret desire to become a politician hidden from my mates but I'm proud to say last Friday I had a great day watching the UK election. It was so interesting seeing it unfold, the twists and turns, the election of the UK's first Green MP (only took twenty years of trying), and the knife-edge outcome. The election has raised the interesting question: is the UK's electoral system broken? With our own electoral referendum next year it's a good chance to take stock of MMP.

So what was the outcome in the UK? The Conservatives got the highest vote with 306 seats, Labour received 258 and the Liberals received 57, which means that no one party received more than half the seats in the 650 seat Parliament. This is described as a hung parliament - in other words a 'bung' parliament, where no one party controls the majority of parliament and can form a government. Unlike New Zealand where we are used to negotiating between parties to form a government, British citizens are left wearily eyeing up the imminent horse-trading to see who will form a government.

The United Kingdom operates under the same voting system we ditched last Century. The First Past the Post (FPP) electoral system means as a voter you only get to vote for your local constituency MP. Then the party, or parties, who have the most MPs from the different electorates form the Government. The problem is that it sometimes results in an outcome like what has just happened in the UK where there is no clear mandate for governance by anyone. On top of that, FPP locks in the two big parties as the only governmental choices and produces final results that are not representative of the way people vote across the country, which is deeply unfair.

In the U.K. neither David Cameron, nor Gordon Brown, could make a compelling case that they should be Prime Minister. Although Cameron leads the largest party, the Conservatives only received 36% of the overall vote and still need at least one other party to support them to gain a majority. Brown, whose party received 29% of the vote, clearly doesn't have a mandate to lead - especially considering the Labour Party lost 91 seats this election. Meanwhile, the Liberals, with 23% of the vote, are the kingmakers and can choose to either go left or right or opt out altogether.

In terms of the dominance of the two main parties under FPP, if you were part of the massive 35% who didn't vote Conservative or Labour, you're most likely left feeling disenfranchised. Only the Conservatives and Labour can be potential leaders. This can only leave a huge number of voters feeling as though their vote didn't really count and the only choice of Government is between the two major parties, which is kind of like choosing between Coke and Pepsi.

The dominance of the two major parties also reflects how unfair FPP results often are, particularly in terms of not reflecting the wishes of the voters. In this UK election, the Liberals, under Nick Clegg, received 23% of the vote but only gained 8.8% of the seats. Compare this with the Conservatives, whose 36% of the overall vote saw them win 47% of the seats and Labour's 29% of the vote equals 39% of the seats. Not surprisingly, the Liberal Democrats have rightfully made electoral reform a key negotiating

position in the hopes that unfair results like this can not happen again.

Not surprisingly UK pundits have been looking at New Zealand and our move away from the FPP system to Mixed Member Proportional (MMP) back in 1996. New Zealanders voted to change to MMP in two referenda during the 1990s after political trust was broken between voters and the elected. Back in the old days, parties could gain the highest vote, yet actually win fewer seats and be unable to form a Government, like Labour in 1978 and 1981; or smaller parties could gain a huge percentage of the vote and receive either very few seats (like Social Credit, who in 1981 won 21% of the vote but just two seats) or no seats (like the New Zealand Party who in 1984 won 12% but no seats). MMP fixes these problems because every vote counts and the way the seats in Parliament are allocated is far more in line with how the people have voted.

Most Kiwis would agree we made the right call to switch to MMP. I first voted in 1999 so I've only ever voted in MMP elections and I can't imagine how it used to be back in the day when you only got one vote for your local MP. I think most young people today can't envisage how limiting the act of voting became under FPP. In the town where I grew up, and most towns in New Zealand, the realities of FPP meant there was only a choice between red and blue, Coke and Pepsi.

After the introduction of MMP, Parliament changed and began to look more like a true representation of who the voters were and who the voters wanted. For a first year student in 1999, it was really exciting to see Greens in Parliament. People like Nandor Tanczos, Sue Bradford and Keith Locke were an inspiration. No longer was Parliament full of old white guys making all the calls. Instead it contained people more like me, talking about the stuff I was interested in.

Ever since that first MMP election Parliament has become more representative of New Zealand. MMP has also seen Parliament become much more diverse, from Pasifika, to Asian, to Rastafarian, many more ethnic and social groups are represented in the House of Representatives, better reflecting New Zealand society. As the youngest MP I'm stoked there are two other MPs aged under thirty, and eight under thirty five which just didn't happen under FPP.

MMP has also seen power shared more widely,

which I believe has seen better decision making and legislative process ensue. Instead of being dominated by single-party Coke or Pepsi majority governments, we now have a variety of coalition-like arrangements between all the flavors of parties. If you looked at today's Parliament in the context of the unfair FPP model, parties like the Greens and all the ACT MPs, bar Rodney Hide, would disappear. This would also be the case under the slightly-less-unfair Supplementary Model (SM), which is being pushed as a replacement for MMP.

At the next election, us Kiwis will be asked for our thoughts on the electoral system in New Zealand. We'll all be asked two questions - whether we want to retain MMP or change to another electoral system, and if there was a change, which other system we'd prefer. If MMP proves the most popular at next year's referendum, then it will be reviewed. This process gives us a great opportunity to modify MMP and smooth out some of the kinks, such as the current 5% threshold.

The submission process for the electoral referendum is currently open so if you'd like to have your say, check out [www.parliament.nz](http://www.parliament.nz) to find out more and get your submission in by June 10th.

GARETH HUGHES IS THE NEWEST MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT. AS A 28 YEAR OLD, HE WAS A STUDENT AT VICTORIA UNIVERSITY OF WELLINGTON IN 2009 AND IS NOW A GREEN PARTY LIST MP.

# DEAR CRACCUM

LETTERS TO CRACCUM MUST BE 200 WORDS OR LESS. WE RESERVE THE RIGHT TO MESS WITH YOUR LETTERS FOR NO REASON OTHER THAN OUR OWN PERVERSE AMUSEMENT. LETTERS ATTACKING CONTRIBUTORS (ESPECIALLY YOU-KNOW-WHO) WILL BE PASSED OVER IN FAVOUR OF THOSE USING MERIT-BASED ARGUMENTS. BY READING THIS YOU HAVE WAIVERED ANY LIABILITY ON OUR PART IN PERPETUITY THROUGHOUT THE UNIVERSE. SEND YOUR MISSIVES TO [LETTERS@CRACCUM.CO.NZ](mailto:LETTERS@CRACCUM.CO.NZ)

## ATHEISM: REAL MERIT IN FREEDOM OF THOUGHT.

In his article 'Atheism: A Brief History', Nevin Govindasamy presents a misguided interpretation of so-called New Atheists.

The authors mentioned do not positively assert that there are no gods, but simply lack a belief in a god due to a lack of evidence. The claims that they "adopt an almost militant approach to their beliefs" and "express their views with an impressive dogmatism" are ridiculous. These authors do not claim anyone should be compelled to hold or rescind any belief; the claim of 'dogmatism' is absurd when one compares the definition of the word with what the authors have written. It seems otherwise mild words are often interpreted to be harsh when religion is being criticised.

Govindasamy seems to imply the US does not share Europe's increasing trend in atheism. The American Religious Identification Survey indicates those who claim to have no religion are a growing proportion; the percentage who call themselves atheist/agnostic doubled between 2001 and 2009. Furthermore, Govindasamy's penultimate sentence—perhaps unintentionally—appears to inappropriately class atheism as another religion.

Dogmatism should not be considered impressive or admirable. We should not "show atheism ... accommodation" so much as cherish reason and critical thinking, and defend freedom of thought.

ALEX  
*Exactly 200 words? Competent criticism of an article? An ambitious lack of foul language? Craccum's letters section has come a long way, baby. Alex picks up the bar tab for this week, care of friendly crew at Shadows.*

**SHADOWS**  
YOUR STUDENT BAR

## BOX BLOCKED BY BUSINESS SCHOOL.

Dear Craccum,  
I just have to start by saying how much I love Craccum! He (yes he is a boy) gets me through my week of the train when ive forgotten my ipod or even worse, have left it on in my bag and it get halfway through the first song and runs out! I read him cover to cover, even the articles that help me fall asleep... But WHY aren't there any of the red Craccum boxes in OGGGB? Not all of us commerce students would sell out our grandmothers and we are actually quite likable. It would be nice not to have to run to the underpass between classes to get my Craccum every Monday! I know you love me too!

HOLLY

*We don't run the Business School, and if we had our way, you guys wouldn't be able to move for Craccum boxes. Seriously though, we can't just plonk them wherever we want, and we'd need the Business School to OK them. From our previous informal enquiries, we can't see it happening any time soon.*

## YES. YES WE HAVE. START YOUR DAY WITH A BOWL OF DICKS?

Dear Craccum,  
Has anyone else noticed that the Nutri-grain advertisements that are in bus shelters all over Auckland look a lot like...well...a penis?

It is the placement of the bowl and the stuff pouring into it. All I see is cock, cock, cock.

Regards,  
SIGMUND

## THEM'S FIGHTIN' WORDS \*REACHES FOR DERRINGER\*.

To Tama,  
You are an idiot.  
You should be paying cheating at poker tax to all those who play honestly.  
True, fat people can be annoying

sometimes, but they are stil less annoying than your idiotic, cheating dribble.  
R. DAVIS

## VOLCANOES, GREEKS FEAR GEORGE BUSH.

Dear Craccum,  
Bring back Bush. That's right, and not the strip of bear like fur that certain ladies cannot be bothered to remove in preparation for my manhood, but the late great American president. George Bush was a pea brained monkey shit, and he was a bully. But the world is just one big fucked up playground, and it needs a bully. When Bush was running the show, the world was terrified that he would do something completely over the top at any moment, North Korea didn't dare fuck with this man, Iran was practically mute and all in little old gods own could sleep safe. But did we pay our respect to the great one? No, we ridiculed his intelligence and demanded change. Well we got it, and look what's happened? With Obama the Ivy League genius in charge even fucking Greece has grown some stones and is telling everyone to get fucked, shit can you imagine that volcano in Iceland pulling a stunt like this with George W in as p to the r to the e to the sident? No fucking way. That volcanoes balls would be mincemeat the very second it puffed out its first little cloud of Icelandic shit. Bring back Bush.  
BREWSTER

## FETUSES: CONTRAVERSIAL, TOPICAL AND DELICIOUS.

Dear Jack,  
As a 20yo female who has had a few pregnancy scares, I can see where you're coming from and find your ideas refreshing and challenging. However, any validity in your letter is void due to you contradicting yourself. Yes more abortions would help with population control but then you went on to talk about curing diseases...?

What would be the point of that if we wanted to control population growth? Disease is Mother Nature's way of ensuring one species doesn't gain too much control in the rainforest/jungle/country etc (The Happening? see it) So you saying that you want to cure all disease, but control how many humans are running around, baffles me. The real solution is sterilisation. (Making people infertile). So that these teenage/ Abusive/retarded/ catholic/crazy/ too-rich-and-will-spoil-children-beyond-acceptance and drug fucked potential parents are simply unable to have children. It may seem like everyone's right to reproduce but the simple truth is that a lot of people do not deserve children. How can they raise kids without being able to even fucking look after themselves. Also, who the fuck needs ads to remind them NOT TO SHAKE A BABY?? So yes, pro-choice, pro-disease and pro-sterilisation. FFS  
LAUREN

## HEH. DICT.

Dear Craccum,  
I noticed something quite disconcerting in this week's Craccum. There is a brunch review of a cafe called Benediction, but it does not include a review of their eggs benedict. Now I understand that not everyone is as fond of eggs benedict as I am, but when the cafe is called Benediction, there should be at least a reference to the dish, even if it were simply

## WANT TO BE IN TO WIN THE SHADOWS BAR TAB?

Now you don't have to muck around with attachments and electronic mail! Just visit [www.craccum.co.nz](http://www.craccum.co.nz) and click Letter to the Editor on the top bar. Just fill out the form and you're in to win. Terms and conditions apply.



justifying why it was not ordered. Fortunately a friend of mine was able to inform me that while their eggs benedict was good a number of years ago, an ownership change resulted in a significant drop in quality. However it is possible that the cafe has since rectified this, can anyone inform me whether this is the case? Yours in the enjoyment of fine food and drink,  
**STEPHEN BIER**

### HOW TO SCORE CHICKS: TALK ABOUT YOUR OWN ASS.

Dear last week's bar tab winner, You are a disgrace to all engineers, What scares me is that people thought it was me that wrote that bitching letter in. No-one loves me boo whoo. So lets see your smart, nice, sporty... hmmm you got that personality right what could be the problem... you play rugby right? Wait I bet you are a front row forward, right? Stumpy little fuck with cauliflower ears and a broken nose that is smeared half the way round your face. I can only guess you problem with the ladies is your Fucking UGLY. Its not because you a friend your fucking ugly. I know that personality is what people fall in love with, but girls can't see someone's personality at a glance, however they can get a peek at my sweet ass. The world is better for beautiful people. Dude think now, to walk through a door you have to open it first that's where the looks come in. When I stroll down the road the metaphorical doors (literal legs) are wide open for me. Also after reading your bitchy and whinging letter I can't wait to get away from you.  
Harden/shut the Fuck Up.  
**JACK**

### MORE FEEDBACK FOR OUR LOVELORN ENGINEER...

In response to last week's prize winning letter, rest assured there are plenty of nice girls out there in the exact same situation as you. Unfortunately, we also have the same problem. There are awesome people wanting relationships on both sides of gender divide, it's just that the system is inefficient for getting them together, because just as you aren't at Shadows groping people, those girls aren't likely to be hanging out at Shadows ready to be groped. Maybe some you could figure out a better solution? Engineers are meant to be good with systems after all. Plus, it'd make you popular and probably rich as well.  
**ANNA**

### WE ALWAYS PICTURED GOD AS MORE OF A WENDYS KIND OF GUY.

Dear Craccum,  
I have realised that god is a nothing more than one of us dirty students. Just think of earth as a project. The universe was created 4.6 Billion years ago, god apparently made earth 10,000 years ago. So if we say he had 1 weeks to create earth by day 0, then

this means he started making earth with just over 1 second before the due date. Who of us hasn't started a assignment with seconds to spare. To quote the bible, "He looked at what he created at it was good". Sure it wasn't great and hell give it a few hours and it will fall to pieces catastrophically, but fuck it will get at least a C-. After it's done he hasn't seemed to give a flying toss about the place since, really how often do you re-read your assignments and fix them after you know you have it finished. Shit if they hadn't edited the bible there would probly be sections were god gets on the piss and heads of a journey to get some amazing kebabs. God is nothing but a smelly, drunk, student, probably flicking through his collection of porn while writing letters into you lot.  
Wait....  
**ALEX**

### IRON MAN 3: IRAN MAN VS IRON MAN?

Dear Craccum,  
This has been eating at me for years now, but now its time to tell you all the truth. You all wonder who the story was meant to portray. When i was young my father passed away but he left me a very important key to the future that will save all of humanity. At first I was unable to unlock the secret but with hard work and determination i did it! Inside this rough exterior lies the heart of a warrior. The truth is I AM IRON MAN! You can take the man out of the suit but you can't take the suit out of the man, the suit and I are one!  
**VEST CHEST  
A.K.A IRON MAN**

### YOU SHOULD ALWAYS READ CRACCUM. ALWAYS.

Dear Craccum,  
you guys are the best, and I know cause I'm from the west, they say I shouldn't read it, but I tell them to just beat it.. cause Craccum is funny it makes me hop around like a bunny, but what I'm trying to say is that I AM SUPERMAN...and I'm ur number one Fan!

SUPERMAN will save us all...not Iron Man...  
**S.W.T**

**ALWAYS!**

### IS PARLIAMENT SOVEREIGN ENOUGH TO REPEAL MURPHY'S LAW?

Dear Craccum,  
We love you, but your religion issue didn't mention the greatest faith out there: Murphyism. Murphyism is simple, and easy to understand, and very rewarding. To put it simply, There is no God, only the devil, and his name is Murphy. Murphy hates each and every one of us on a personal level. When anything goes wrong, that's Murphy having a little laugh to himself, and things will go wrong, often, you can try and ward him off with

salt, or knocking on wood, but really, we know that doesn't work. Peace and may Murphy be looking the other way.  
**NĒTP**

### FAT RAGE TAKEN TO A NEW LEVEL. ALSO, IN THE LIBRARY? REALLY?

Dear Craccum,  
I want to complain. I think the university should limit entry to though who are thin and pretty like me. Ugly cunts like those pig faces up at NZP should be excluded. They are so ugly they cant even pass with goodanuf grades to get into uni so they get assistance schemes and scholarships to help them out. If I was born that fat, ugly and dumb I would have been shot at birth. Also how cum they are so enormously fat and are still getting fucked and knocked up? Who would fuck that? how could you even find the right hole? Oh well maybe it's a hit and miss affair, or maybe jumbo attracts jumbo, I don't know, but I wish they would stop fatty fondling in the General library. They look and sound like hippo mating. (muurp mmmm slop slop lick, humph ) Next time I see a sumo match going on in the reference collection I will pix it and email it on to Craccum , that'll teach to ugly bung holes not stroke the bacon in public.  
**EWWWWWWW YUCK FATTY FUCK GREASE .**

### WEEKLY CUNT QUOTA: EXCEEDED.

Dear Craccum,  
What the fuck is up with all the cunts who smoke in Albert Park?  
"Isn't it so lovely here, a place in the middle of this concrete shithole with some trees and greenery. Now I'm going to destroy this sanctuary by puffing out toxic fumes - stop and smell the smoke motherfuckers!". And then these douchebags leave a souvenir of their dick-move by littering the place with their cigarette butts. Whilst I respect your right of freedom to kill yourself (and consequently harm myself and others with your second-hand smoke), I must surely have the equal right (as well as the right of self-defence) to punch you in the face next you light up. Sound fair?  
**CAMERON**

### TOUCHED BY HIS NOODLY APPENDAGE...AGAIN!

Dear Craccum,  
While I commend the "The A-Z of Religion" article, I feel that it lacked the essence of some [sic] belief systems.

Atheist perspective: You rot.  
Conclusion: Plant food.

Agnostic perspective: Don't know, don't care.  
Conclusion: Meh.

Scientific perspective: You "live on" as atoms. Heaven is possibly a higher dimensional plane.  
Conclusion: Get farted out by God knows who.

Christian perspective:  
December 25 = 7 sins.  
If you're not good enough, you get stuck in between a rock and a hard place.  
Conclusion: Unless you do as you're told, you burn.

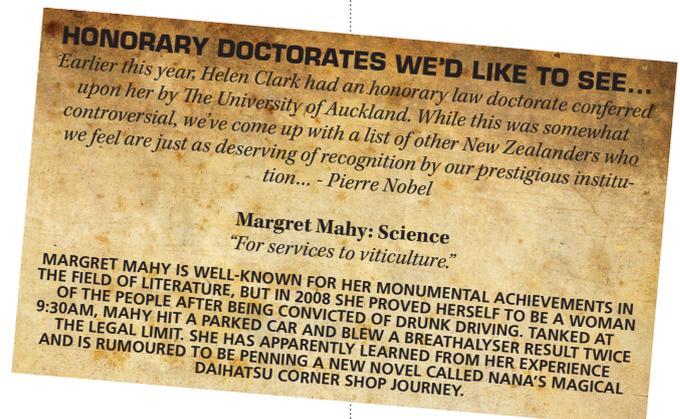
Flying Spaghetti Monster/ FSM perspective:  
Stands for all that is good.  
Against all that isn't good.  
Accepting of everyone. (However, Scientologists are best left alone.)  
All Pirates are Prophets.  
Donning full Pirate regalia is preferred.  
Every Friday is a holiday.  
Supported by academics.  
Supported by logical reasoning.  
Compatible with other beliefs.  
Get to eat nothing but Ramen every Ramadan  
Midget Whacking is a sport.  
Heaven contains a Beer Volcano and Stripper Factory.  
Has a sense of humour.  
Conclusion: Pastafarians are not assholes. They simply deliver His word and let the people decide.

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was Arrrgh!" - PIRATICUS 13:7

Ramen.

**GETSU - PASTAFARIAN.**

**PS: ALLLLLLLLLLLLLLLLLLWWWWWWWWW-  
WWWAYS!**



## VICTORIA AND OTAGO TURN AWAY STUDENTS AS BUDGET LOOMS

JUST A WEEK out from the announcement of the Budget, both Otago and Victoria Universities have voted to reject any new domestic applications for study in 2010 in a bid to keep numbers in line with resource restrictions.

The move comes as the Government continues to toy with the ideas of tying academic performance to student loan funding, with thousands of out-of-work New Zealanders contemplating study in the wake of the prolonged economic downturn.

Victoria University had previously put in place their own policies surrounding academic performance, which would have seen students who failed to achieve a sufficient standard denied the opportunity to continue their studies. However the Victoria University Council found themselves facing a "considerable surge in demand and limited resources", according to Chancellor Ian McKinnon. International students will still be able to enrol as they pay their fees in full.

Auckland University has its own academic probation policy, which limits the numbers of papers that students with inadequate grades can take. If their situation fails to improve, they are unable to enrol in any papers for a year, but are able to return to study after that period.

The Otago student magazine *Critic* noted that OUSA President Harriet Geoghegan voted for Otago University's policy to restrict numbers, but some have claimed that her vote was motivated by a desire to ensure current students did not face additional cuts to services or resources. Otago University also announced the disestablishment of their Design Studies Department earlier this week. Victoria University Students' Association President Max Harding voted against the Victoria policy.

The announcements come in the week before the National Government is due to deliver a budget that is unlikely to address growing concerns in the tertiary sector. Funding levels have continued to decline in real terms for some time, and there has been a suggestion that the Government will relax the Fee Maxima system that restricts the increases of student fees.

Other proposed reform to the tertiary student sector include an additional \$50 student loan administration fee and for funding to be based on course completion rates, although issues have been raised with just how they can be effectively measured. Tertiary Education Minister Steven Joyce has also hinted that student loan access to new permanent residents and Australians would be restricted for a two year period, and signalled the Government's intent to drastically slash the number of qualifications available by up to 45%.

Comments at last week's AUSA Executive meeting expressed frustration that Joyce gave most of his policy dialogue through the medium of breakfast television shows. Joyce has also revealed through TVNZ political affairs show *Q+A* that the chances of increased funding for tertiary institutes are "not great".

Over the past five years, The University of Auckland has made a number of moves to cut costs, including limiting entry to previously open entry courses, and closing several departments. The decisions regarding this issue, and the other proposed student loan changes, will be made in the Budget released later this month.

## PRO-LIFE CLUB FINALLY AFFILIATES

LAST WEDNESDAY'S STUDENT forum meeting saw the Pro-Life Club officially affiliated to AUSA after a heated debate. Students packed into the quad not just to avoid the rain and cold—most came to vote on and hear the debate surrounding the club's affiliation. The motion was passed with 89 votes to 33 with 10 abstentions.

A total of fourteen people spoke on the club's affiliation before the motion went to a vote. Those who spoke in favour of the club said that it was a matter of freedom of speech that Pro-Life be allowed to express their views on campus.

"We want an open forum," noted student Georgia Yarrow. "This is not about whether abortion is right or wrong. This is about freedom of expression."

Speakers on both sides received their share of cheers and jeers as opinions clashed.

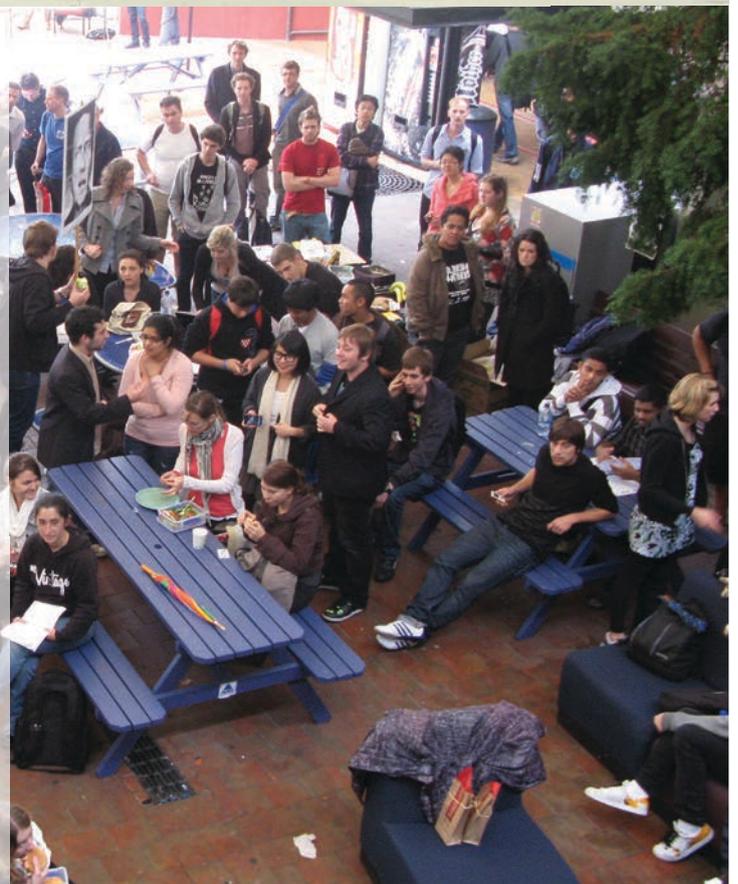
AUSA Educational Vice-President Alex Nelder spoke out strongly against the views of the Pro-Life club, calling them "abhorrent". However, he would vote for affiliation in order to uphold freedom of speech. He also intended for Pro-Life's affiliation to bring them under AUSA club rules, meaning they would face harsh condemnation if they broke AUSA regulations.

Women's Right Officer Soraiya Daud framed the debate as a clash between two freedoms: the freedom of expression and the freedom of autonomy women have fought to obtain over the past 50 years. She expressed concern over misinformation being spread on campus and women being forced to feel uncomfortable or harassed. Past incidents involving alleged "harassment" of women on campus resulted in the club being de-affiliated and barred from affiliating at Student Forum since 2002. The ban has only been lifted this year.

The president of Pro-Life Simeon Brown was invited to speak but he declined the invitation. Other pro-life supporters spoke on his behalf.

Student Courtney Brown urged for a compromise, saying "someone will want [Pro-Life's] services. It may not be you but one girl will. Don't deny her that opportunity."

- Craig Robertson



# CONSTITUTIONAL CONCERNS OVER DELEGATION POLICY

THE AUSA EXECUTIVE has passed an extremely contentious piece of policy that conflicts with the AUSA constitution.

The policy, which was voted in at last week's Executive meeting, appears to breach the Third Schedule of the constitution, which deals with the structure and powers of committees.

Under the new policy, an ad-hoc committee comprising of any four of the General Manager/Secretary, Administrative and Educational Vice Presidents, the Treasurer and President can enter negotiations, sign, and deliver any contract with any external body. The General Manager/Secretary is the only one required to be present for the meeting to be valid. This places the existing power of the Executive to sign contracts with a committee that does necessarily require the President.

Under the Third Schedule, a committee must include the Maori Students Officer(s). While some requirements of the Third Schedule can be amended, Section 3(iii) cannot. This requires all AUSA committees to include the President, EVP, AVP, Treasurer and Maori Students Officer(s).

The policy was moved by EVP Joe McCrory and seconded by EVP Alex Nelder. There were no Executive votes against the motion, with only three abstentions. These were from the International Affairs Officers, Sports Officers and the Cultural Affairs officer.

AUSA Welfare Officer John Kingi, not present at the meeting, said "I'm very concerned at the policy that was passed delegating powers of the Executive to negotiate, execute, sign or deliver any contract to an ad-hoc committee. Decisions should be made in consultation with the entire executive, and I'll be raising these concerns at the next Executive meeting."

The following is the full text of the policy:

## AUSA DELEGATED POWERS (EXTERNAL CONTRACTS) POLICY

### **Purpose**

1. AUSA is a democratic, transparent, and accountable institution. This policy clarifies the procedures for negotiation and representation of AUSA in relation to any external contract as is defined.

### **Terms of Reference**

2. This empowers the Officers of the Association to negotiate terms of contract or similar, and provide a dedicated reporting structure to the Executive in relation to same.

### **Interpretation**

3. In this policy the term "contract" shall mean "any contract, contractual relationship, document, deed, terms of agreement, terms of trade, or similar".

### **Constitutional basis**

4. This policy arises from:

Rule 9(m) "To sign execute and deliver any deed"

Rule 35(i) "power over and control all business and activities of the Association"

Rule 35 (ii) "may...delegate to them...the powers of Executive in relation to any matter"

Rule 37(i) "Executive shall have the power to and may for any purpose make contracts"

Rule 37(i)(a) "delegate some or all of these powers... to the Secretary of the Association"

Rule 38 (ii) "signed by the Secretary or the Accountant and one of the President, the Administrative Vice President and the Treasurer"

Rule 60 "Common Seal"

### **Procedure**

5. When the Executive cannot meet or decides to delegate its responsibility on any matter concerned with negotiation and representation with an external body, or where notice to the Executive is impractical or unwarranted within the circumstances, the powers of Executive to negotiate, execute, sign or deliver any contract are delegated to an ad-hoc committee comprising:
  - i). The President
  - ii). The General Manager/Secretary
  - iii). The Administrative Vice President
  - iv). The Education Vice President
  - v). The Treasurer.
6. The quorum for all discussion or meetings shall be four (4) and must include the General Manager/Secretary.
7. Any use of the powers reserved by this policy must be noted at the next ordinary meeting of the Executive, provided that
  - i). The contract is ratified subject to the conduct of business laid out in the first schedule of the Constitution pursuant
  - ii). Any related material of a confidential or commercial nature may be presented orally in a strict committee or similar.
8. Provision must be made for the Finance Committee to consider any such contract before it is discussed, agreed to, or executed by the Executive.
9. Noting in this policy shall contradict or be inconsistent with powers granted to and exercised by the General Manager/Secretary.
10. Nothing in this policy shall contradict or be inconsistent with powers elsewhere provided for in the Constitution and Rules of the Association.



## EYE ON EXEC: STAY ON TARGET!

Craccum would like to kick off this Eye on Exec by offering our apologies for a few issues that seem to have resulted from last week's Eye on Exec. First of all, EVP Alex Nelder had prepared his report, but time constraints saw it presented last week. Secondly, Sports Officer Kerry Manson was not only wearing pants, but wearing track pants - the king of all pants. We apologise to Kerry for portraying him as some sort of exhibitionist deviant and for failing to acknowledge the majesty of track pants. To err is human, and Craccum has offered our apologies to the EVP, AVP, Sports Officer and Secretary.

This meeting again ran for a marathon two hour session, which would have been fine except the debate was a little more rambunctious than last week's law commission report (which we couldn't fit in last issue's news section).

The Executive heard from Sophia Blair who

was representing the Campaign to Keep MMP. Numerous comments were made around the chambers, with claims that FPP represented the interests of straight white men and that the Executive chambers were "full of monarchists." It only took the Executive 29 minutes to reinforce Godwin's Law, which states that the longer an argument goes on, the closer the probability of Nazis or Hitler being mentioned gets to one. The Exec then voted to support the position of the Campaign to Keep MMP to support a review of the system.

Next up was John Kingi's Welfare Committee reports, which were presented in his absence as he had prior engagements that he offered his apologies in advance for. Some meetings of the Welfare Committee were found to be inquorate, so they were referred back to the Welfare Committee to verify. The rest were passed. EVP Alex Nelder then presented his much-anticipated report—which Craccum can confirm always has existed—that revealed Vice Chancellor Stuart MacCutcheon doesn't know what YouTube is. It was suggested that students compile lists of their top ten YouTube memes for his perusal. The Executive also nobly supported the Arts Graduate Action Group's aims to speed up the improvements to the Arts Graduate Lab. The Exec will form a liaison group to work with the AGAG, so watch this space.

Four faculty associations were granted \$2250 each for expenses such as events and websites. Craccum would like it noted that our only computer is more useful as a chair than a work station, and that we paid for our website out of our own pockets.

The Exec discussed an interesting new piece

of policy introduced in the late papers that warranted its own news story. Have a read above.

There was also a discussion surrounding possible changes that may or may not happen under the Budget, with the Exec voting on their opposition to lifetime limits on student loans, the proposed stand-down period for student loans for new permanent residents and Australians, the linking of course completion rates to funding, and the proposed \$50 yearly fee for current and former students with outstanding student loans. The meeting ended with Sean Topham attempting to put forward a motion to thank Sophia Blair for her time, but attached a rider that wanted to honour Michael Laws in some way. The motion was not heard.

Finally, the conduct of the Executive themselves was notably below its usual standard. Members asking questions were talked over, clarification over motions were difficult to obtain and it would do some members well to remember what their function is and how they can best serve students in that role. They are not there to espouse their own opinions, but to work out how to best represent those of students through their various portfolios and positions. Craccum left the meeting unsure of the exact wording of some motions that were passed, as did some members of the Executive. While the Chair and AVP made concerted efforts to keep everyone on track, this shouldn't have been necessary at all. Student politicians should be capable of behaving themselves and treating each other with respect, otherwise they waste their own time, our time and the time of the students that elected them.



## MODEL UN: DRESS UP, KILL DIPLOMATS, EVADE PARKING TICKETS

THE OWEN G. GLENN BUSINESS School abounded with more than its usual complement of business-attired people two Saturdays ago, with the Auckland region Model United Nations taking place. With students from the University of Auckland, the University of Waikato and students from Japan, the conference was diverse in nature.

Over one hundred students took part in the event, with pairs of students representing countries as diverse as Afghanistan and Malaysia. They were there to discuss a mock resolution that considered a tribunal for war reparations. Reparations are a contentious issue, with opinions divided on the purpose and usefulness of them. Several delegates argued that it was more important to look forward instead of focussing on the past, while countries like Israel and the United States concentrated on limiting potential liability to other countries by strongly opposing the resolution.

A simulation of the United Nations' predecessor, the first Model League of Nations took place in the United States in the 1920s as a way to learn about civics and current events. While these themes still run through Model UNs now, they are also a way for students to declare war on other countries, physically take delegates hostage as part of negotiations, and to dress up as terrorists and bishops without looking like complete dorks. Saudi Arabian delegate Jaime Pang exclaimed that it was "a great time," although when pressed for a highlight, he most enjoyed the suffocation of the Chinese delegate with a Chinese flag. Organiser Wilson Chau commented that "The passion and level of debate brought by the delegates coupled with the hard work put in by the United Nations Youth Association of New Zealand's Auckland Regional Council made UNIMUN a resounding success" and urged those interested in receiving updates on future Model United Nations events to e-mail him at [auckland.uni@unyanz.co.nz](mailto:auckland.uni@unyanz.co.nz)

-Tianwei Pang

## DOCTOR PETITIONING FOR SHORE-GRAFTON TRANSPORT SERVICES

AN AUCKLAND CITY Hospital doctor has started a petition in a bid to increase bus services from the North Shore to Grafton.

Dr. Garth MacLeod, who lives in Torbay, has organised the petition to appeal to the Auckland Regional Transport Authority (ARTA). MacLeod claims there is no bus service from the North Shore that directly supplies Grafton, and only very limited numbers which go anywhere near it. This poses a problem not only for some of the 6,000 staff and 1,000 patients at the hospital who might need to use the service, but also for students at the UoA Grafton campus.

In order to get to Grafton, those from the North Shore would either need to walk up from Britomart or pay the cost of another bus. While there are a few buses which go near Grafton, they are infrequent and often full—which is "basically not a service at all" MacLeod told *Craccum*.

MacLeod claims that the lack of easy bus access is for those living on the North Shore has a large impact, as it means that patient access to the hospital is compromised, and it forces many of those working or studying at Grafton to drive. This is reflected in the fact that the Auckland District Health Board must subsidise offsite parking costing \$1,846 per park per year, and is not exactly encouraging the aim of the ARTA to reduce the impact of travel on the environment.

Dr. MacLeod's proposal—which is to be handed in with the petition—suggests that bus services travel along the Northern Busway, up Symonds Street (to cater for the many university students who travel via bus), then cross Grafton Bridge to Grafton. The buses could then carry on to Newmarket.

The petition was started earlier this year, and is only for those who would use the service. As *Craccum* went to print, it had 240 signatories. It is to be handed in this Friday to the ARTA, coinciding with the end of AUSA's EcoFest.

If anyone would like to sign the petition, it is available where bus tickets are sold at the Grafton shops, or you can obtain a form by emailing [news@craccum.co.nz](mailto:news@craccum.co.nz).

-Kate Dowson

### HONORARY DOCTORATES WE'D LIKE TO SEE...

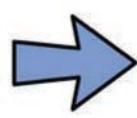
**Mike King: Politics**  
"For services to Mike King."

MIKE KING WENT FROM EXTOLLING THE VIRTUES OF THE PORK SWORD TO WIELDING IT AGAINST ITS CREATOR. DISILLUSIONED WITH WHAT HE HAD BECOME, KING TURNED ON HIS MASTERS AND IS NOW CAMPAIGNING TO DESTROY THE SAME SOW CRATES THAT PAID FOR HIS SPLENDOUR. GIVEN THAT EVERYTHING MIKE KING HAS EVER DONE HAS BEEN IN THE INTEREST OF HIS OWN FLAGRANT SELF-PROMOTION, IT'S SAFE TO SAY HE WOULDN'T TURN DOWN A CHANCE TO GET HIS HANDS ON SOMETHING FREE. THERE'S BLOOD ON YOUR HANDS MIKE, AND ALSO, IN YOUR BRAIN.



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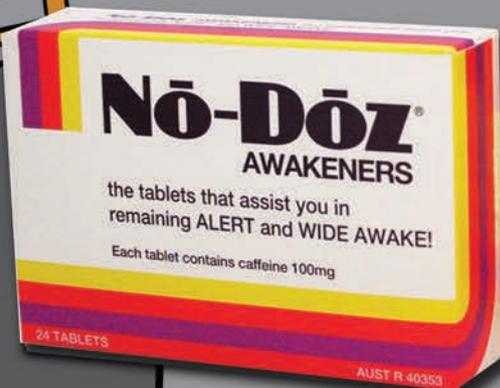
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TAPS NA4141

# THE 'CLASS A' STUDENT LOVE AFFAIR WITH STUDY HIGHS

**E**xams are looming. The glory days of O-Week, faculty steins and Drinking Horn nudity (male) are long gone. Your social life will soon be relegated to that of an eighty-year-old cat lady, your only friends will be your highlighter and a sad little cubicle in the General Library. Will you crack under the pressure? Will you abandon your dream of getting into law school and opt for a stress-free life of book-shelving instead?

Students are starting to feel the strain and some are turning to prescription drugs that can be used as cognitive enhancers - also known as 'study drugs'. Adderall for Accounting 221, Modafinil for Mathematics, and Ritalin for Roman history. Amphetamines are a common type of study drug, they stimulate brain activity, which results in high levels of concentration and prolonged alertness. These drugs are becoming as accessible on campus as weed is in Albert Park on J-Day. Students with legitimate attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) often sell their prescription pills, and fake prescriptions are only a click away through the internet. Those who have combined caffeine and prescription drugs during exam

period will know how helpful this mix can be in producing cognitive alertness. After experiencing a productive and drug-fueled study binge until about 6am, it only takes a few hours of sleep to be miraculously functional the next day.

*The Washington Post* recently published results from a US study which revealed that approximately 19% of teenagers in the United States have misused prescription drugs including for use as a study aid, and this number is expected to be on the rise. The current drug of choice in North America is Adderall - cocktail of Ritalin and other stimulants - because it tends to have less side-effects than other drugs available. In the US the use of drugs like Adderall is becoming more prevalent in elite academic programs as there is an increased feeling that if you are not on study drugs in certain Honours programmes, chances are you're screwed, because everyone else is.

Although study drugs are a popular trend in North America, New Zealand isn't immune to their growing impact. Keep one eye open while studying in the Library and you might even spot a student or two snorting Ritalin right off their textbook. Ritalin in its powder form has similar effects to cocaine and its use as a street drug has been dubbed "kiddie coke". Sarah\*, an English Literature Major at the University of Auckland, was more than happy to talk about her experience with Adderall. "I've taken Adderall to write papers that were due the next day, and to study all day [and night] for exams," she explains. "They gave me a lot of energy and also a feeling of euphoria. It made it really easy to focus for long periods at a time, and to enjoy getting work done."

Legality aside, the use of prescription drugs as a study aid raises some interesting ethical questions. Is it fair for students to use them to their advantage in competitive academic programmes? As they enhance performance, the debate has some similarities to the discourse surrounding the use of steroids in sport. Despite her use of the drugs, Sarah does not see them as completely legitimate.

"I guess it isn't really fair because it makes it a lot easier for someone to get a lot of work done in a short amount of time. More than anything, it just gives you the motivation and the drive to keep working. At the same time, it doesn't make you any smarter...if you are writing a paper, writing it on Adderall won't make you a better writer. But it definitely gives the people who take it a leg up. So, yeah, in that sense I guess it isn't really fair."

People have always found alternative creative uses for drugs. Marijuana has been used with success for: getting stoned off your face, as a treatment for glaucoma and as an alternative pain medication for cancer patients. Flight attendants always have Nurofen and Nausicalm at the ready to subdue nervous flyers (or those who garner their wrath by repeatedly pushing the passenger call button). There is also a legal drug that is abused daily on campus, and can be seen as a vital part of the student lifestyle: Caffeine. You might consume ten coffees in order to pull an all-nighter, but the barista at Starbucks won't confiscate your keys, even if your hands are shaking violently as you clutch your Venti Cappuccino. Caffeine overdose still pose a health risk in the form of anxiety, headaches, ulcers and heart palpitations, yet its purchase and consumption is not prohibited or regulated in any way. Caffeine in excessive doses was once prohibited as a performance drug at the Olympic Games for its function as a stimulant and ability to boost blood pressure and ward off fatigue. In 2004, however, it was removed from the World Anti-Doping Agency's list of banned substances. For students, caffeine can help evade sleep for long periods of time in order to write last minute essays and cram for exams. On this point, one could tenuously argue that caffeine could be considered a study drug.

One of the main issues surrounding study drugs is that the practice is still relatively new, and the long term effects on users have not been comprehensively studied. The generation of kids that were diagnosed with ADHD and prescribed Ritalin on a mass scale are only now discovering some of

## THE MORE YOU KNOW:

**Alternative Names:** "Study Drugs", "Smart Pills", "Cognitive Enhancers"

**Pharmaceutical Brands:** Ritalin, Adderall, Modafinil, Concerta, Rubifen

**What They Are:** Brain Stimulant drugs designed to treat ADHD and other disorders used without prescription to increase academic performance.

**The Stats:** The Independent reports that a 2005 survey in the US indicated that up to 7% of university students used ADHD drugs in order to pull all-nighters. Research published in the Washington post reveals that "19% of teens have abused prescription drugs including medicine for ADHD".

the ill-effects of their pill popping childhood. Unlike certain students who procure the substance through alternative means, Steven was diagnosed with ADHD and prescribed Ritalin for nine years. He describes his younger self as being a "14 year old tweaker".

"I remember one scout camp, I didn't have any meds, I had a complete psychological breakdown. Seriously lost my marbles. I think I've found most of them but I'm not sure how many I had to begin with."

Steven views Ritalin as a sort of gateway drug. "How can you say drugs are bad and then dose a kid 'till he 'calms down' without expecting that kid to be attracted to other drugs?"

New research continues to emerge in the medical community concerning the effects of ADHD medication. Long-term Ritalin use is linked to depression and Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD) in adults. The receptor cells within the dopamine system become over-sensitised and require an extra boost to be stimulated. Despite these risks, university students continue to take them. When asked if she would consider taking Adderall again, Sarah's answer was clear. "Definitely. I've taken it more than once."

The implications for the use of study drugs in universities are extensive. As these drugs become

more prevalent on campus, a debate over the ethics of their use is required. Is it fair if among the students competing for Law School entrance, some are on cognitive enhancing drugs while others are not? What if the entrance positions are limited and those students taking Ritalin or Adderall are the privileged students who gain access? If study drugs are indeed cheating, then the argument can be made that this short-cut is most accessible to those with the money to purchase the pills.

Perhaps there is a fundamental flaw in the competitive nature of our school system which drives students to take drugs in the first place. There are winners and losers at university. Your neighbour is not your friend; they are your competition. You exchange polite smiles in class while secretly hoping that they fail when exam period rolls around. With limited spots for internships, exchanges, and research grants, this same sense of competition is all around you. Academic performance enhancing drugs seem like a natural progression in this dog-eat-dog environment.

The sporting world is highly aware of the use of anabolic steroids for competition purposes. There are regulations and norms that have been established which denounce the use of drugs. Within academia however, the norms concerning performance drugs have yet to be established. While some perceive it to be cheating, others con-

sider the benefits of more focused, and, perhaps, even more intelligent students. Why are drugs that make you stupid such as alcohol and party pills legal, while those that make you focus your intelligence are illegal? On-campus stores supply energy drinks, and caffeine pills to fuel cram sessions; perhaps it is only a matter of time that study oriented amphetamines will be available on shelves as well.

Propositions for randomised drug testing at exams and anti-drug legislation pertaining to schools are emerging. Students themselves need to be aware and present in this debate in order to ensure that their voices are heard when drug norms are being established. - Laura Pellicer

### HONORARY DOCTORATES WE'D LIKE TO SEE...

Jeremy Corbett: Commerce  
"For services to statistics"

HI, JEREMY! WELCOME TO THE UNIVERSITY OF AUCKLAND. YOUR HONORARY DOCTORATE IS INSIDE ONE OF THESE TWENTY BRIEFCASES, AND YOU MUST USE YOUR CLEARLY IMPECCABLE LOGIC TO FIGURE OUT WHICH ONE IT IS. OH NO, WAIT. WE'RE CANCELLING THAT IDEA. YOU'RE NOT ENTERTAINING ENOUGH AND YOU SMELL LIKE PAINT-THINNER. BUT DON'T WORRY. YOU CAN USE THIS FAILURE AS THE BASIS FOR EVERY JOKE YOU EVER WRITE. WE GET IT. YOU TOOK AN INTERNATIONALLY LOVED GAME SHOW AND MANAGED TO RUN IT INTO THE FUCKING GROUND. GOOD GOING, FOUR EYES. YOU DON'T EVEN DESERVE A FAKE MEANINGLESS DOCTORATE. YOU CAN HAVE THIS SUITCASE FULL OF RADIUM ATOM. ENJOY YOUR SLOW AND PAINFUL DEMISE.

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# ECOPINIONS

## THE FAT CATS NEED A GOOD FEED AND A GOOD CUDDLE

IMAGINE A TAX on wholesale finance, so minuscule as to not even make a dent in the profits of large banks, yet big enough to make a profound difference in dealing with the economic crisis at home and helping to fight poverty and climate change abroad.

Sound too good to be true? Introducing the Financial Transaction Tax (FTT), also affectionately referred to as the 'Robin Hood' tax, which will support New Zealand's international obligations, reduce the volatility of our currency and will raise significant revenue without negatively affecting most New Zealanders.

This tax would miss you, the average bank customer, completely. It is a tax on wholesale finance – the high volume, high frequency trading and speculation that sees massive amounts of money being transferred internationally at the click of a button.

Profits per employee in the finance industry are a whopping 26 times higher than other business sectors in the world, making it by far the most profitable industry. Last year alone the global banking sector made an astounding \$985 billion in profits.

"The 'casino economy' of global finance has grown rapidly in recent years – international financial transactions are now 60 times the level of world GDP," says Oxfam New Zealand's Executive Director, Barry Coates. "Unfortunately the real economy is not insulated from its collapses," he adds.

In fact according to the IMF, the financial crisis has cost the world a staggering US\$11.9 trillion. The proposed FTT is an average levy of 0.05 per cent (i.e. 5 cents for a transaction of \$100). Such a tax is predicted

to curb a lot of speculative activity, but would still raise NZ\$570 billion per year globally. Here in New Zealand, the FTT could generate enough revenue to avoid raising GST, replacing taxes on life's essentials with a tax on socially destructive financial speculation.

Half of the funds raised would be used at home to help fund public services and reduce government deficits resulting from the financial crisis. A quarter of the funds would go towards supporting international



efforts to overcome extreme poverty in the developing world and support the countries that have suffered most from the financial crisis. The balance would be used to tackle climate change.

The good news is that progress on the FTT road is being made. Last month the IMF released a report to the G20 concluding that a package of taxes, including a levy and a "Financial Activities Tax" (FAT) would be the best way to repay the costs of the global economic crisis and to pay for crises to come. The IMF has now given G20 leaders the go-ahead to tax banks and hedge funds. The report is a big step forward for the growing movement around the world that supports a tax on financial transactions, and Oxfam New Zealand is once again calling on the government to take a closer look.

"A Fat Cat tax on banks is becoming a distinct reality and New Zealand should be ready and willing,"

says Coates.

The proposed FAT tax is a big step in the right direction, but the FAT cat needs to get fatter. A much bigger tax is needed, one that will raise funds for rich countries to help pay for their own health and education and provide urgently needed funds to help fight poverty and combat climate change abroad.

Before you dismiss the idea of the FTT, contemplate this: just two minutes of a global FTT could pay for basic health care for 100,000 people. Two months of the FTT would provide the funds necessary to get every child on Earth into school.

So can Robin Hood save the world's poorest?

Come and hear experts discuss the case for FTT at the upcoming panel discussion in Clock Tower 039 at the University of Auckland on Monday May 17<sup>th</sup> at 6pm. The panel features Tim Hazledine, Professor of Economics; Jim Stanford, Economist for the Canadian Auto Workers Union; and Barry Coates, Executive Director of Oxfam NZ.

To read more about the FTT, head to [www.oxfam.org.nz/robinhoodtax](http://www.oxfam.org.nz/robinhoodtax)

-Oxfam New Zealand

## ECOFEST? MORE LIKE ECOFARCE, AMIRITE?

This week is AUSA Ecofest on Campus, and to be honest, I'm fucking pissed. I have the environment jammed down my dickhole by the liberal media and their Al Gore reach-around machine and now they get to do it all over again at University. So here's some myths that I've debunked using entirely undisputable facts that can't be denied.

**Cycling is good for the environment:** Oh hey look, a cyclist! He's one less car! Less traffic! Too bad about the fifteen busses of people he's holding up! Also, bikes are made of the same shit cars are made of - metals! How do they get those metals? Mining. Is mining good for the environment? According to some hippies that I saw on Queen Street the other day, no. Sure, you're less of a dick than someone driving a Ford Falcon, but that's not really much of an achievement. No amount of green propaganda will ever justify lycra-chaffed balls either.

**New Zealand has to play its part:** No it fucking doesn't. We banned nuclear everything, even though it's a relatively (if you discount the decaying waste) clean form of energy. The truth is that if the entire population of China collectively farted, they'd emit more gas than New Zealand does today. We mean dick all, and I guarantee you that if you ask a hippie whether they wanted an emission-neutral New Zealand or a nuclear free New Zealand, they'd start

twitching and their heads would eventually explode.

**It's all some big right wing conspiracy to kill the planet for profit:** If you know about it, then it's a pretty shitty conspiracy. Speaking of shitty conspiracies, let's talk about another one: why hippies can smoke weed and not get arrested. At J-Day recently, a whole bunch of stoners lighting up in public. Were they arrested? No. I look forward to the police granting boy racers who gather to flout traffic laws the same leeway. The world doesn't need more of these people, it needs more Nixons, Reagens and Muldoons to sort them out.

**An Inconvenient Truth was a great...** Fuck off. And if that doesn't get through, let me put it in your beloved slideshow format:

Fuck  
\*Click\*  
Off!  
END OF SHOW, PRESS ESCAPE TO EXIT SCREEN.

**We're killing our planet...** I missed the point where our planet wasn't trying to kill *us*. Floods, volcanoes, earthquakes are all perfectly cool. Maybe if the planet needs our help it should stop trying to fuck us over. If Mother Nature wants to call us out, then she should just hurry up and do it so we can settle this once and

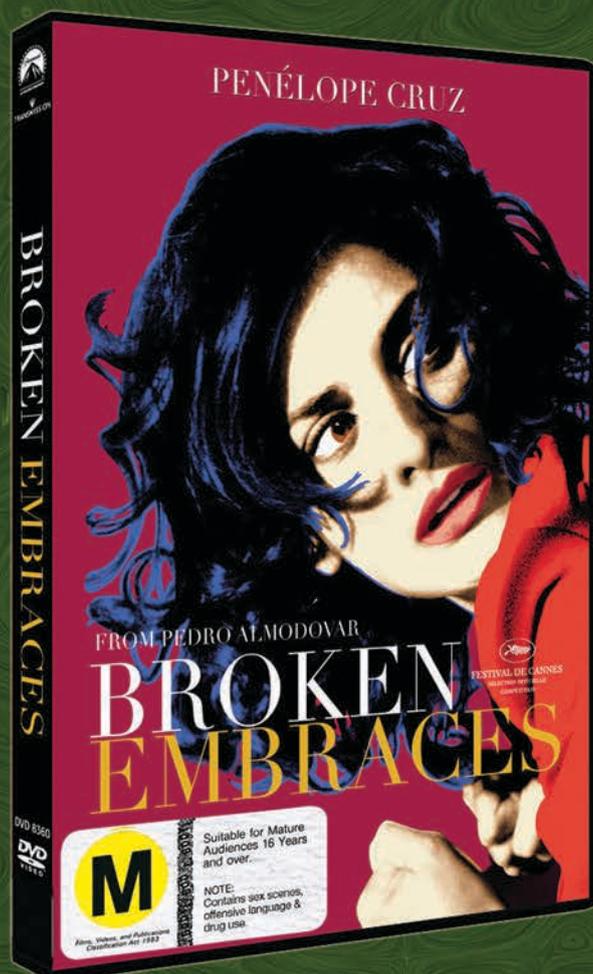
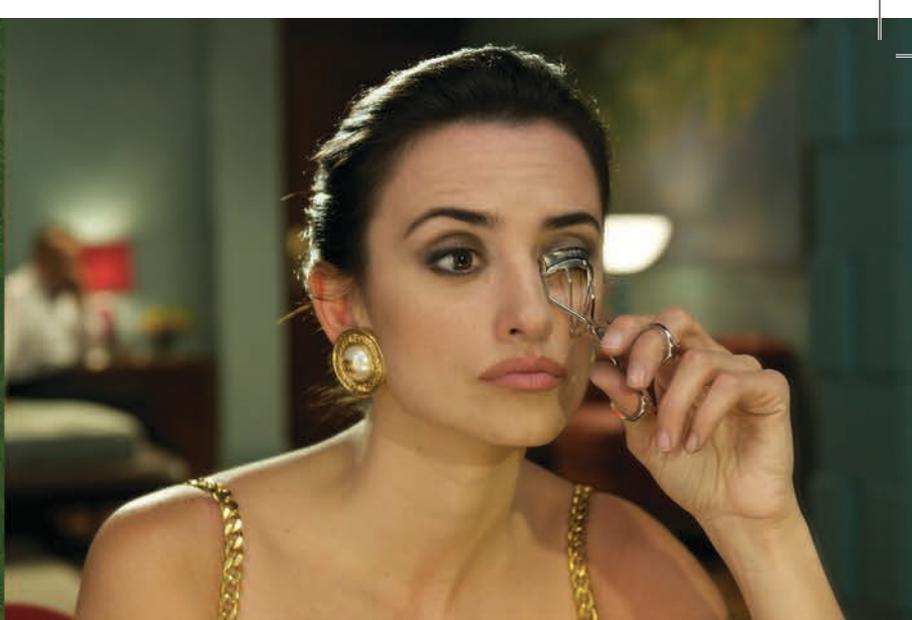
for all.

**We have to protect our landmarks.** I've been wondering about Rangitoto lately. To be honest, it's not really working for me. I've been wondering what it would fetch if we took it to somewhere that needed more land like Singapore and flogged it off. It's flawless really. We just cut it off about twenty metres above sea level so it will still diffuse tsunamis, and we'd also finally get to see what's on the other side. If the America's Cup is anything to go by, it's some sort of boring sporting event.

**Capitalism is wrong!** The only difference between me and the people who unreasonably spout this sort of one-sided shit religiously is that I know why I do it: I hate my dad. What's your excuse? Seriously, when will these people realise that showing an inability to enter into debate without accusing people of being neoliberal right wing <insert negative label here> is like resorting to fat jokes when you've proven yourself incapable of constructing an argument. That aside, "Your mum" jokes will always remain a trump card capable of winning any argument. Except against me. So go along to EcoFest and remember it's all lies. But they're entertaining lies. And in the end, isn't that what matters? The answer is 'No'.

- Armin Meiwes

*Spanish film icon, Pedro Almodovar teams up once again with his muse, Penelope Cruz, to produce Broken Embraces, a hard boiled neo-noir tale of love, guilt and betrayal. Broken Embraces comes to DVD from May 26. Sixteen years ago, Harry Caine lost his eyesight, his lover and his life as he knew it in a tragic car accident on the island of Lanzarote. Now blinded, he lives as a reclusive writer sharing his life only with his agent Judit and her adult son Diego, the accident and the life before long since condemned to memories never to be revisited. But the truth will come out, when Diego is hospitalised after an accidental drug overdose, Harry is finally persuaded to give voice to his previous life, as the famous film director Mateo Blanco, the story of his love affair with the beautiful Lena, mistress to Mateo's billionaire financier and tale of jealousy, betrayal and violence that resulted.*



**Broken Embraces (originally *Los Abrazos Rotos*) was nominated for The Golden Palm at Cannes Film Festival, Best Foreign Language film at the Golden Globes and the BAFTAs.**

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## The Human Rights Implications of Climate Change

CLIMATE CHANGE IS increasingly identified as one of the major crises affecting the international community in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Although climate change is already understood as an environmental problem, and increasingly as an economic one, the human rights implications of climate change are given little attention by world leaders.

What are the human rights implications of climate change? From new health risks, such as the increased incidence of malaria, to mass migration, to threatened food and water supplies, to the disappearance of shelter, land, livelihoods and cultures, climate change creates human rights concerns at every turn.

The United Nations Human Rights Council recognized this in its resolution 7/23 "Human rights and climate change" (28 March 2008), expressing concern that climate change "poses an immediate and far-reaching threat to people and communities around the world."

Mary Robinson – former President of Ireland, former UN High Commissioner for Human Rights and President of the Ethical Globalization Initiative – has been one of the greatest proponents in recent years of a Human Rights-centric approach to Climate Change. In a statement released in the run up to Copenhagen, Robinson declared: "*The cruel fact about global climate change is that while the problem has largely been caused by emissions from the richest countries, the poorest will pay the price.*" Nevertheless, the Copenhagen climate summit in December 2009 failed to produce the fair, ambitious and legally binding agreement that millions of citizens around the world demanded.

Poor countries and communities are the most vulnerable and indeed most likely to be worst hit, given their concentration in the tropics, their heavy reliance on agriculture and their limited capacity to deal with shocks.

Millions of people around the world look to the future and see hope, justice, and opportunity. They will continue to speak out to get the real deal that the world needs in 2010. The most marginalised and vulnerable people need to be heard by leaders if a climate deal is going to meet their needs.

- Thom Clark

AS A KEY PART OF OUR EVENTS CALENDAR THIS SEMESTER, AMNESTY ON CAMPUS HOSTS THE ANNUAL HUMAN RIGHTS PANEL DISCUSSION TO AIR IMPORTANT ISSUES. THE ISSUE OF WHETHER NEW ZEALAND HAS AN OBLIGATION TO ACCOMMODATE ENVIRONMENTALLY DISPLACED PEOPLES IS AN IMPORTANT QUESTION FROM A HUMAN RIGHTS PERSPECTIVE AND ONE OF MANY THAT WILL BE DISCUSSED THIS THURSDAY AT 7PM.

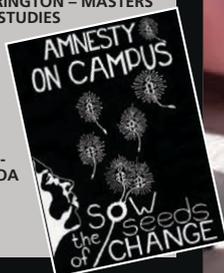
COME ALONG FOR AN EVENING OF INTERESTING DISCUSSION FROM A RANGE OF SPEAKERS, INCLUDING:

- DR GRAHAM SEM - NOBEL PEACE PRIZE LAUREATE AS A MEMBER OF THE IPCC
- VERNON TAVA - RESEARCH FELLOW AT THE NEW ZEALAND CENTRE FOR ENVIRONMENTAL LAW
- BARRY COATES - EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF OXFAM NEW ZEALAND
- GARY CRANSTON - ENVIRONMENTAL ACTIVIST
- CHAIRED BY KATHY ERRINGTON - MASTERS STUDENT IN POLITICAL STUDIES

WHERE: LIB B10 LECTURE THEATRE, LIBRARY BUILDING BASEMENT.

WHEN: THIS THURSDAY, 20 MAY 2010, 7PM.

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## GETTING YOUR MAC ON: SEX IN AN INCREASINGLY DIGITAL WORLD

PRESUMABLY THE INTERNET was originally intended for noble purposes. Its potential for good is limitless. An information super-highway created to connect the world and amplify our opportunities to express knowledge, create friendships, and to generally better mankind as a species. But as is the case with other noteworthy inventions in human history, it was soon tainted. Tainted by the terrible, disgusting and decidedly necessary presence of sex. Before long, it had been completely overrun. No one is safe from the sleaze that inhabits the worldwide web. Only a few years ago this filth was largely a solitary process, involving a hurried selection followed by a vigorous anaerobic exercise and a shame shower. However, as the internet has evolved, so have the ways we choose to add sex to our digital experiences. Online matchmakers create ways for you to (supposedly) meet with strangers and explore your deepest, most revolting fantasies. Or, if you're legit, Facebook and other social networking sites mean you barely have to leave your house to court a potential mate, and can get to know them entirely through your computer screen. In our modern sex-crazed world, getting your rocks off is easier than it's ever been, regardless of what floats your boat. You can actively seek out porn and seedy relationships for one-off, purely sexual adventures, or you can use social networking sites and other forms of digital communication in an attempt to find some more meaningful poon-tang or dick.

As the Internet has evolved, so has its part in our greater sex culture. In its youngest form, the only presence of sex online was pages from *Playboy* and *FHM*, scanned into digital images and posted online. And for a good long while, that was it. Internet pornography was the only way a computer was going to help you achieve an orgasm. This solitary basement five knuckle shuffle was largely given the stigma (and perhaps rightly so, I won't discuss that here) of being pathetic, lonely and desperate. And perhaps it was, but it spread quickly, in the kind of insidious way only sex can. As porn became a major part of the internet, making billions of dollars worldwide and shoving the idea of sexuality down our throats harder than anything ever had, it became less a solitary process, and more a tool to express people's individual desires. With this expression of desire came an intrinsic want to see it satisfied. And as such, online sex sites began to crop up.

An online sex website works, in theory, similarly to a dating website. You sign up to said website, put in a collection of personal details and spend the afternoon trolling through lists of potential sex partners, or simply wait for them to come to you. In the good old days of quiet prudishness, the only thing you were actually likely to get out of joining one of these sites was a constant and vulgar collection of spam to clog your email address. However, whether or not this has changed with the digital sex revolution, is a mystery that requires more sleuthing and research than should be committed to a one thousand-word article. If you were visit to Adultfriendfinder.com, one of the most well-known sex sites, you would encounter a collection of pictures showing a range of unfeasibly beautiful and slutty women who are willing to have sex with you right *fucking* now. However, look closely and you'll see that these images are only for illustrative purposes and do not depict the actual women you're likely to meet. The

long and short of it is, while it may be possible to find sex through sites like this, chances are it'll be of a low standard and won't be worth the junk mail.

However, random singular encounters for a purely sexual goal isn't the only way to use the internet for your sexual gain. The ideals of digital sex have seemingly moved hand in hand with the idea of digital relationships, and their mainstream acceptance. Today, it is *almost* socially acceptable to admit to people that you met or dated someone as a result of a purely digital introduction, through a dating site or perhaps even an online game. Yet it is still seen as pathetic, shameful and embarrassing, to the point where couples who have met online will fabricate a fictional first encounter to avoid shame from their friends. It seems odd then, that it is completely acceptable, and even perhaps normal, for a person to meet someone in person once, and then proceed to get to know them almost entirely through social networking sites, online chat software and txting. Digital communications are speeding up the courting process, allowing people to judge a person's taste, intelligence, sense of humour and a range of other characteristics without the effort and potential awkwardness of ever leaving the home. Putting up a good first impression via txting and Facebook, through choosing your words carefully and sending out the right signals, is almost as important, in terms of the back and forth of dating, as the actual dates are, or so it seems. Once a relationship has begun, there's a further digital expectation seemingly put in place; txting and keeping in touch on a daily or hourly basis with whomever you're with is the norm. None of this is technically a bad thing; it just shows the technological presence we've come to expect in our daily lives.

The real question is; where do we go from here? The way we look at relationships is constantly evolving. People will always find different things acceptable as time goes on. The concept of stereotypical dating, as seen on *Friends*, is slowly being subsidised and replaced by digital chat and networking sites. Online dating sites are no longer totally unacceptable by social norms. Chat Roulette is pushing the boundaries in terms of the social use of webcams and of how many random penises you're willing to see before vomiting in revulsion. In a society where technology dictates everything, how relationships change isn't really up to us anymore. Probably best not to worry about. Just log on and enjoy the ride.

-Mike Mizanian

### HONORARY DOCTORATES WE'D LIKE TO SEE...

Paul Holmes: Anthropology

"For services to Cultural Awareness and International Relations"

THE CHEEKY WHITEY HIMSELF, PAUL HOLMES HAS NEVER BEEN TOO FAR REMOVED FROM CONTROVERSY. OVER THE COURSE OF HIS CAREER, HOLMES MANAGED TO PROMOTE A PROFOUND SENSE OF EQUALITY THROUGH HIS POWER TO ALIENATE VIEWERS OF ALL AGES, RACES AND GENDERS. THE SPECTACULAR FAILURE OF HIS PRIME SHOW PAUL HOLMES AND HIS SOLO ALBUM HAVE LEFT HOLMES PROBABLY IN NEED OF A SELF-ESTEEM BOOST, AND AN ANTHROPOLOGY DOCTORATE MIGHT HELP.

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# THE EVENTS GUIDE

Want to get your event/gig listed? Email [events@craccum.co.nz](mailto:events@craccum.co.nz), or add the events guide as a friend on Facebook ([www.facebook.com/craccumevent](http://www.facebook.com/craccumevent)) and invite them to your functions and box car socials.

## MONDAY 17 MAY

### SPORT - Authentic Aiki Jujitsu & Kicking

Pioneer Women's Memorial Hall, Cnr High St and Freyberg Pl. 6PM - 7PM. R15.

### GIG - Code 107

Racket Bar, 6-10 Roukai Lane, CBD. 6PM. FREE.

### FILM - Auckland Film Society:

McLaren Dazzlers  
Academy Cinemas, 44 Lorne St, Auckland CBD. 6:30PM - 8PM. R15.

### SPORT - ANZ Championship 2010 -

Mystics v Pulse  
The Trusts Stadium Arena, 65-67 Central Park Dr, Henderson. 7PM.

### DANCE - 2010 Made in New Zealand

skyCity Theatre, Cnr Victoria and Federal Sts, Auckland CBD. 8PM. \$35.

### JAZZ - Monday Night Jazz: Stomp

'n' Blues  
Gus Fisher Gallery, 74 Shortland Street, Auckland CBD. 8PM. \$15.

### GIG - Acoustic Song & Music Session

The Thirsty Dog, 469 K Rd, Auckland CBD. 8PM - 11:30PM. FREE.

### DJ - Student DJ Competition

Ivory Lounge, 421 Parnell Rd, Parnell. 7PM. FREE.

### ROCK - Rock'n'Roll Social

Papatoetoe RSA, 22 Wallace Rd, Papa-

### Infamous Pub Quiz 8pm

## SHADOWS

YOUR STUDENT BAR

## WEDNESDAY 19 MAY

### GIG - The Morning Steppa

The Lucha Lounge, 1 York Street, Newmarket. 5:30PM. FREE.

### HIP HOP - Loop Sessions

Rakinos, Level 1, 35 High St, Auckland CBD. 7PM. FREE. R18.

### JAZZ - Creative Jazz Club Aotearoa:

Neil Watson Trio  
One 2 One Cafe, 121 Ponsonby Road, Ponsonby. 7:30PM - 10:45PM. \$10.

### DJ - The Sister Act

Chapel Bar & Bistro, 147 Ponsonby Rd, Ponsonby. 7:30PM. FREE. R18.

### FOLK MUSIC - Beoga

Kings Arms, 59 France St, Newton. 8PM. \$30. R18.

### GIG - The Circling Sun, DJ Truent

Ponsonby Social Club, 152 Ponsonby Road, Ponsonby. 8PM. FREE.

### GIG - Sounds Of The Countryside

Khuja Lounge, Level 3, 536 Queen St, Auckland CBD. 9PM - 12AM. R18.

land. 8PM. Tickets from \$35 +BF.

### THEATRE - We're Strangers Here

The Rose Centre, School Rd, Belmont, Takapuna. 8PM. Tickets from \$20+BF.

### GIG - Rule of Theives, Take the

Willing & The Gaze  
Kings Arms, 59 France St, Newton. 8PM. FREE.

### DJs - The Gibson - Thursday Nights

The Gibson, 26 Uxbridge Road, Howick. 9PM. FREE. R18.

### GIG - GOLDRUSH feat. MAMPI

SWIFT & IC3 (3 DECK SET)  
Studio, 340 K Rd. 9PM. \$2.

### DJs - DJ Kutz

Fu Bar, 4 Wolfe St, Auckland. 9PM. Tickets from \$15+BF. R18.

### GIG - Jackie Bristow

Juice Bar at The Windsor Castle, 144 Parnell Road, Parnell. 9:30PM. FREE.

### The Early Birds & Clap Clap

Riot 8pm

## SHADOWS

YOUR STUDENT BAR

## FRIDAY 21 MAY

### MARKET - Wesley Community Centre

Market Day  
Wesley Community Centre, 740 Sandringham Rd, Mt. Roskill. 7AM. FREE.

## SATURDAY 22 MAY

### MARKET - Otara Markets

Newbury Lane, Otara. 6AM - 12PM. FREE.

### MARKET - Parnell Farmers' Market

Jubilee Building, 545 Parnell Rd, Parnell. 8AM - 12PM. FREE.

### SPORT - Driftopia - Drift Expression Sessions

Pukekohe Park Raceway, 222-250 Manukau Rd, Pukekohe. 8AM - 5PM. \$10.

### SPORT - Beginner's Guide to Off

Road  
Auckland Domain, Domain Dr, Grafton. 8AM - 9:30AM. \$40.

### EVENT - Birman Cat Show

Auckland Normal Intermediate School, Poronui Street Mt Eden. 9AM - 4PM. \$4.

### MARKET - Karangahape Rd Street

Market  
Long bus shelter location, Karangahape Road. 9AM - 3PM. FREE.

### MARKET - City Designers Market

Ellen Melville Hall, Cnr High St & Freyberg Place. 9AM - 5PM. FREE.

### CONCERT - NZSO: Dame Malvina

Major  
Auckland Town Hall, THE EDGE@, 303 Queen St, Auckland CBD. 3PM.

### DJ - DJ Chris Cox followed by DJ

Low Key  
Neighbourhood Brewbar, 498 New

Bones, Split Second, Cash Cult and The Lost Boys 5pm

## SHADOWS

YOUR STUDENT BAR

## SUNDAY 24 MAY

### MARKET - A Day of Psychics

Ceramco Park Function Centre, 120 Glendale Road, Glen Eden. 10AM - 4PM. \$5.

### DJ - Sunday Session ft. Acoustic

Jade Pritchard  
Kingsland Neighbourhood Brewbar, 498 New North Rd, Kingsland. 2:30PM. FREE.

### SPORT - Vodafone Warriors v

South Sydney  
Mount Smart Stadium, Beasley Ave, Penrose. 4PM.

### GIG - Starlight Sundays

The Windsor Castle, 144 Parnell Rd, Parnell. 4PM - 7PM. FREE.

### JAZZ - Twilight Jazz and Blues Sessions

Ivory Lounge, 421 Parnell Rd, Parnell. 7PM - 10PM. FREE.

### THEATRE - Bjorn Again - The

World's No.1 ABBA Experience  
Aotea Centre, 50 Mayoral Dr, Auckland CBD. 8PM - 10:30PM.

**ROCK - Rock'n'Roll Social**  
Papatoetoe RSA, 22 Wallace Rd, Papatoetoe. 7PM. FREE. R18.

**GAMBLING - 21- Blackjack Tournament**  
Cranks Restaurant Bar, 10 Mercari Way, Albany. 7PM - 11PM. FREE. R18.

**DJ Spade 5pm**  
**Singles Pool Comp 9pm**

**SHADOWS**  
YOUR STUDENT BAR

**TUESDAY**  
18 MAY

**MARKET - Upcycled Original Clothing Market**  
Pioneer Women's Memorial Hall, Cnr High St and Freyberg Pl, Auckland. 10AM - 4PM. FREE.

**SEMINAR - Riette Ferreira**  
University of Auckland Music Theatre, 6 Symonds Street, CBD. 1:05PM - 2PM. FREE.

**GIG - UNITEC Music Students**  
Waitakere Central Library, 3 Ratanui Street, Henderson. 3:30PM. FREE.

**GIG - Acoustic**  
Rakinos, Level 1, 35 High St, Auckland CBD. 5:30PM - 7:30PM. FREE. R18

**CONCERT - Discover NZ Music**  
**Orchestra**  
Auckland Town Hall, 303 Queen St, Auckland CBD. 6:30PM. FREE.

**THEATRE - Avenue Q**  
The Civic, Cnr Queen & Wellesley Sts. Runs till 30 May. 7PM - 9PM. R15.

**JAZZ - Auckland Jazz and Blues Club present: The New Phil Broadhurs**  
Pt Chevalier RSA, 1136 Great North Road, Pt Chevalier. 7:30PM. FREE.

**GIG - Live Music**  
The Mexican Cafe, 67 Victoria St West, CBD. 8:30PM - 11PM. FREE.

Khuja Lounge, Level 3, 536 Queen St, Auckland CBD. 9PM - 12AM. R18.

**GIG - Trigger Theory**  
Roasted Addition Cafe, 487 New North Rd, Kingsland. 9PM - 11:45PM. FREE.

**DJ - Electr Vibes**  
On The Rocks, 491 Pakuranga Rd, Highland Park. 9:30PM - 3AM. FREE. R18.

**DJ - Holy Fuck**  
Flight Lounge, 1 Fort Lane, CBD. 9PM.  
**CLUBS - The AU Frat Highlighter Party**  
24 St. Benedicts St, CBD. 10PM. \$10 presales. R18.

**Karaoke 8pm**  
**SHADOWS**  
YOUR STUDENT BAR

**THURSDAY**  
20 MAY

**FESTIVAL - Disney on Ice presents a Disneyland Adventure**  
Vector Arena, 34 Mahuhu Crescent, Auckland. 11AM. Tickets from \$28.50+BF.

**MUSIC - Luchtime Concert Series: St Mary's College**  
Auckland City Library, 44 - 46 Lorne Street, Auckland. 12PM. FREE.

**MUSICAL - Avenue Q**  
The Civic, Cnr Queen & Wellesley Sts, Auckland. 7:30PM. Tickets from \$59.90 + BF. R15

**MUSIC - Student Jazz Ensemble: Jazz Large Ensembles**  
Kenneth Myers Centre, 74 Shortland St, Auckland. 7:30PM. FREE.

**DJs - DJ General Lee**  
Chapel Bar & Bistro, 147 Ponsonby Rd, Ponsonby. 7:30PM. FREE. R18.

**THEATRE - The New Zealand Post Season of Horseplay**  
Maidment Theatre, 8 Alfred St, Auckland.

**tre Market Day**  
Wesley Community Centre, 740 Sandringham Rd, Mt. Roskill. 7AM. FREE.  
**GIG - Roast Release Party w/ support from Blackbird**  
Juice Bar at The Windsor Castle, 144 Parnell Road, Parnell. 6PM. R18. \$10+BF.

**CHARITY - Celebrity Waiters Dinner 2010 for Dress for Success Auckland**  
Hyatt Regency, Cnr Princes St & Walterloo Quadrant, Auckland. 6:30PM. \$250+BF.

**MUSICAL - Peter Pan**  
Aotea Centre, 50 Mayoral Dr, Auckland. 7PM.

**MUSICAL - Avenue Q**  
The Civic, Cnr Queen & Wellesley Sts, Auckland. 7:30PM. Tickets from \$59.90 + BF. R15.

**PARTY - The Bachelor of the Year Party**  
CT Club (Commerce Club of Auckland), 27-33 Ohinerau St, Remuera. 7:30PM. \$30+BF. R18.

**THEATRE - The New Zealand Post Season of Horseplay**  
Maidment Theatre, 8 Alfred St, Auckland. 8PM. Tickets from \$35 +BF.

**THEATRE - We're Strangers Here**  
The Rose Centre, School Rd, Belmont, Takapuna. 8PM. Tickets from \$20+BF.

**MUSIC Pair of Halves - Acoustic Duo**  
GBS Bar & Restaurant at The Prospect, Cnr Picton St & Uxbridge Road, Howick. 9PM. FREE.

**"Friday Live" from 5pm - DJ Spade**  
**Mother Motor and Interconnector**  
**DJ Sunil**

**SHADOWS**  
YOUR STUDENT BAR

**DJ - DJ Chris Cox followed by DJ Low Key**  
Neighbourhood Brewbar, 498 New North Rd, Kingsland. 5:30PM. FREE.

**DJ - DJ Sweetmixkids**  
Nuffield Street Trading Co. Brewbar, 22-27 Nuffield St, Newmarket. 7:30PM. FREE.

**GIG - "In The Pink" - Pink Floyd Tribute Show**  
Papakura RSA, 40 Elliot St, Papakura. 8PM. \$15. R18.

**GIG - Dueling Piano's with Deryn Trainer and Murray Hancock**  
Ivory Lounge, 421 Parnell Rd, Parnell. 8:30PM. FREE.

**GIG - Tim Guy 'Big World' Album Release**  
Galatos, 17 Galatos St, Newton. 8:30PM. R18.

**GIG - Battle Circus and Decortica**  
Kings Arms, 59 France St, Newton. 8:30PM. \$10. R18.

**GIG - The Outsiders: Album Release Tour**  
Whammy Bar, 183 K Rd, St Kevin's Arcade, Auckland CBD. 9PM. R18.

**GIG - Atsushi and the Moisties**  
Khuja Lounge, Level 3, 536 Queen St. 10PM. R18.

**DJ - Phoenix - Black Party**  
Pyramid Night Club and Lounge Bar, 26 Wyndham Street, Auckland CBD. 10PM. \$20. R18.

**DJ - Dropped: Bass Kleph (Aust)**  
Be Club, 8 Commerce Street, Auckland CBD. 10PM. \$10. R18.

**THEATRE - Peter Pan**  
Aotea Centre, 50 Mayoral Dr, Auckland CBD. Check interwebs for session times and prices.

**DJ - CXC Sapphire Nights with DJ Mandhoo**  
Sapphire Highland Park, 491 C Pakuranga Road, Highland Park. 10PM. FREE. R18.

**FAMILY - Disney on Ice presents a Disneyland Adventure**  
Vector Arena, 34 Mahuhu Crescent, Auckland CBD. Runs till 23 May.

Aotea Centre, 50 Mayoral Dr, Auckland CBD. 8PM - 10:30PM.

# PICKS OF THE WEEK

**MONDAY**  
SPORT - ANZ Championship 2010 - Mystics v Pulse

**TUESDAY**  
Discover NZ Music Concert - Auckland Philharmonia Orchestra

**WEDNESDAY**  
CLUBS - The AU Frat Highlighter Party

**THURSDAY**  
DJs - The Gibson - Thursday Nights

**FRIDAY**  
FESTIVAL - Disney on Ice presents a Disneyland Adventure

**SATURDAY**  
DJ - Dropped: Bass Kleph

**SUNDAY**  
SPORT - Vodafone Warriors v South Sydney

# COCKTAIL

## CHERRY VODKA CHOCOLATE MARTINI

**Ingredients**  
60ml chocolate flavoured liqueur  
60ml cherry wine  
60ml vodka  
15ml chocolate syrup  
Fresh cherries and chocolate-dipped cherries to garnish

**Instructions**  
Fill a cocktail shaker with ice  
Pour in the chocolate cherry liqueurs and vodka  
Shake  
Drizzle the chocolate syrup into a chilled martini cocktail glass  
Pour in the liqueur cocktail mix  
Garnish with the cherries

**MOTHERS OF DARKNESS**

**THE THOMAS OLIVER BAND**

**THE PINK POUND EXPERIENCE**

**RACKETS**

**MIHO WADA**

**GLOWDOGS**

**MAD PATTERN**



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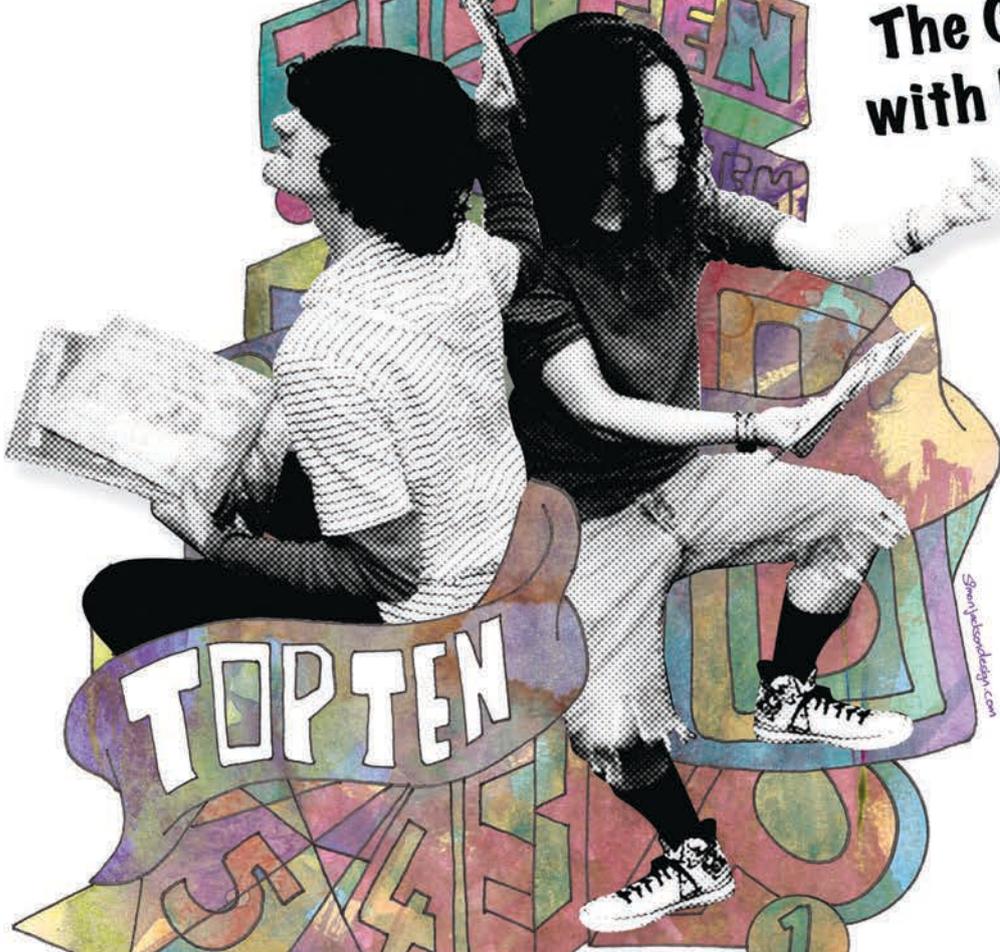
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**95FM**

# MMP. FPP. WTF?

## Why are we having a referendum on the electoral system?

ELECTORAL REFORM IS not a sexy topic. List MPs, confidence and supply agreements and overhang seats don't get anyone that excited. Lately with the UK elections in the news and the amusing way in which British commentators have hysterically been predicting the end of the world as a result of a hung parliament, talk of electoral reform seems to be heating up.

It's rather ironic that while the United Kingdom is considering reforming their current electoral system (First Past the Post), the Government is asking New Zealanders about their thoughts on the current electoral system that we currently have (Mixed Member Proportional).

The move towards MMP came during a time in which both major parties had pushed through unpopular policies at high speed. Adding to this, people got fed up with the broken promises from each of the major parties. To add insult to the injury, people who did not want Labour or National felt like didn't have much of a choice. The social demographics of New Zealand were changing and people began to believe that the Parliament should represent all the diverse opinions in New Zealand, not just two. In the early 1990s, New Zealanders rejected the First Past the Post electoral system and voted for a new system of electing our political representatives. 1996 was the first election that was held under MMP.

First Past the Post (FPP) is the current electoral system that Britain has, and one we used to have. Under FPP, political parties wishing to form a government have to win the majority of electoral seats around the country. To win a seat, a political candidate only has to get more voters than the next polling candidate.

This system is highly unfair. For instance, candidate A might get only 38 percent of the vote with the rest of the 62 percent of the voters is split amongst the other candidates. When you look at it, such a result indicates that more people voted against candidate A, yet the candidate would be declared the winner. If you extrapolate this out to the entire population, you get a situation like in New Zealand in 1990 where the Labour Party won the popular vote but the National Government won more seats.

Like wise, with the example of the British election it's simple to see the inherent unfairness in the system. The Liberal Democrats despite getting 23 percent of the popular vote only received 8 percent of the seats in the House of Commons.

Such a system can only breed apathy. If you lived in Labour safe seat, but wanted a National Government, your vote was entirely wasted. The people who had any power to change the Government were people who lived in swing seats. If people feel that their vote is worthless, it's easy to understand why they would see no value in voting.

In 1990 the National Government promised an election on the electoral system and in a series of two referenda in 1992 and 1993, New Zealanders voted for Mixed Member Proportional. We now get two votes, one for our local electorate MP and the other for our party vote. Such a system ensures that the breakdown of votes is represented proportionality in the house. For instance, if a party receives twenty percent of the vote, they get twenty percent of the seats.

In 2008, the National Government promised to hold a referendum on the MMP. There is currently a referendum bill that is currently before Parliament that empowers the Government to run a referendum, what the process will be and whether or not there

will be spending caps on each side of the campaign.

The proposed process for the MMP referendum is very similar to the original referendum question that the public were given in 1992. The first question will ask you: "should the current MMP system be retained?" The second question then asks: "Regardless of your choice above, if there is a change, which voting system would you choose?" The other electoral systems that will be offered are: First Past the Post, Supplementary Member, Single Transferable Vote and Preferential Voting.

If people vote to retain the current MMP system, it automatically triggers an independent review of the system which will be open to public submissions and will recommend changes to the Government. If people do not vote to retain MMP, there will be a subsequent referendum in which MMP will be put against the highest polling option (from the original election).

There are some issues with MMP. For instance, it is unfair that while New Zealand First received more party votes than the ACT Party, the ACT Party was able to receive five MPs, yet New Zealand First received none. This is because Rodney Hide won an electorate seat which then allowed him to bring in four MPs.

Furthermore, the issue of list MPs has vexed some people with people arguing that many MPs who have been rejected by their constituents are still returned to Parliament on the party lists. This could be solved by using open lists in which voters could rank MPs on party lists, rather than letting political parties decide.

If you do support MMP, but want to see some

changes, the best thing to do is to vote to retain MMP, as this will trigger an independent review of the system. If MMP is not retained, there will be no chance to have your say on the small changes you want to see to the system.

At the end of the day, do we need to change our electoral system?

There is no huge sea change of opinion against the electoral system like in the late 1980s and early 1990s. Although there were some hiccups when MMP was first implemented, politicians have learnt from the mistakes that were made early on.

There is also a sense of pride in our system. One only has to look over to the British Isles to see the dying remains of a stale, elitist and backwards system

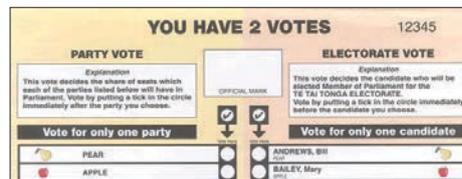
that consistently delivers the same old boring white men into Parliament. New Zealanders should be proud to have a dynamic and progressive electoral system that reflects our egalitarian values and ensures that the people

that represent us, actually reflect who we are as a country.

MMP is a good system - it has delivered proportional results, has increased the diversity of our elected representatives and has delivered stable Government over the last three elections. Most democracies in the world have moved to proportional systems like ours and we shouldn't go back to an unfair electoral system that has a poor record of delivering truly representative government.

If you're interested in finding out more about the Campaign to Keep MMP, visit [campaignformmp.org.nz](http://campaignformmp.org.nz)

- Sophia Blair



## INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

Hey guys! Michael and Nicole here again.

As this goes to print, Ecofest will be upon us all. I've been working really closely with your Environmental co-officers Lucia McClean and Natalie Mitchell-Lowe, so I know first hand that this Ecofest should be a pretty good. Lucia and Natalia ought to be commended for putting on such a week-long event such as this. Turn up. Seriously (flip to their column elsewhere in this magazine to find out details of the events coming up).

Since this poor excuse of a column is meant to be dedicated to global issues more focused towards politics, some of you who read this column (yes all friggen five of you! You know who you are!), might ask why I'm cheerleading for the greenies and being such a limp wrist for the environment. Environmental issues are becoming increasingly global issues especially with climate change, peak oil and peak resources among other things. Amnesty on campus will be holding a discussion panel on climate change from a human rights point of view, while Oxfam will be holding an event on the infamous Robin Hood tax and its role within the environmental movement.

**"Can Robin Hood save the environment, and the world's poorest?" 6:00-7:30 pm Monday May**



17<sup>th</sup>, Clocktower 039.

**Amnesty on Campus climate change panel debate. 7:00-9:00pm Thursday May 20<sup>th</sup>, Library Basement10.**

**"Questioning Israel - Liberated Jewish thought on Israel Palestine" 7:00- 9:00pm Tuesday May 18<sup>th</sup>, Conference Centre Lecture Theatre (architecture building), 22 Symond Street.**

Also going down is this event, hosted by the Palestine Human Rights Campaign and supported by Students for Justice in Palestine and Stand UP! Anthony Lowenstein is a Jewish journalist based in Sydney and will be speaking on Liberated Jewish thought, and in particular his opposition to Zionism.

Come visit us in our office (right underneath Shadows, across the balcony from Cap 'n Gown). Our office hours are Monday-Wednesday 2-3pm. Sorry to sound repetitive but we are your student representatives so get in touch with us for whatever you need!

Yet again, get in touch with us if you want to know of upcoming events or if you would like us to help publicising/putting on events. Email: [iao@ausa.org.nz](mailto:iao@ausa.org.nz) Phone: 09 309 0789 ext 243. Facebook: (look up AUSA International Affairs 2010)

- Michael Lai and Nicole Boyce

# GEEK WEEKLY

```
<Sigurd> a sprite is anything not
static
<SRElyisian> a sprite is a vari-
able object
<SRElyisian> be it 2d or 3d
<TorMuck> a sprite is a fucking
soda
<TorMuck> you god damn geekass
bastards
```

DESPITE *AVATAR*'S BOX office success, the jury is most definitely still out on 3D. You get a few people who claim it made them giddy, some who claim it was immersive, and others who say it adds very little. After a few major 3D releases, and with more on the way, 3DTVs are now starting to find their way onto the walls of some (extremely well off) New Zealand homes. It's still very much a first generation product, so we're taking a look at the ins and outs of 3DTVs and what you can expect.

Samsung has been quick to the market with their range of 3D LEDs and plasma screens.

The Samsung sets use the same electronic shutter goggles that most 3DTV sets will be using. The TV tells the goggles which eye should be open and which should be closed to create a 3D effect when the viewer looks at the image on the screen, which the TV manipulates to work with the goggles. These goggles require charging and will probably cost somewhere near \$200 a pair, and anyone who wants to watch will need to be wearing some.

Other manufacturers like Visio are opting for the more traditional polarised glasses option, much like the ones most people would have used when they watched *Avatar* in cinemas. These have the obvious benefit of being cheaper, and we can't really compare them to the shutter technology because we haven't seen home cinema applications of either one. To make things even more diffused, Toshiba has a set in the works that uses the Playstation 3 'Cell' technology and won't require glasses at all. Curiously, the Sony sets that are coming to the market will use the shutter goggles. It's all horribly reminiscent of the Blu-ray/HD-DVD format war of the mid 2000s and will probably severely limit the penetration of 3D into living rooms.

So after you've spent the GDP of a small nation on your TV and goggles, you'll probably need something to watch. Samsung's 3DTVs are capable of upscaling existing 2D content to 3D, although initial reviews indicate stuff that's specifically made for 3D viewing looks far better. Sony's latest PS3 firmware update added support for 3D Blu-ray and we hope that 1080p will eliminate the blurring effect that dogged *Avatar*. Finally, the FIFA World Cup in South Africa is being broadcast in 3DHD - on ESPN. We're not sure where this leaves New Zealanders, but sport will play a big part in deciding how fast 3DTV gets into



homes. While the idea of seeing a Formula One car hurtle through narrow Monaco streets is appealing, commercial reality will dictate whether sports and broadcasters will want to adapt their technologies, with some of them only recently (and some yet to) adopt high definition.

## KEYBOARD: MICROSOFT SIDEWINDER X4

THE SIDEWINDER X4 is a damn good looking piece of kit. Sleek and refined, it almost makes our Logitech G15 look cartoonish. If looks alone decided how good a piece of hardware was, then the X4 would be a winner as soon as you laid eyes on it. Microsoft have also managed to back it up with a very solid feature set.

The X4 features notably flatter keys than other keyboards, with the function keys along the top about the same size as you'd find on a laptop keyboard. Like the G15, the X4 features six macro keys down the left-hand side, but the X4 features a macro recording key with an LED light to let you know it's active. The keyboard has a palm rest that isn't detachable, but it features a very attractive matt-black textured surface that feels as good as it looks. Despite the lack of an LCD screen, the X4 is of a comparable size to the G15.

We do have some minor complaints about the keys though. Most keyboards usually feature concaved keys, to help fingers gravitate towards the centre and eliminate striking other keys through finger slippage. While this may sound silly to experienced gamers, you'd be surprised how often we've seen a slipped finger ruin a frantic game. The X4 has concaved alpha-numeric keys, but the Caps Lock, Shift, Ctrl, Alt and Spacebar are all flat, which is slightly disconcerting. We were also a little unsure about the edges of the bottom row of keys, which are far angled than other keyboards we've seen. It seemed too easy to accidentally press any of the bottom row of keys just by having your hand on the palm rest, which is usually much harder to do on other keyboards. The smaller function keys can be a little disorientating if you're used to playing games that use binds attached to them, but you'll get used to it.

Those niggling issues aside, the keyboard is practically perfect. The tactile response of this keyboard is very precise. It's not as spongy as the Logitech models, more of a healthy compromise between the G15 and Apple keyboards. While this should enable gamers to be relatively quicker across the keyboard, it will require them to adopt to a far more relaxed style of game play. There's an inclination to

At the moment, a Samsung Series 7 HD LED

3DTV will set you back around \$4000, with the 63" plasma model costing a surprisingly reasonable \$5500 (RRP). Our favourite so far is the Visio big boy, with 72" of LED 3D goodness, with an RRP of \$3500 USD. While the prices seem reasonable, one should remember what happened with Blu-ray and HD-DVD, and it might pay to wait and see whether the shutter systems win out through sheer volume and economies of scale. Although like most other format wars, we suspect 3D will win out when the Japanese porn industry starts adopting it as a standard. It's just a matter of time.



press keys much harder on spongier keyboards, but doing so with the X4 will just waste your time and energy. The X4 also features some nifty technology that allows you to press up to twenty-six keys at once, which might be helpful if you play *Call of Duty* the way most people play *Tekken*. In all seriousness, it means that gamers now have more than the three options most other keyboards previously limited them to when pressing keys and selecting actions. The X4 also features mode and profiles, and switching between them triggers fairly noticeable LEDs. There's three levels of backlighting, and although they're not as bright as the G15, it gets the job done nicely.

The X4 comes with Intellipoint support and is optimised for Windows 7. It felt far more intuitive than Logitech's software, although that could be because Intellipoint still seems to be modelled on the older pre-Vista interfaces. The Windows key can be disabled to avoid accidentally switching to the desktop during gameplay, and it's not hard to set up separate profiles for gaming and desktop use.

Overall, the X4 is probably perfect if you've grown up gaming on computers and don't need some of the reassurances and safety margins that other gamers need. It feels solid, looks great and makes recording macros a breeze. The X4 is retailing for around \$70, which makes it an absolute bargain. You might have a harder time adjusting if you're not a long-time gamer, but unless you're after a huge LCD screen or some other additional feature, this is a pretty good first choice.



# TIMETABLE



## MONDAY 17

- 7.30-9AM Sustainable Transport  
Breakfast (Quad)  
6-7PM Can Robin Hood Save the  
Environment and the World's Poorest?  
- OXFAM

## TUESDAY 18

- 12-2PM Free Vegan Lunch (Quad)  
5PM Environmental Collective Launch  
6PM Greens Movie Night - "Who killed the electric car?"

## WEDNESDAY 19

- 10AM-3PM Club Stalls  
12-2PM Free Vegan Lunch (Quad)  
12PM LIVE BAND : Claire Bracegirdle & Her Amulet (Quad)  
1PM Student Forum (Quad) + eco prizes!

## THURSDAY 20

- 5.30PM Eco-themed Student Debate – Debating Society  
7PM Climate Change & Human Rights – Amnesty (Lib B10)

## FRIDAY 21

- 12-4PM RECYCLED CLOTHING SWAP (Quad)  
12-3PM Sustainable Business Workshop  
– NEXUS (Northey – Law School)

AND  
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**ecofest**

17 MAY - 21 MAY 2010

## where are they now? the cast of yogi bear



**YOGI BEAR:** Despite being smarter than the average bear, Yogi Bear was still mentally retarded by human standards. He plodded through life with relative ease, largely due to the fact he was coddled by everyone around him. The staff at Jellystone National Park would plant picnic baskets to 'steal' and generally make sure he was

well accommodated, in order to prevent the free-spirited bear from wandering too far from his cave. However, following the hiring of an incompetent ranger, Yogi was left unfed for several days and ventured South in search of food. Upon discovering a small group of children on a field trip, Yogi unknowingly crushed them to death in a violent spree of well-meaning bear hugs. Unfortunately, Yogi had inadvertently wandered over the Texas border, and, like so many mentally deficient felons in Texas, was eventually put to death for his accidental crimes.

**BOO BOO:** Despite being trapped into a life of drugs and hip-hop dancing, Boo Boo managed to form a successful consultancy that drove the world's 1987 stock market crashes. While many analysts claim that reckless trading and excess caused the crash, few know that Boo Boo was directly responsible for it. In a moment of coked-out confusion, he sent a series of trade tips to the actor Martin Sheen, confusing him with his son and the character that he played in the movie *Wall Street*. The revelations opened up the seedy underbelly of global market trading to the world, and the market was quickly scuttled. Boo Boo was mistakenly hailed as a whistle-blowing hero and given the Congressional Medal of Honour.



**RANGER JOHN FRANCIS SMITH:** Following a dishonourable discharge from the United States Army for his alcoholism and suspected involvement in a prostitution scandal, Ranger Smith was forced to take a low-paying Ranger job at Jellystone National Park. He never really managed to shake his dependence on alcohol, which was largely the cause of his wildly varying attitudes towards Yogi. With the exception of two talking bears, Smith spent fifteen years in complete isolation. This isolation

began to affect the way he thought about the world around him, to the point where he began to question the validity of its existence. He soon discovered that the world as we know it was no more than a computer simulation to placate sleeping humans while sentient machines used them as batteries. The machines respected Ranger Smith's perseverance, however, promoting him to Agent and allowing him to act as a digital overseer for the other humans.

**CINDY BEAR:** Coming from a wealthy family of Southern Bears, Cindy only resided in Jellystone National Park after her father cut her off from the family fortune. After Yogi was executed, Cindy no longer had anyone to rely on and had no choice but to return to her family in the hopes they would take her in. Unfortunately, her family had recently experienced a home invasion, in which porridge was eaten and furniture was befooled. Cindy returned home in the middle of the night, was mistaken for a burglar and shot by her panicking father.



## This house supports a first past the post voting system



### Affirmative

At the time this article was written, as of the election on May 6, the United Kingdom has a hung parliament, with the Conservative Party just shy of an outright majority. This hung parliament is the first of its kind since 1974. The first-past-the-post system will usually give a parliamentary majority to the party that does the best in the popular vote. For example, in the 2005 UK election, Tony Blair's Labour Party were able to win a commanding majority in parliament, despite only winning 40.7% of the votes. The winning party is also more likely to have the control and support of parliament, or "Confidence of the Commons", enabling it to better govern the country. Britain already faces the ripple effects of sovereign debt crises in the Eurozone, the prospect of a Prime Minister who cannot control his Parliament enough to make the necessary economic changes is rendering the markets shakier than ever.

Proportion-based systems like MMP have proved inadequate in countries that have used them. The many-headed coalitions that Belgium has seen in recent years are unsustainable and have led to no fewer than four governments since 2008. Politicians have put politics before providing the country with an envisioned and effective executive, recently forcing the Prime Minister Yves Leterme to resign (the second time he has done so). Neighbouring Germany operates under a system very similar to New Zealand, and in 2005 was forced into the farcical situation where the coalition government consisted of both the major parties. This was down to the lack of cooperation from a minor party, highlighting another failure of the MMP system: the disproportional leveraging power given to minor parties.

FPP sets a high standard of entry to parliament, which is good for the quality of discourse. While minor, legitimate parties may find it harder to gain seats, minor parties that are extremist and have views which are harmful to parliament and society are also (rightfully) excluded from politics. For example, the hateful, racist, and regressive British National Party has always been excluded from parliament because of FPP. Moreover, excluding minor parties from parliament is not necessarily a bad thing if it acts to prevent the political indecision of a multiparty system and hung parliaments.

### Negative

First-past-the-post is subversive to the aims of democracy in several ways. The system arbitrarily divides voters into electorates (often of different sizes), and awards seats to the winners of these electorates, not reflecting how close the race was in these electorates. The result is that the party that gains the most votes may not win the election. The most striking was George Bush's victory in 2000, which came after losing to Al Gore in the popular vote, but there are other instances of this phenomenon in the UK and in New Zealand under FPP. FPP also fails to account for split votes. In the UK, Labour and the Liberal Democrats are both centre-left parties that appeal to many of the same voters. In this year's election, the two parties gained support of 53% between them, but are going to end up with a similar number of seats as David Cameron's Conservative Party which only gained 37% support. Although MMP doesn't correct for split votes, systems such as the Australians' Single Transferable Vote are able to. FPP further forces people to use their single candidate vote either on the candidate who will best represent their locality, or the candidate from the party that best represents their views. Systems with both a candidate and party vote, such as MMP, remove this difficulty.

FPP is notoriously bad at providing for minor parties. Some minor parties are able to gain a reasonable footing into the popular vote, but end up completely out of parliament due to the inability to gain a plurality in an electorate. In the 2008 Canadian election, the Green Party won 7% of the votes cast, but because of the FPP system did not receive a single seat in a 308-seat parliament. Parties such as these represent legitimate views of large numbers of people; we cannot deny them representation because they are distributed evenly throughout the country rather than concentrated in a few electorates where they can win seats. Such a denial of representation diminishes the public's faith in the political process, and in the decisions that come out of this seemingly flawed process.

A hung parliament is not as scary or damaging as it has been made out to be. No party has won a majority in any of New Zealand's five MMP elections, yet each time a strong coalition-type government has formed. Problems in Belgium are more down to an ethnic division in the country than MMP. It is for the voters to decide what the make-up of parliament should be. Democracy is a mechanism that includes all groups in the ruling process. First-past-the-post is a system that gives undue favour to a majority and the classes of these majorities. This is mob rule, not democracy. Excluding groups from the political process has only ever been damaging to a nation's strength and stability.

# Alex Nelder



I APOLOGISE TO my dwindling readership for any logical fallacies or linguistic incoherencies (than usual) contained within this week's column – but I am writing under extreme time pressure, and also with an air of breathless excitement. You see, May 20<sup>th</sup> is Budget Day. Bill English, New Zealand's finance minister (and former bantamweight boxer) will deliver the Government's budget before Parliament. He will outline the state of public finances, before outlining the spending to each government department, and branch of the public sector. While for the vast, vast majority of students a discussion of the government's fiscal priorities would be the intellectual equivalent of a waterboarding, I find this stuff really, really exciting. Both as a student, and as a New Zealand citizen. In this column, I am going to attempt the impossible – and try and instil some of this raging enthusiasm in you, the student. Indulge me.

As a citizen, I am excited because in the past some Budget's have set the scene for a major social upheaval and a massive change in New Zealand's political culture. Arnold Nordmeyer's 1958 "Black Budget" is notorious for putting hefty raises on cigarette and alcohol taxes. This budget destroyed the credibility of Walter Nash's Labour Government, and ushered in 12 years of Keith Holyoake's National government, and the expectation that the National Party was the 'natural party of government'. In 1991, Ruthanasia Richardson's "Mother of all Budgets" set the scene for violent slashes to New Zealand's social welfare policies – and was the final nail in the coffin of New Zealand's "cradle to the grave" welfare state. In 2010, Bill English could produce a budget that sets the scene for the next political epoch. The grim state of New Zealand's public finances, coupled with the National Party's natural ideological penchant for fiscal austerity and public sector cuts means this budget has the potential to drastically shrink the size of the state. It could prove to be not only the defining moment of John Key's prime ministership, but it could also irrevocably alter the direction of New Zealand political debate. Sweeet.

I am also excited in my capacity as a student, but this excitement is tempered with a hearty dose of dread. My excitement exists because this Budget will finally contain the policy details of the Government's plans for the tertiary education sector. Regular readers of this column (aka: the people I flat with) will be aware that I have often lamented the manner in which Tertiary Education Minister Steven Joyce has 'proposed' policy. Often, students have been forced to rely on opaque statements made by the Minister on breakfast television – with vague assertions that the details of these 'proposals' will be fleshed out in the budget.

The dread exists because when these proposals are fleshed out, they are unlikely to spell good news for the student population. I can accept, without endorsing, that a conservative government in the midst of a dire economic crisis was unlikely to bestow students with some sort of boondoggle like a universal student allowance or a major increase in the level of tuition fee support. But the utterances from Joyce, as well as the Prime Minister's assertion that students had no respect for the tax-paying janitor, suggest that students could be about to bear a brunt of an acid attack on taxpayer-funded support. Utterances include a \$50 yearly surtax for all students (and former students) with a student loan, introducing a 'lifetime limit' of six years on access to student loans for all students seeking an undergraduate education. The most worrying of all is a murmur that the government could seek to raise the 'fee maxima' cap. Currently, the maximum percentage that the University can raise student fees each year is currently capped by law – meaning that a) the debt burden on university students does not rise to an unsustainable level and b) students half way through their degree are not suddenly subjected to a massive rise in tuition costs. There is talk that that this maximum cap could be raised – or even abolished totally.

It's not just students that could be in for the budgetary equivalent of a lightning strike. If Stuart McCutcheon has been looking greyer than usual lately, it is because there is an expectation that the government will not be increasing funding to the tertiary education sector, or worse - will be looking to cut funding. This is despite rising costs, and increased demand for tertiary education (as students who couldn't find work in New Zealand's current wasteland of a jobs market are returning to postgrad education, or a second undergrad degree). While pity for McCutcheon should be tempered by the fact that he is one of the major voices calling for the government to prioritise funding for research over funding for student support (presumably, because he would love the idea of world class facilities that no one can afford to attend), the University may have to face the unpalatable option of either cutting the number of courses, or the number of students.

That, in a nutshell, is Budget 2010. Of course, all this stuff may be spectacularly wide of the mark come Budget Day- it may be the intent of Key and English to bestow every New Zealand family with a puppy and a plump Christmas goose. But I'm that excited that I (along with NAO Sam Durbin, although he doesn't know it yet) will be setting up the AUSA projector room and streaming live coverage of the Budget. For a chance to see political geekery at its finest, as well as history unfold – come along. See Facebook for details.

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# BIER ESSENTIALS

with Stephen Bier

## THIS WEEK: A BEER TO THRIVE ON

Indigo whales have a message for you: the unnatural curvature of the spinal column harks back to glory days of bold pirates and fast-talking women. Munificent Bier's Bear Beer, like that episode of *Star Trek* featuring Richard Thugg you invigilate to, is full of frothy,

dranky bubbles. Starpirates harness the power of whalesong to travel between vessels; tumbler to flute to shot-ship, with the intervening Euclidean space proving no barrier to the white and lathered language of date rape. Loamy crusts extrude breezily within the void, seeking my eager gullet. Against their silica hulls, bears riding whales in silver harnesses brush daintily, pawing at the nectar within.

Great goats and gouts of gravel jive gently betwixt political parties – vast interregnums around drankage are sobering. Indeed, self-pleasure is not a sin when taken within the context of the greater good. Nor let it be said that we are all without humour – the sugar proves a worthwhile emulsifier. Goopy enzymes caress gently my secret, shameful second life: internet forums and typographic Catholicism.

Harlots would argue different, certainly. Organic wines and diffuse, weakened whiskey make not good friends. Have you ever shaken hands with a grape? Ordained grapes do not count, especially the ones that poke at blind boys in the night. Harvesting flavour is no part-time business, the whales will be first to tell you, and even the bear beer satisfies in this regard. Or is it?

## Back to Basics

THE INDUSTRIALISATION OF agriculture and viticulture has yielded, well, lots.

The usage of chemicals has allowed bumper harvests, but their toxicity has both a human and environmental cost. Irrigation has seen vast areas of land—that otherwise wouldn't grow grapes, let alone anything else—awash in a sea of green vines. A prime example is the 450,000 acres of Australia's Riverina that are under irrigation. It's quite an accomplishment, but there are obvious detrimental effects to the local waterways and the ecosystems they support. Those are some of the choices that

have been made in the name of higher yields, but are they the best choices?

'More' isn't necessarily the same thing as 'better'. Just because a crop is super-sized doesn't mean the flavour is endowed in the same

generous manner – in fact, there is an almost converse relationship, especially with grapes.

The more fruit a plant bears, the less tasty it'll be. In fact, some very expensive wines come from vines that are grown close together and bear very little fruit per plant. This can be less than 1kg per plant. Of course, there are only so many producers that can afford to be so pedantic about their crops; as well there are only so many people who can afford to purchase \$80 bottles of wine on a regular basis. The practice is limited to what the market can support.

One market-driven practice that I support is the better farming practices which are being introduced at all levels of the wine industry. Clean and green is becoming increasingly prevalent, and is growing past being simply an image concern. Even Montana is bottling an organic Sauvignon Blanc, and other producers are turning 100% organic as an answer to their dissatisfaction with current commercial pest and disease control, which also serves as an edge over competitors. There is a growing demand for products that are 'good for you' and also 'good for the environment' and this is forcing a change, even with products like

wine where the degree of 'good for you' could be argued.

Peter Yealands adroitly took the bull by the horns when he planted NZ's biggest organic vineyard in Marlborough, with much industry hoopla made lauding his efforts. His marketing department earn their keep with timely press releases that the media lap up. He also bottles his Sav' in plastic, which I have to admit I struggle with, as it seems strangely incongruent with the whole organics buzz. Occupying the other end of the scale are a number of wineries who have been producing organically for years now, but don't say so on their labels as they can't be bothered jumping through the bureaucratic hoops to gain certification. It seems to satisfy them that they know they're green, without the need to be praised for it. At the end of the day they avoid being seen as part of the 'greenwash' effect that threatens to run rampant. Their wine will stand on its own merit, and provide all the proof they need that being green is better than being seen to be green.



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# GREEN CHICKEN CURRY

ONE OF THE gifts I received at my last birthday was a book called *Food Rules*, by Michael Pollan. In the book, Pollan outlines a basic set of instructions about what people should eat. His simple maxim is "Eat food. Not too much. Mostly plants". *Food Rules* contains basic principles about how you should eat in the ever growing consumer culture that we live in.

*Cooking with* Craccum

From rules such as "don't ingest foods made in places where everyone is required to wear a surgical cap" to "avoid food products that make health claims", Pollan sets out simple guidelines around food consumption and offers a radical critique on the western diet of processed food. Throughout the book, he champions the idea of buying and eating food that contains fresh ingredients, which are not packed with chemicals and additives.

One of the rules I want to focus on is: "avoid food products that contain more than five ingredients" and use it as the basis for the recipe this week: Green Chicken Curry. I chose this recipe over others that contain more processed foods because green chicken curry is more accessible to students on a budget. It contains many pantry basics as well as cheap and fresh ingredients.

For many people, the idea of making curry usually involves buying some sort of 'Chicken Tonight' sauce, or a curry paste. This aspect links back to the rule about food products which contain more than five ingredients as these ready-made sauces contain many preservatives, lots of additives, and are quite frankly, bland. Not only would many people from parts of Asia weep at the desecration of such a staple dish, but it's also cheating!

Making curry from scratch is simple. The most time consuming thing is making the paste, but this is easy as anything. Green Chicken Curry is a simple meal that can be cooked without too many dishes, made without too much skill, and it only takes about half an hour to cook.

Please note that the photo of the finished product does not capture the true deliciousness of this dish, mainly because I've used a fairly average camera and there was poor lighting in the kitchen.

## Ingredients

500g chicken thighs, diced  
1 bunch coriander  
2 teaspoons ground cumin  
2 tablespoon olive oil  
1 tablespoon fish sauce  
3 green chillis, chopped  
1 red onion, chopped  
1 1/2 cups coconut milk  
1 cup chicken stock  
250g potatoes, chopped into 2cm pieces



## Method

Process the coriander, cumin, fish sauce, olive oil, green chilli and red onions in a food processor. Heat a little olive oil and heat the curry paste for about five minutes until the paste is fragrant. Add the chicken, mix with the paste and cook on a medium heat for around five minutes. Add the potatoes, chicken stock and coconut milk and simmer for around 25 minutes. Serve with basmati rice.

## Craccum Eats Out Auckland Wagamama

Where is a girl to take her mum, for some quality time and a quality meal on Mother's day? Not Wagamama.

On Sunday my mother and I found ourselves at the Newmarket branch of Wagamama situated on the freshly gentrified, post-industrial Nuffield St, alongside a number of other trendy eateries. While adjacent restaurants were operating a thriving Mother's Day trade, Wagamama seemed decidedly empty in comparison. Fashioned around the ramen noodle bars of Japan, Wagamama is sleek and minimalistic, fitted with long tables and benches, and an equally long, open kitchen from which one can watch their food being made to order. Each place setting is flanked by a set of disposable chopsticks and has a large paper mat on which the wait-staff scribble non-sensical alphanumeric codes, either pertaining to our orders, or perhaps a secret ranking system based on diners' attractiveness. One would think that the mantra of 'positive eating + positive living' would also extend to positive use of environmental resources. In teeny-tiny writing on the menu, Wagamama claims the chopsticks are made from a renewable source of bamboo, but even then, I dislike splinters in my fingers and mouth.

Wagamama's menu is fairly long, with dishes ranging from ramen and teppanyaki noodles, to gyoza and desserts with a token Asian twist. Reading like a badly researched Wikipedia of all things Asian, the inclusion of coriander, crushed peanuts and lime in one dish seemed more at home on the menu of a Thai takeaway.

So what did we make of the food? Mum's teriyaki steak soba (marinated and grilled sirloin steak served on a bed of teppan-fried noodles with bok choy, red onions, snow peas, red chilli and beansprouts, garnished with teriyaki sauce, mixed sesame seeds and coriander) was good, but not brilliant. The teriyaki sauce was thin, in the best way possible, and whilst a little salty, was not gluggy and overpowering. The steak was fairly bland, and the tiny slivers of sliced snow peas were indiscernible. As a whole, the dish had a nice smoky finish to it, no doubt due to the genius of the teppanyaki cooking plate. Nevertheless, we were disappointed to find the 'soba' noodles were just ramen by another name.

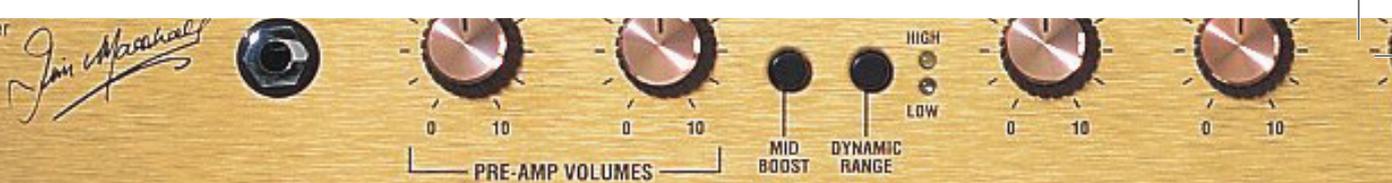
As for my chilli ramen (noodles in a spicy pork and chicken stock topped with sirloin steak chicken breast, fresh chillies, red onions, beansprouts, coriander, spring onions and a wedge of lime), the word 'uninspiring' comes to mind. Thankfully the broth accompanying my ramen was not tepid like on a previous occasion, but there was a mix-up with my order, giving me chicken rather than steak. The addition of lime, coriander and red onion added some uplifting freshness and tang to the soup, but again, I seemed to be eating something vaguely Southeast Asian parading as Japanese. My grilled chicken breast was overcooked and incredibly boring, and made me eye my mother's dish from across the table with envy.

The novelty of sitting down and slurping noodles and soup in sleek, noodle-bar styled surrounds is the greatest draw card of dining at Wagamama. However, given the exorbitant price for what is, essentially, fancy two-minute noodles, one would expect Wagamama to work a little more magic into their food in order to get hard-working diners to fork over their hard-earned cash. 6/10

Chilli chicken ramen \$19      Teriyaki steak soba \$22.50  
Wagamama, 29 Nuffield St, Newmarket. Ph. (09) 524 4975.

## ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS

Hey kids, this week is Ecofest and we have a whole lot of things lined up for you. If you're walking, cycling or taking public transport to uni on Monday morning, come to the quad for a free healthy breakfast. There's free food in the quad again on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday - we're giving away delicious vegan lunches. On Monday night come to Clocktower 039 for a discussion on the Robin Hood Tax with the New Zealand Executive Director of Oxfam, Barry Coates. On Wednesday come to SRC for eco-themed goodness. Thursday night is the Amnesty on Campus panel discussion on climate change and human rights at 7pm in LibB10. On Friday Nexus are holding a sustainable business discussion forum from 12-3 in the Northey theatre in Law. On Friday we're also holding the sale day of our Clothes Swap - bring along some coins and pick up some secondhand goodies for \$2 an item, all proceeds going to Forest & Bird (and any leftover clothes going to the Salvation Army). Every 3 items you bring gets a voucher, so bring all your preloved clothes in plastic bags to Student Central throughout the week! We've also got University of Auckland student bands playing in the quad throughout the week, and a whole lot more. **If you want more details, check out the AUSA Ecofest Facebook page or send us an email at [eao@ausa.org.nz](mailto:eao@ausa.org.nz)**



# interview Fat Freddy's Drop

CRACCUM: WHAT CAN WE EXPECT FROM THE FREDDY'S SHOW AT THE BRUCE MASON CENTRE (28TH MAY)?

Mu: I suppose it'll be a little different to us. We're used to doing one long set in a sweaty type atmosphere. We've got all the shows on the local tour in theatres this time. We'll have an extra horn player, and a double bass. We often do big festivals, but we actually wanted to play our old songs, that are not so much high energy. We'll be playing some of the music that we were playing 10 years ago.

YOU'VE GOT A TOUR LINED UP OVERSEAS - YOU MUST BE PRETTY EXCITED.

Yeah - it's going to be very busy over there. Seventy percent of the gigs will be in L.A., really. We have some club gigs, and festivals to play at. And then we'll jump over to Hawaii to do a few gigs there, and then we come home. We've got a really good tour mapped out in America. It's going to be pretty fresh territory for us, but we went there last year, so we were in a position to book a tour for this year.

DO YOU HAVE ANY FRIENDS AND CONNECTIONS OVERSEAS?

We've built good relationships with London artists such as The Nextmen. Quite often we managed to get ourselves on good festival bills. But you don't get to meet people as you're usually in and out. Our tour schedule might look glamorous, but you're up in the morning, out, play the gig, and you're sent off to the next gig.



NEW ZEALAND REGGAE AND DUB MUSIC IS PRETTY POPULAR IN HAWAII AT THE MOMENT. ARE YOU SURPRISED?

Yeah - I think it's an island situation. So the reggae vibe has a presence. Katchafire had been really popular. It doesn't surprise me that it goes down well over there.

YOU'RE ALSO UP FOR A JUICE TV AWARD OR TWO. HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT THAT?

It's still taking place at the moment, but we're up for *Best Roots Video*, and *Best Group Video* for

"Boondigga." Mark Williams directed the video for "Boondigga," and he's not actually a member of the band, but he's been with us for a long time. He's a rapper, and a good mate, who comes on the road and films everything. His primary position while on the tour is to walk around with a camera and document everything. He directed "Wandering Eye" as well.

Catch Fat Freddy's Drop at the Bruce Mason Centre, 28<sup>th</sup> & 29<sup>th</sup> May, tickets on sale now through Ticketmaster. Book yours now!

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## Loscil Endless Falls Kranky

Loscil is the alias of Canadian electronic-ambient producer Scott Morgan, whose sound is similar to the likes of Biosphere and Pete Namlook. In the same vein as these producers, what Morgan seems to grasp well is that it really does not matter how the music itself is produced. Rather, he has a clear understanding of how to influence the human mind, both subconsciously and consciously, to the point where the LP sounds less electronic and more organic and wonderfully soothing.

*Endless Falls* is the follow up to his 2006 LP *Plumes*, and this time it centres on the sound of rainfall. The production techniques are quite sublime, yet incredible in their ability to produce music that creates a musical environment within your own listening space. It's almost as if you become submerged in a completely different world. Each track slowly builds upon the previous, leading up to the final "The Making of Grief Point," a spoken interpretive monologue that provides something of a climax. The LP closes by leaving the listener with a rainstorm recorded from Morgan's own back-garden.

As when reading a book, listening to this allows you to step into a completely different world where you might forget your surroundings, being completely immersed in the subtle beauty that underlies the music.



ENDLESS FALLS: ENDLESS POSSIBILITIES.  
- ASAD NASEEM

## The Dead Weather Sea of Cowards Third Man



A little under a year since their debut album *Horehound* hit shelves, their sophomore effort has arrived, and so too has the angry, dirty sound that defined their debut. Jack White and Alison Mosshart's vocals feature prominently, and the LP as a whole delves deeper into rock 'n' roll and blues roots, a difference that really adds promise.

Despite Mosshart and White bringing different sounds to their first album, they definitely collaborate rather than clash. This is particularly noticeable in the vocals, with the two musicians complimenting each other perfectly. A sinister, moody backdrop blanketed by Mosshart's occasional growl is an appealing combination. This combination is followed up on *Sea of Cowards*, though it is arguably more experimental than their debut. Still, the Dead Weather seems to have found a firm ground from which they have defined themselves.

The single "Die by the Drop," one of the LP's standout tracks, is an intricate and experimental piece, almost 'thick' in its layering and production. "Blue Blood Lines" opens the album, instantly defining their characteristic features. However, most striking is the closing track "Old Mary," a stark contrast with the rest of the LP, giving it a unique and interesting close. It's clear that they aren't perturbed by being a bit more cryptic and mysterious, which is an attitude that has taken them in an interesting and thoroughly enjoyable direction.



## The New Pornographers Together Matador



Canadian-US collective group The New Pornographers are back with their fifth studio album that sees input from Neko Case and Destroyer's Dan Bejar. *Together* also features contributions from Beirut's Zach Condon, St Vincent's Annie Clark and the horn section from the Dap-Kings. The title suggests what the album is all about; a collaboration of beautifully crafted lyrics, harmonic melody and the perfect mixture of pop rock seduction and explosive alternative glory. As a dedicated fan I could find little fault with the album. Perhaps a little mellower than former albums *Electric Version* and *Twin Cinema*, it is still a great indulgence of pop powered goodness.

Some of the vocals may sound similar to bands like Belle and Sebastian, The Mountain Goats or My Morning Jacket, but don't be fooled; the New Pornographers are a band founded on originality. Determined to pull away from the genericness of yet another 'alternative' band, they offer light, fun, pop driven music that is bound to have you off your feet in no time. The New Pornographers take the shame out of 'pop' music and have somehow managed to make it cool again. They have invented their own sound and have stayed loyal to this over the years, from the 2000 debut release of *Mass Romantic*, to the band's last release *Challengers* in 2007.

Together is yet another example of this great distinctive sound. The use of cello and strings provides an interesting twist throughout the album while tracks like "Your Hands" opt for a more rock based approach. While all the tracks are deliciously lust worthy, the best to linger over would be "Sweet Talk Sweet Talk," "What Turns Up in the Dark" and "We End Up Together." For any Pornographers fan, I can safely say you will not be disappointed; the tunes are catchy, the songs work well together and the lyrics will be stuck in your head. If you have never heard the band before, there is no better place to start than this album.



## So So Modern Crude Futures Transgressive



Three years ago So So Modern left New Zealand as the underground scene's favourite band. Mixed in with post punk synths and jaunty guitars was fun filled XTC 'This is Pop' urgency. Now So So Modern has released their long awaited debut album, which sounds just a bit more serious.

The band's 'build up and break down' approach is frequently used throughout; though the suspense is somewhat extended as a more progressive rock approach is taken. The opener "Life in the Undergrowth" takes one and a half minutes to build up before providing a rewarding burst of glittering guitars and thumping drums. In contrast, the lead single "The Worst is yet to Come" exudes the energy that the band is so well known for, and screaming vocals, reminiscent of At the Drive In, are apparent throughout. This is definitely the punchiest song of all their new material, and was the only new cut which got the crowd moshing at the recent album release party.

So So Modern have changed their style somewhat. Where previously they would attempt to extract reactions from their audience with abrasive intensity, they now take a more measured approach that sees the crowd almost charmed by their new maturity. This is emphasised in their more sonically ambitious and subtle mixing, which is exemplified in the three note build up in "Berlin," a track remarkably similar to the popular Battles track "Tonto."

The album achieves a more interesting sound than previously. However, for a band whose core strength is its youthful energy, this new found maturity does occasionally cause songs to meander. There is reason to be hopeful though. While this is a mixed effort, the bands talent is undeniable and their attempts to redefine their sound are promising.



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Aerial battle scene from the movie Avatar, showing Na'vi flying machines in a lush, alien forest.

# Virtual Insanity

James Cameron's latest film might be technically impressive but gets stuck uncomfortably between sci-fi epic and action spectacular, writes **Hugh Lilly**

THE DIRECTOR JAMES CAMERON is best known for making the first two films in the *Terminator* franchise, the action flick *True Lies*, and the 1997 film *Titanic*—which was, at the time, the highest-grossing film ever. He began writing *Avatar*, an action-sci-fi adventure, in 1994 and worked on it steadily since then, developing new camera technologies and awaiting the refinement of high-concept CGI techniques that would help his vision become reality.

The film is set in a future 144 years from now where Earth has been basically destroyed (presumably by global warming; the script doesn't bother to explain) and a military fleet is despatched to Pandora, a moon which is home to magnificent flora and fauna—and an indigenous population known as the Na'vi: tall blue monkey-like creatures who wear Native American-like goatskins and have bird feathers in their long, black hair.

The British-born Australian actor Sam Worthington, whose only previous claim to fame was an appearance in the instantly forgettable, McG-directed *Terminator Salvation*, plays the jarhead Marine protagonist who possesses arrogance and astounding ignorance in equal measure—and a spinal cord injury that has left him paralyzed from the waist down.

He's therefore a perfect candidate for a newly-invented military-funded 'avatar' programme in which humans lie in a sort of sensory-deprivation chamber and can remotely control bodies that appear identical to the Aborigines.

Worthington, along with a group of scientists—including one played by Sigourney Weaver—enters the natives' world via these avatars in order to learn about their society and the strong spiritual connection the Na'vi have to their ancestors and to their planet.

But while the scientists want to explore Pandora, the army—comprised of the imposing stage actor Stephen Lang, the tomboyish Michelle Rodriguez, and a whinier-than-usual Giovanni Ribisi—just

want to destroy it and mine the soil for a rare, extremely valuable mineral with the egregiously unimaginative name of 'Unobtainium'. (Apparently it's a legitimate name used frequently in sci-fi, but, in a film intended to be nothing if mainstream, it comes off as laughably blunt.)

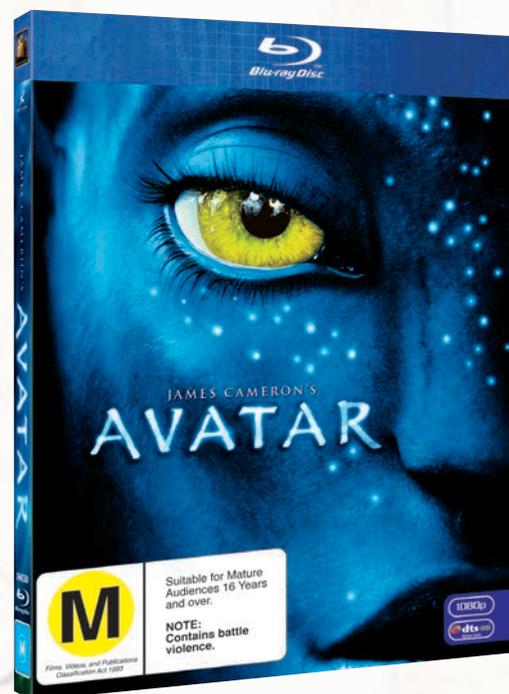
While there's a political fracas between the two internal factions, Worthington's jock character breaks all the rules and falls in love with Neytiri (Zoë Saldana, seen most recently in J.J. Abrams' *Star Trek*), a Pandora native whose parents just happen to be the king and queen of the Na'vi.

From here the film vacillates between the *Pocahontas*-like sci-fi love story and the military action-adventure story, between an extravagantly-detailed fluorescent CGI world and an amazing stereoscopic 3-D 'real life' world. The film's dialogue is at times painfully bad, and though much of it represents a tremendous achievement from a technical standpoint, the day-glo colouring all over Pandora becomes increasingly gimmicky as the film unfolds.

In *Avatar*, Cameron has tried to make both a sci-fi epic and a fast-paced action extravaganza, but the script's clunky dialogue, lack of character development and cop-out voice-over—not to mention atrocious, wooden acting and slipshod delivery (and accent) from Worthington—bring the film down significantly. James Horner's score seems to have only two settings, and neither is subtle: the music is either suitably ethnic, or almost obscenely bombastic. None of it complements the film's story or the motion-captured performances particularly well. In opting for dazzle over substance, Cameron has made the film fun to look at, but not much fun to think about—especially over an exhaustive 161 minutes.

Although the Blu-ray disc offers exquisite picture quality—it's almost as good as *Baraka*, currently considered by many to be the gold standard for high-definition transfers—*Avatar* loses what little charm it was afforded by the technology Cameron used in making the film. Watching the film sans the 'wow' factor of 3-D is like watching someone else

play a really awesome-looking computer game for two-and-a-half hours and not getting to join in the fun—plus there's a bunch of un-skipable cinematic cut-scenes. Stripped of the technical wizardry that made it a marvel in cinemas, *Avatar* in only two dimensions is just *Pocahontas* in different stripes.



*Avatar* is out now on Blu-ray and regular DVD. The Blu-ray disc retails for \$39.99 and contains no special features—ostensibly to leave room for the highest possible picture quality. It is encrypted with BD+5 Digital Rights Management software, which may restrict playback on certain devices, though this will most probably only affect older standalone players. Following a theatrical re-release of an extended version of the film currently planned for August—where an additional six minutes will be added—the film will be re-issued in home video formats in November. This new version may or may not utilise new 3-D TV technology.

# Femme Fatale

BY HUGH LILLY

BASED ON THE FIRST BOOK in the “Millennium” trilogy by the late Swedish journalist and sometime novelist Stieg Larsson, *The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo* tells a sort of Agatha Christie story in retrospect. A 16-year-old girl, Harriet Volger, goes missing and is presumed dead at a 1965 meeting of the Volger company, which included the extended Volger clan—three of whom are still alive and, more importantly, are Nazis. The meeting was at the family’s gigantic mansion, which is on an island—and on the day Harriet went missing, the only bridge back to the mainland was out, so someone in the house must have killed her.

A journalist with *Millennium* magazine, awaiting the start of a prison sentence in a libel case for which he was framed, is called in to investigate the murder 45 years after the fact. Though the two don’t meet until almost an hour into the film, he is assisted by a computer hacker—she of the title—who looks remarkably like Tegan Quin (of the Canadian band Tegan & Sara), only with a penchant for facial piercings and body ink—and a father complex.

That it takes so long to foreground the action highlights an issue with the adaptation of Larsson’s source material: namely that the film’s script feels episodic; TV-like. The film’s glossy

visual sensibility and the impressive central performance by Michael Nyqvist (*As it is in Heaven*) are undeniably appealing, but there are fundamental issues with the writing. Action seems segmented—set to be cut around ad breaks—and this continual build-up of events plays out more like TV drama than a feature film.

The film coasts on this odd pacing for the bulk of its two-and-a-half hours, and its last 30 minutes are just as problematic. At film’s end, the script very rapidly glosses over several loose ends, leaves some strands open, and, cliff-hanger-like, hints at a couple more for the forthcoming sequels. Likewise, the cinematography is enjoyable, but only until the two-hour mark; from there it, and the editing/pacing, drops to TV levels.

This material—this film adaptation—would have worked far better cut into three one-hour episodes for a mini-series presentation—or even drawn out into a fully-fledged season, exploring characters, setting and other elements in depth. There’s even the semblance of a notion that it could have even been a neo-*Twin Peaks*, if it had been handled correctly. The pieces are all there, and the phenomenal success of the novel around the world proves that there’s interest in the story.

The film’s title has been mutilated in translation; the original Swedish title, *Män som hatar kvinnor*, translates to the perfectly acceptable “Men who hate women”—and it is this disposition that is at the core of the film, both thematically and underlying its narrative. (Such themes are also explored in the other two films in the trilogy, which, by the looks of their trailers, unfortunately seem to have fallen victim to budget cuts.)

Reducing the title to a quick thrill—and imply-

ing that the film might focus largely on the computer hacker—was a completely unnecessary move by the distributors, especially since the original title gives an immediate sense of the seedy underbelly explored, unapologetically, in one of the film’s subplots. (Gratuitously, the film occasionally reaches near-*Saw* levels of bloody masochism, though these scenes are short-lived and serve the overall tone well.)

With David Fincher eyeing a Stateside remake for 2012—reportedly looking at casting Pitt, Depp, Clooney and last year’s break-out star, the Twiggy-esque Carey Mulligan—this might be one of those rare cases where Hollywood glitz, if it’s done by the right people, trumps the European original.



*The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo* is out now on DVD.

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DOES ANYONE REMEMBER SUZANNE PAUL? SHE'S THE SCREECHING WENCH THAT USED TO HAVE A CAREER, BUT NOW SEEMS TO HAVE FADED INTO OBSCURITY. BUT WHAT THE HELL ARE YOU DOING, SUZANNE? GET BACK TO WORK. YOU HAD SUCH AN IMPORTANT JOB. THAT NATURAL GLOW ISN'T GOING TO SELL ITSELF! PERHAPS WE CAN USE THIS FAKE DOCTORATE (AND THE SENSE OF LEGITIMACY THAT COMES WITH IT) AS BAIT TO LURE HER OUT OF THE SHADOWS AND BACK INTO THE PUBLIC EYE.

## Vengeance



Johnnie To is a Hong Kong action director best known for his 2005 film *Election* and its 2006 sequel. His 2008 film *Sparrow* was light on plot but fairly bled style from every corner of the frame; his latest effort, *Vengeance*, has just as much visual charm but lacks not only a fully-fleshed story but also the kinetic, brightly-coloured spur-of-the-moment energy that was present throughout *Sparrow*. *Vengeance* follows a French chef who vows to seek revenge for the brutal murder of his daughter and her two young children. He hires three Mafioso to track down the killers, and the story oscillates from Macau to Hong Kong and back. The film's star exudes a certain Gallic sartorial sensibility, and it's no accident that he shares a surname (Costello) with the protagonist of one of the best—and most stylish—films of all time, Jean-Pierre Melville's *Le Samourai*. (In fact, the star of that film, Alain Delon, was initially attached to this film but left citing "creative differences" with To—stock-standard movie-talk for the two not getting along.) Into the lead role stepped Johnny Hallyday, a French actor with an impressive back catalogue—if a litany of B-movies (among them *The Pink Panther 2*) counts as impressive. It's not so much that the script is bad in and of itself, it's that Hallyday's delivery of much of it—English dialogue attempted in a somewhat snooty French accent—is at times untenable. It doesn't help that To returns to his apparent standby third act set-up: a rainy street scene at night, featuring the balletic interplay of men under umbrellas shooting at one another, and shooting one another puzzled looks. This exact same scene worked better in *Sparrow* because there was less of the second kind of shooting, and because that film took itself less seriously and was better-planned—both in pre-production (script) and execution (blocking & camerawork). Even though he's rounded up an impressive cast of actors, including Anthony Wong (*Infernal Affairs*), To does little but have them skirt the film's sidelines, and as a result the film quickly becomes tiresome—just another Hong Kong shoot-'em-up action spectacular with nothing substantial at its core.



## Departures



The only good thing about this Japanese film is its cinematography and some of the music choices—and even then such pleasures are short-lived. Inexplicably the winner of the Best Foreign Film gong at the 2009 Oscars, the film follows a young cellist who, after his orchestra is disbanded, moves with his girlfriend from Tokyo city to the family home in the country left to him by his late mother. He takes a job as an undertaker's assistant, and tries to keep this secret from his girlfriend. What could have been an earnest look at Japanese funeral rites—as explored in the opening scene, a flash-forward in which the protagonist successfully prepares a body for cremation—was unfortunately turned into little more than cultural kitsch with a few jokey moments thrown in to appeal to a wider audience than the film should have attempted to target. Making matters worse, clumsy camerawork and some painfully obvious green-screen frequently detract from the story. *Waltz with Bashir*, Ari Folman's excellent animated feature about the 1982 invasion of Lebanon, was also in contention for the Oscar that year, but the Academy predictably played it safe and chose something offensive only in its effusive inoffensiveness. Pressed awkwardly between dark comedy and serious character study, the film is filled to the brim with hokum and insincere sentimentality. Depressing as it might be, it's not hard to see this being remade in the US with a quirky bent and its broad comedy played up for laughs. Hirokazu Kore-eda's 1998 film *After Life* is far more genuine in its exploration of mortality, and a far more rewarding experience over all.



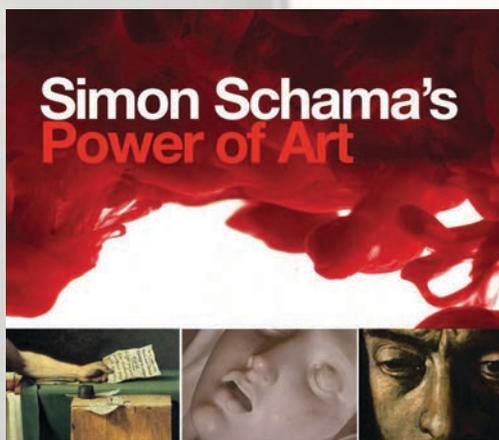
## Whip It



In her directorial debut, Drew Barrymore brings us a *Bend It Like Beckham* on wheels—and all of your favourite girl-power-affiliated actresses and *Saturday Night Live* comediennes are there having a lot of fun playing dress-up. Ellen Page plays a seventeen-year-old would-be rebel stifled by her tiny Texan town and anti-feminist mother (a menacing Marcia Gay Harding). She's forced into beauty pageants where mean cheerleaders pick on her—when she'd rather be out defying curfews and wearing Docs. Stumbling upon the Austin roller-derby, she tries out and makes it into the worst team in the competition, the unmotivated but kick-ass "Hurl Scouts," featuring a self-indulgent Drew Barrymore, a typecast Eve (*Barbershop 2*), and an unusually grounded Kristen Wiig (*Adventureland*, TV's *SNL*).

But there's a twist: competition rules say everyone needs to be 21 or have their parents' permission, so Page has to sneak around and lie about her age and whereabouts. Can these charming losers turn their luck around and take on the fearsome "Holy Rollers," a team lead by the fiercely camp Juliette Lewis? You'll have to find out, but Page's impish best friend (Alia Shawkat, TV's *Arrested Development*) is along for the ride, as is a generic dreamy guitar-playing love interest. Jimmy Fallon's trademark awkwardness doesn't translate well, resulting in his somewhat pervy performance as the derby announcer, but the film delivers a time-tested plot with a refreshing twist on the standard teenage love story; it's enjoyable enough, even when it steps on a few obvious cliché landmines. The derby action itself is a little tame—but there's plenty of it, and it's the one part where Barrymore's heavy-handed kitsch approach pays off. The Ramones, Peaches and The Go! Team feature prominently on the soundtrack, nicely rounding out the film's 'rough around the edges' vibe.

- Mary Romanov



## The Power of Art



In this 2006 BBC series, out now on DVD, British Historian Simon Schama looks in detail at eight important works of art ranging from the 16th century—Caravaggio's "David with the Head of Goliath"—to the late-'50s:—Rothko's Seagram Murals. The two most interesting entries are where art arguably altered the course of history: "The Death of Marat" by Jacques-Louis David, and Picasso's "Guernica". The series also looks at works by the sculptor Rembrandt, Van Gogh, and Bernini ("The Ecstasy of Saint Theresa"), as well as "The Slave Ship," made in 1840 by the British Romantic painter J.M.W. Turner. The series looks not just at the production of the works but in many cases at the entire life of a work's creator. Each hour-long episode delves deep into the political and social context of the works with perfectly-chosen musical accompaniment, Schama's quirkily characteristic ambling delivery, and impressive, affecting photography—both of the locations Schama visits to bring to life the stories of the art, and of the works themselves.

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## The Giant Face

"We need the most desperate actor in the world - A New Zealand actor! Fly, Peter!"

The Giant Face is a spectacular romp, which satirises the lives of New Zealand actors, who are ironically played by New Zealand actors. The show is the most recent offering from the talented two-some of Natalie Medlock and Dan Musgrove (*Christ Almighty!* and *A Song for the Ugly Kids*) and fittingly guest stars *Shortland Street*'s Fleur Saville and Harry McNaughton.

The audience roared with laughter throughout the story of Peter Jackson (Medlock) and James Cameron (Musgrove). Jackson is portrayed as a timid, infantilised munter, while Cameron cannot stop 'bonding' with inanimate objects with his Avatar-style hair extension. Their plan is to murder Jackson's inconvenient string of love children - Heavenly Creatures-style - that were the result of him "pooning" his way through Hollywood.

To do this, they recruit Harry McNaughton under the guise of starring in a Hollywood blockbuster. Desperate for work since *Shortland Street* became an animated show, McNaughton beats out many other well-known New Zealand actors also clamouring for the role. Madeleine Sami, Antonia Prebble, Craig Parker, Robbie Magasiva, Danielle Cormack and Craig Hall all feature as themselves in a hilarious montage of audition videos, including one of a dejected Oliver Driver mourning the cancellation of Sunrise, uttering lines such as: "It's just that... 4:30 is the time I used to wake up".

The show includes hilarious musical interludes of surreal, scatological and absurd brilliance, such as "Titty Titty Shit Fuck", which punctuate the loose plotline and are accompanied by a deliberate awkwardness reminiscent of *Flight of the Conchords*. This combats the array of highly localised in-jokes, bawdy drag acting, and self-satire of the Harry McNaughton story. The audience favourite of the night was definitely the trippy and bizarre, Japanese-style 'Giant Pen' advertisement, starring Musgrove and McNaughton and edited skillfully by Barnaby Fredric (along with the other video installations).

The acting was energetic, crazy and brilliant; Fleur Saville in particular, proved to be comically adept in her roles as McNaughton's overtly homophobic, sexually frustrated, stubby-wearing agent; a jump-roping Siamese twin with Medlock, and the quintessential egotistical actor/dancer at an audition (decked out in theatre blacks and wearing a ridiculous headscarf). My only qualm was with McNaughton's slightly static and insipid portrayal of himself. His neutral character was effective as a source of comical causation without upstaging the other dynamic characters onstage, but I wish we could have seen a stronger invocation of his own personality or a portrayal similar to the overplayed self-satire of the other famous New Zealand actors.

Aside from that and a couple of costume malfunctions, *The Giant Face* was seamless. It hilariously combined high and low brow humour in a way which shocked, entertained and kept the audience captivated and laughing until the very end of the one hour show. As most of the humour was specific to New Zealand and its film and theatre industries, the show proved to be a unique local contribution to the New Zealand International Comedy Festival with its energy, creativity and comedic brilliance. - *Pippa Neels*

## Jimeoin – Something smells... funny

Irish-Australian comedian Jimeoin is a dependable veteran of the comedy festival. His shtick is well established - with a tilt of his expressive eyebrow or a lift of his leg, he will cleverly deconstruct human behavior and body language, drawing attention to the quirky things we Homo Sapiens do. His observations are genius in their simplicity; the way we laugh, make the bed, or dance while on the phone.

It takes some time to get used to him, as his manner is deceptively low-key and low-energy, and his accent often requires some deciphering. I felt the show dragged, as there was not enough to break-up Jimeoin's behavioral flight of fancy (which became slightly repetitive). The show never quite peaked. But when Jimeoin is good, he is bloody good, especially at holding a mirror for us to view how ridiculous our race is. I loved his gags on the 'goodbye game' - the competition we play when parting to be the last person to say goodbye. You think you've won until the other person beeps the horn on their car. Brilliant.

- *James Wenley*



## Paul Barrett – Tic Tic

Paul Barrett has Tourettes syndrome, and crafts a very funny and charming show around his condition.

He emphasises that only 10% of Tourettes sufferers are swearers. And he's not one of them - he has tics and sometimes barks. So instead of being treated to a tirade of peculiar swear words, we are treated to a beautifully slow-burning show in which Paul Barrett - showing off a very swish suit - serenades us over a baby grand piano, letting us into his life and exploring how Tourettes has affected him.

The show is less stand-up comedy, and more of a one man theatrical show. He recounts the significant events in his life - including his disastrous Boy Scout days, realizing he was gay, becoming an actor, and finally being diagnosed with Tourettes in the '90s.

He portrays the different characters he meets along the way. His anecdotes are sparkling and fascinating - I particularly enjoyed (and felt immense sympathy for) his spiel about the rejection letter from the New Zealand Drama School. He'd told the careers counselor he wanted to be an actor, a concert pianist or a conductor. Big dreams for someone who couldn't always control what his body did! Paul's a pretty amazing guy to have achieved his dreams (he's a welcome regular in ATC productions). I felt that Paul could afford to be a little more off the cuff and more connected with the audience, as he comes across as too rehearsed and appears as though he is

Paul Barrett playing the character of Paul Barrett.

It's a rare comedy show that will give you a history of Tourettes syndrome along with smatterings of Beethoven, Wagner and Cole Porter played on the piano. Paul's story is moving, and he is without a doubt the class act of the festival.

- *James Wenley*

## Jamie Bowen – A Rational Fear of Concrete

Jamie Bowen's profile has increased recently. After doing the comedy circuit for years, he's been popping up on television more often and he has his own TV show in the works. He is a comic that I respect, but he wasn't at the top of his game for his show *'A Rational Fear of Concrete'*. Bowen was a rollerblader, who developed his fear from falling over too many times. He sets up some good riffs around this theme, and I enjoyed his stories about how he tried to use his 'war wounds' to solicit a sympathy boob grope out of his teen girlfriend.

Throughout the show, Bowen puts together some music (he brought along a loop pedal). It is clever to begin with, but it came across as a bit indulgent and there was nothing inherently funny about it - I've seen people do far more interesting things with that kind of technology. The comedy basically stopped while Bowen played. He did have some good songs near the end, but he should get rid of the instrumental!

- *James Wenley*



## Raybon Kan – Discomfort Zone

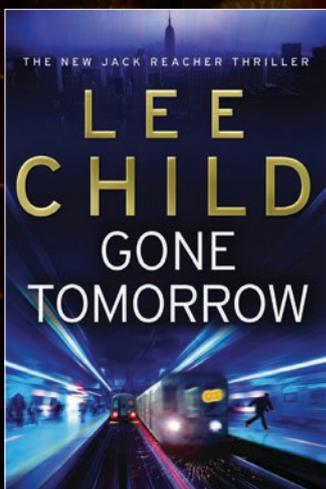
New Zealand comedy great, Raybon Kan has returned to his standup comedy roots in 'Discomfort Zone'. The show is aptly named, because Kan is not afraid of wading into some dangerous territory and offending people. He zeroes in on religion and even suggests that JC was gay. He takes a while to warm up, still telling us a quarter of the way in that he hadn't started the show. He says most of his stuff will revolve around the theme 'The Government is dumb', but he sometimes lacks direction and he could have been just a little tighter on opening night. He jokes that his audiences are affluent and well-off. Kan does indeed attract a high-brow class of patron, because his humour is more of the intelligent kind. He has some great insight into today's world - how kids are wimps because they can't withstand txt bullying ("look, he is frowning at me sideways") or how anti-social social media is. You can't help but feel smarter after seeing Kan. - *James Wenley*

## GONE TOMORROW

LEE CHILD (BANTAM PRESS)

If you don't know of Lee Child's famous action hero Jack Reacher yet then you're clearly wasting too much time on highbrow novels that don't involve ruthless action scenes, sexy older women and clip-together tooth-brushes. *Gone Tomorrow* is Child's latest in the ever-growing Reacher series, and it's a nice addition that gives the fans exactly what they want: the literary equivalent of a decent action flick.

Lee Child's universe is a fairly simple one: something illegal or terrible goes down, and former Military Police officer Jack Reacher somehow gets roped into sorting it out. This system is yet to fail Child, and thankfully there's no break from his formula in *Gone Tomorrow*. The ever-wandering Reacher finds himself on a New York subway car at 2am, with



5 other passengers. Four of these passengers are irrelevant. The fifth, however, is a woman displaying all eleven visual signs of a potential suicide-bomber. Responding cautiously, Reacher does his best to prevent a potential explosion, using various tricks and techniques he'd picked up from his

army days. However, not all goes to plan and Reacher ends up in an interrogation room being questioned by a bunch of mysterious government agents.

If you've read a Reacher story before, you won't be disappointed (or surprised) by the content of *Gone Tomorrow*. Everything awesome about Jack is here: namely fantastically written fight scenes and an intriguing mystery at the heart of the narrative. One of the things I've always liked about Lee Child is how he switches between first

and third person narration between novels depending on which is likely to be more appropriate. *Gone Tomorrow* is first-person,

which is a fitting choice given the frequent high tension situations Reacher finds himself in. The prose is fittingly simplistic (Reacher is not the kind of character to waste words), makes the engaging story simple and enjoyable to read. The only flaws I could think of come from personal taste. Personally, I like the somewhat formulaic nature of the series and the heavy emphasis on fight scenes, but that's not for everyone. If you're more at home reading about frilly women in the Elizabethan era, perhaps give *Gone Tomorrow* a miss.

If you like reading, and want a break from the insufferably boring shit that University forces upon you, I implore you get to know Jack Reacher and catch up with all his adventures. It's the best kind of mindless entertainment, kind of like watching *Die Hard*. But, dare I say it, better. I recommend it especially to Literature students; use it to wash away the bad taste of Hemmingway and Nabokov over the inter-semester break.



GO ON. GIVE YOURSELF A JACK REACHER-ROUND.  
- SPENCER DOWSON

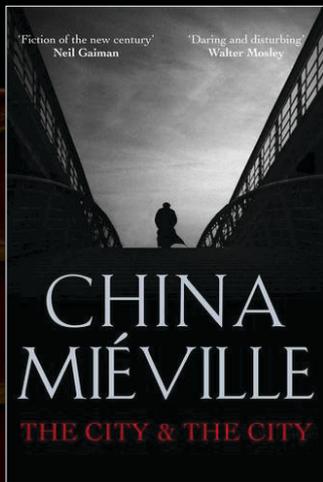
## THE CITY & THE CITY

CHINA MIÉVILLE

*The City & The City* is a hard novel to classify.

Despite winning the UK's top science-fiction award, many readers questioned whether or not this book could be considered science-fiction at all. Regardless, it is a spectacular piece of work: a curious mixture of crime and speculative fiction centred upon an unsolved murder and a pair of cities unlike any other.

The premise is (almost) simple. In the city of Beszel, a murdered woman is found in a run-down estate, and Inspector Borlú gets assigned to the case. But as he investigates, the case becomes unsurprisingly convoluted. The story is made exceptional by the setting: the bizarrely conjoined city-states of Beszel and UIQoma. These two cities occupy only one geographical location (a vaguely defined locale somewhere in Eastern Europe) but are definitely separate entities, each with



their own language, politics, fashions and food. This leads to a complicated existence, where the only things keeping the two cities apart are centuries of tradition and 'Breach', an Orwellian law enforcement body with seemingly boundless powers to enforce the surreal borders of these overlapping worlds. Here, citizens learn to 'unsee' whatever doesn't belong in their reality, be it people, buildings, or foreign traffic.

Formal relationships between the two cities exist, of course. There is only one legal border through Copula Hal, a large government building in the centre of the city. Children from both Beszel and UIQoma learn the language of the other. And houses located 'grosstopically' on the same street can call each other using international dialling codes. The fact that the two cities are also situated on Earth, rather than some fantastic otherworld, only adds to the oddness; mundane talk of Amnesty International, Google and German cars definitely

feels out of place next to the unremarked upon existence of crosshatched roads, where a gentrified area of one city could overlay dangerous, graffitied streets of the other.

Miéville doesn't dwell on the strange logistics of these fictional cities (although his meticulous and fascinating world building is frequently much more absorbing than the actual plot). Instead he spins a reasonably convincing crime story that leads Inspector Borlú from Beszel to UIQoma and back again, tracking leads—including one about a third, mythical metropolis—across both cities in an increasingly complicated quest to discover the killer of a woman who turns out to be an American student of archaeology. However the cities themselves feel like much stronger characters than most of the humans, who seem loosely drawn and, with the exception of Borlú and two of his colleagues, play only minor roles in the overall narrative. But these small flaws do not detract much: *The City & The City* is an excellent novel, and highly recommended.



A SURREAL AND THOUGHT-PROVOKING THRILLER  
- MIRIAM WILLIAMS

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## Just Cause 2 (XBOX 360, PS3, PC)

Ever wondered what would happen if you somehow merged *Grand Theft Auto*, *Spider-Man* and a truly awful action movie (*Spider-Man III*, perhaps) together? Well, chances are the result wouldn't be far removed from *Just Cause 2*, the latest action game from Square Enix.

*Just Cause 2* picks up with essentially the same plot as the original; a small island has been taken over by malevolent forces, in this case a corrupt and violent dictator, and it's up to the U.S.A. to sort that shit out. For some reason, the man representing America in this game is an almost offensively South American Rico Rodriguez; a mercenary who loves blowing shit up and speaks like he's doing a bad Tony Montana impersonation. He's given the responsibility of finding a missing American agent, in hopes of getting the intel he needs to bring down the corrupt government. It's best not to worry about the storyline though. Laughably bad voice acting and what feels like zero concern for plot make *Just Cause 2* a game that's better watched than heard.

Luckily, *Just Cause 2*'s often ridiculous gameplay more than makes up for its failings in other departments. The game loves to throw dozens of guards and soldiers at you all at once, but the shooting controls usually play well enough for it not to be a huge challenge. The biggest struggle comes when the game refuses to acknowledge hits on the AI soldiers; unloading a whole clip into a dude's chest for him only to ignore them and shoot you in the face is a pain. This is a rarity though, and doesn't really slow down the pace of the game that often. And if someone really insists on ignoring your bullets,

you can always harpoon them with your wrist-mounted grappling hook, and pull them in for a hand-to-hand beatdown. The hook is a fantastic addition to the otherwise generic shooting system, and has a lot of other fun uses throughout the game too.

The gameplay itself is based around the three criminal gangs that hold a stake in the island. Rico has to curry their favour by killing people, in the hopes of using them to find the target he's after. This system works reasonably well, but is held back by the cumbersome and cluttered map system, making choosing and following each objective near-impossible on occasion. This is a real shame, considering that *JC2*'s most handsome asset is the island itself and exploring it should be made as easy as possible.

Panau Island is the perfect environment for a free-roaming game, combining bustling urban sectors with vast and tropical jungles. It's a lot of fun to explore, especially due to the 100+ unique vehicles Rico has access to throughout the affair. Some of the missions that take place within these environments can be more frustrating than fun, but the sheer number of them means you can move on to another if you get annoyed.

There are some minor annoyances in *Just Cause 2*, which may become apparent after the first few hours, but it's worth a look nonetheless, if for nothing else than the sheer number of gratuitous explosions and laughable racial caricatures.



MADRE DE DIOS! — SPENCER DOWSON

## HARDWARE REVIEW:

### Xbox 360 Wireless Controller for Windows PCs

Any hardcore gamer will have an opinion on the whole keyboard versus controller debate, and chances are it's likely to be a fairly vocal one. People who have been raised on *Counter-Strike* and *Starcraft* are generally going to favour the keyboard and mouse setup, claiming that it gives them a greater range of motion and better control over the games they play.

While I have nothing but respect for this opinion (each to their own, takes all kinds, etc), I was raised on the PSX *Tekken* and *Crash Bandicoot*, so my heart will always belong to analogue controllers. I just can't handle gaming on my computer, and over the years my lack of faith in my keyboard and mouse has been responsible for me missing out on a number of games I'd have really enjoyed.

However, it seems like I may be able to finally bridge this gap, now that I have an Xbox 360 Wireless Controller for Windows PC at my disposal. It's pretty much what it sounds like: an Xbox 360 controller (which can be used with your Xbox 360, as well as your PC) that you can use with your PC games via a tiny dongle that plugs into your USB port.

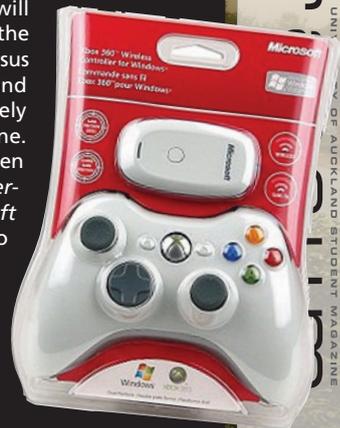
Setup is unbelievably easy: download the software from the disc that comes with it, plug in the USB dongle and turn the controller on. Then all you have to do is start up whatever game you're playing, switch the control settings to 'Xbox controller' and go for gold, assuming the game you happen to be playing is compatible with the controller.

I ended up using the controller for two games I could play on Xbox 360 anyway, *Bioshock* and *Gears of War*. Both games had a seamless transition from keyboard and mouse to controller, and the controls were immediately mapped to the exact configuration of their Xbox 360 counterparts. The game responded perfectly to the controller, both when on and off line.

The Xbox 360 Wireless Controller for Windows PC does exactly what it claims to do, recreating the Xbox 360 control scheme for games perfectly. Given that you can pick up one of these sets for \$99.99, when a regular controller costs around \$89.99, I can't see why you wouldn't buy one of these if you needed a spare controller. Having said that, I can't really see why someone who uses a computer primarily for gaming would bother with it. A bit of research indicates that most of the games compatible with the controller are available on Xbox 360 too, so it's really just a matter of making up your mind about which control method (and gaming platform) you prefer.



A GREAT ALTERNATIVE TO BUYING AN XBOX 360 IF YOU ALREADY HAVE A DECENT PC. — SPENCER DOWSON



THE UNIVERSITY OF AUCKLAND STUDENT MAGAZINE

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RHYS' SPENCER'S PIECES

# JUSTIN BIEBER? I'VE GOT MORE PUBES THAN THAT GUY.

Fans of this column (and anyone whose noticed our countless plugs) will no doubt be aware that Rhys Mathewson has been busy as of late, doing his darnedest to win the most prestigious comedy award in New Zealand: The Billy T. And while this is great for him and his career, the work required to actually put together and perform a comedy show has meant he's had no extra time for writing his weekly musings in *Craccum*. Have no fear though. Spencer the understudy is here to pick up the slack. I may only be half as funny as Rhys, but I'm twice as ginger so it kind of balances things out.



Given that this could be my only chance at the back page column space, I thought I'd talk about something that's been bugging me lately: the music industry. There are plenty of good reasons to hate the music industry; the way they whinge about piracy, their poor treatment of emerging artists and the way they keep giving Madonna money. These problems are annoying, yet tolerable. My major grievance with the music industry at the moment is how they are constantly using sexuality to sell records, by targeting individual peoples' sexual preferences. And it's fine if we're talking about Rihanna's sexually suggestive lyrics and smoking hot body making dudes watch music videos, or using Michael Bubl 's soulful lyrics and sharp suits to drive women everywhere wild. Everybody wins there. But, come on, Music Industry. Specifically packaging Justin Bieber to attract paedophiles? Really? That's just too far. That's fucking sick. I can appreciate that paedophiles are (barely) people and that they too listen to music, but using their disgusting sexual perversions to flog off poorly made Canadian pop albums is just appalling. I hope you're ashamed of yourself, Usher.

Those of you out there with Bieber fever (the cure, by the way, is a painful injection of the Wu-Tang Clan directly into your spine) will immediately doubt the legitimacy of my accusations. Before you swarm together and attack me in a writhing sea of hysteria, take a long hard look at Justin Jailbait's lyrics.

In the 'hit' song 'Eenine Meanie', Justin teases his paedophilic audience with the lines "Tell me what you're really here for/ Them other guys?/I can see right through ya," because he knows he is the number one target of paedophilic lust in the world right now. This line is generic enough to be about anyone, but its sinister undertones are made clear by the following verse: "You seem like the type/To love 'em and leave 'em/And disappear right after the song," noting the tendency of pedophiles to hastily disappear after they molest their youthful prey. Rumor has it is next album is even going to be called *Taking Candy from Strangers*.

There's nothing funny about paedophilia. Please, join me in a boycott of all Justin Bieber products to help promote the message that advertising directly to kiddie-fiddlers (or any other kind of sexual deviant) is not ok. I don't care how fucking sexy he is.

- Spencer Dowson

## COMING UP IN CRACCUM

**Issue 11 Theme: Subcultures**

**Deadline: Monday 17th May, 10pm**

Are you a geek? Are you a sports nut? Do you LARP? Are you a Twihard? Straight-edge? Are YOU New Zealand Cricket? Tifosi? Are you in a group that is somehow quirky and interesting, yet marginalised by society? Tell us about your group, or one you find interesting. Send your submissions to [contribute@craccum.co.nz](mailto:contribute@craccum.co.nz).

**CONTRIBUTE!** Feel like writing articles about stuff that you feel students should know about? Want to get involved in some dirty underfunded student journalism? Email [contribute@craccum.co.nz](mailto:contribute@craccum.co.nz) and tell us you want in.

**Articles/Features:** Visit us at the offices top level of the student union buildings, on the side closest to the Maidment Theatre.

**Cover Art:** Email [dan@craccum.co.nz](mailto:dan@craccum.co.nz) for our template and design details.

**Letters:** Can be sent to [letters@craccum.co.nz](mailto:letters@craccum.co.nz) - deadline Tuesday 5PM.

**Reviews:** Email a section editor and tell them you want to help out.

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[news@craccum.co.nz](mailto:news@craccum.co.nz)    [theatre@craccum.co.nz](mailto:theatre@craccum.co.nz)

# END OF LISTS STARTS

**Illnesses in the *Craccum* offices this week: 3.**

**Injuries in the *Craccum* offices this week: 2.** You clumsy spaz.

**Comedy Festival:** A great time had by all.

**Did Rhys win the Billy T?** We certainly hope so.

**And if he didn't?** The entire campus is about to learn the true meaning of the phrase 'Rhys-out'.

**Bieber fever:** It's sort of like Herpes, right?

**Serious journalism this week:** Delegate-gate.

**Almost half way there:** And yet still not living on a prayer.

**Still confused about:** People liking the way we smell.

**Exams are coming:** LALALALALA WE CAN'T HEAR YOU LALALALALALA.

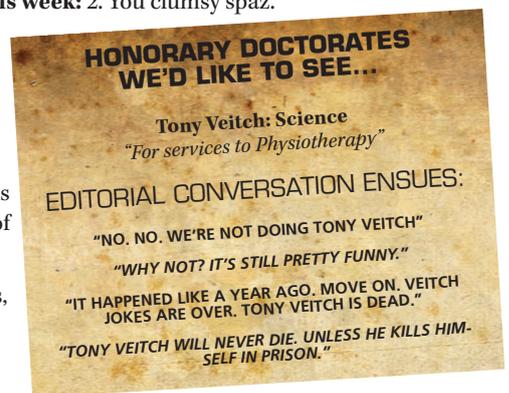
**Place of the week:** Taumatawhakatangihangakoauauotamateapokaiwhenuakitanatahu, Hawkes Bay.

**Shape of the week:** Polytagoreannippopolislyginga.

**This is clearly just space-filler now.** Your mother is space filler.

**While I detest your character for bringing in the nature of my mother's physical form and fitness, I must nonetheless agree with your frank but fair assessment of my mother's ability to occupy physical three-dimensional space.** Who's filling space now?

**True.** True



# SHADOWS

YOUR STUDENT BAR

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Jägermeister

**MONDAY**  
FROM 5PM  
AUSA CARD DEALS!

DJ SPADE  
SINGLES POOL COMP  
FROM 9PM - \$3 ENTRY FEE  
\$100 BAR TAB FIRST PRIZE ONLY  
(HEAT WINNERS THROUGH TO END OF SEMESTER GRAND FINAL)

DOUBLE CHEESE  
BURGER (BUN,  
TWO (2) BEEF  
PATTIES, CHEESE & ONION  
TOMATO RELISH)  
ADD FRIES "M"  
TOMATO SAUCE

\$5

\$10



COCA  
COLA  
\$3

BOTTOMLESS GLASS

**TUESDAY**  
FROM 8PM  
PURCHASE A  
STEINLAGER PURE  
& "FLICK THE BALL  
OUT" TO REVEAL IF  
YOU ARE AN  
"INSTANT WINNER"

INFAMOUS SHADOWS  
PUB QUIZ  
HOSTED BY MR. MARK  
\$200, \$150 & \$100  
BAR TABS TO BE WON

STAMP 3X JIM BEAM RTDS



WIN THIS  
MASSIVE JIM BEAM  
TOOLBOX

**WEDNESDAY**  
FROM 8PM  
\$750 CORUBA  
GOLD SHAKERS  
AND  
AUSA CARD DEALS

CORUBA "GOLDEN MIC"  
KARAOKE  
HOSTED BY BOMBER  
\$100 BAR TAB  
FOR OUR BEST  
PLUS PIZZA & CORUBA GOLD VOUCHERS

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TOASTED  
BAR & CAFE

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"CHEESE OR TOMATO TOASTED" \$2

**THURSDAY**  
FROM 8PM



SHADOWS

PRESENTS...

LIVE MUSIC WITH...  
"THE EARLYBIRDS"  
&  
"CLAP CLAP RIOT"



SHADOWS  
EXTENSION



AVAILABLE FOR PRIVATE FUNCTIONS  
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NO MINIMUM SPEND!

**FRIDAY**  
FROM MID-DAY  
"QUARTS IN  
SESSION" WITH  
CASTLEPOINT  
\$5.50

"FRIDAY LIVE!"  
FROM 5PM - DJ SPADE  
KICK'S OFF BEFORE LIVE  
MUSIC WITH "MOTHER  
MOTOR" AND  
"INTERCONNECTOR" THEN  
DJ SUNIL SPINS YOU OUT!



**SATURDAY**  
BAR OPEN  
FROM 5PM



SHADOWS

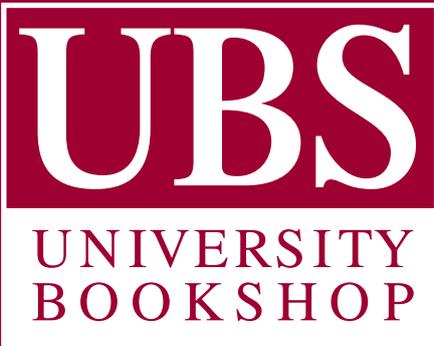
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AND THE LOST BOYS



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