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WRO

What it's like to speak
for 25,000 women

ADITI GORASIA
AUSA WOMENS' RIGHTS OFFICER 2016

I don't think I'm good at being a feminist sometimes. I subconsciously judge people's clothing choices, hide my tampons and blame myself when someone harasses me on the street at night.

I'm a work in progress but the best thing about being this year's AUSA Womens' Rights officer is understanding that I have to hold myself to a certain standard. There is a final aim we are all trying to reach and being able to recognise times when you're a bad feminist is a great starting point. Don't stress about it, the most important part of being a feminist is accepting that people have the rights to equal opportunities regardless of how they live their lives. You're allowed to dislike how some people live their lives but infringing on their liberty to do so is problematic. This is my greatest takeaway from the year.

Being the WRO was not easy: hectic work loads, constantly trying to be politically-correct, avoiding all and any cupcakes and fighting off trolls. I couldn't tell you which I hate more, the sound of my alarm or being asked "Why is there no MenSpace". I found myself exhausted of advocating for us sometimes, wanting to give up. As long as I hear someone telling us the words we "can't" though, I think we have no choice but to keep fighting.

One of the most difficult parts was balancing my views on feminism while still trying to be a good, Indian daughter. My parents are relatively liberal in terms of general Indian practice, but still the constant "Why are you dressed like that? Is it just that you like the attention? You want boys to stare at you?" or the "please leave your feminism bullshit at work" aggravate me. I

am encouraged to pursue my ambitions but not without the constraints that "must" come with being a woman. We're getting there though, the more I yell about the patriarchy, the more understanding my parents become. We are not a lost cause.

The best thing about being the WRO is the inherent trust people have in me. Women from all over the university come into our office, telling me about the most intimate parts of their life.



We drink tea together, we cry together, we fight together. This gives me faith. No one that's ever been into a public women's bathroom can claim that women only fight amongst each other. The comradery and the willingness to support within us is overwhelming. This will be our greatest asset in the movement towards equality.

I don't think I'd be sane enough to write this without the constant support of Diana. She is in all essence of the word, my better half. Thanks Diana, for just getting shit done. I love you and can't wait to see the places you take us.

We have a few months left as your WROs but this week (Womensfest) feels like the closing ceremony. Thank you for putting your faith in us to make your voice heard. My final plea is that you start to call out the injustices in your life and the lives of your loved ones, no matter how small or big. We deserve better. ■

"I found myself exhausted of advocating for us sometimes, wanting to give up. As long as I hear someone telling us the words we 'can't' though, I think we have no choice but to keep fighting."

A WRO perspective: Diana tells all

One of your Women's Rights Officers shares her experience on her personal feminist journey

DIANA GIU

At this point I've got nothing more to hide. Womensfest is underway, I just published an entire magazine and my job for the year is basically done. I can stop pretending.

I can stop trying to be that perfect role model who was supposed to know everything about feminism right from the word 'go.' I can stop lying every time I walked into Womenspace and told myself I actually liked it there. I can stop faking it. Because the truth is that I am not a perfect feminist. I'm far from it. And if I stop lying I must be telling the truth and the truth is that I am deeply, deeply flawed.

I had no idea what to expect when I was elected into this position in August last year. At the time, I thought it would be something fun to do. I would be sitting on the student's association of the largest university in New Zealand, overseeing and being actively involved in strategic decision-making. I would advocate for the interests of women on campus in Executive meetings and organize one of the biggest themed-event weeks of the year. I would have my own office and exclusive access to AUSA spaces to hold important meetings with distinguished individuals. At the same time, I would also be doing dishes in Womenspace, and be fending off trolls on social media.

Safe to say, the position was not glamorous all the time in the same way I thought it would be. But it would be an injustice to the role if I were to say that and leave it there. Doing so would be to ignore the learning opportunities it gave me. And, with WRO, there were certainly plenty of those.

After having been elected, I embarked on a conscious journey to learn more

about feminism and how it affected people. I had two questions in mind. First, what was I supposed to stand for as a feminist? Second, what was I supposed to do? Often this process involved me talking to my more progressive friends, only to have them scoff when I told them I didn't know what intersectionality was. It all seemed as if everybody around me had it all figured out. I was a fluke, but I wasn't ready to admit that.



Over time a few things started to click and fall into place. Intersectionality was when an individual's separate social identities combine together to create unique systems of disadvantage or discrimination. For example, if you were a young, Asian female then you were basically guaranteed to have it worse compared to a middle-aged, white male. The way society views one aspect of your identity necessarily informs the way society views all other aspects of your identity. If you have an identity that is 'normal' or 'desired,' then you have 'privilege.' If you don't, then you aren't. That was simple enough. What was next on the list?

Well, mansplaining is when a man explains something to a woman in a

way that is regarded as condescending or patronizing. Transmisogyny is the intersection of transphobia and misogyny. Blaming victims of sexual assault for their adversity, thereby normalizing male sexual assault, is rape culture.

To the untrained eye, all of the above may seem like something novel and new and may cause an unsuspecting reader to uncomfortably challenge their status quo. It certainly did cause me to do so. But the reality is that the lived experiences behind those concepts are anything but novel or new. Instead, we've only become much more aware of people's experiences today than 50 odd years ago. We've become aware enough to coin terms for them.

Coming into my role at the beginning of this year I certainly felt more ready for it than I did when I was elected. Even so, I realised it was important that I didn't become complacent. Starting out as a relative noob, I've now met people through Thursdays in Black and the Campus Feminist Collective who teach and challenge me every day. The women who I previously wouldn't even have spoken to I am now proud to call some of my closest friends.

I believe that all of this was the result of a leap of faith. Although I am still not a 'perfect' feminist, I have learned my own version of feminism that I am more than happy to stand behind. Every single person is at different places in their own feminist journeys. I can only hope that you, too, will find a place that works.

At this point, I really have got nothing more to hide. Womensfest is underway, I just published an entire magazine and even wrote an article for it. My job for the year is basically done. To the 2017 WROs, brace yourselves: you're in for a real journey. ■



red carpet sexism: women and the oscars

recent history shows the golden statue favours certain "types" of women for certain kinds of roles.

ANUJA MITRA

We all remember #oscarssowhite, the hashtag that fueled discussions around media representation early this year. But the Academy Awards do more than only reveal Hollywood's racial biases. Turns out, actresses are awarded on different merits than actors. And it's getting harder to ignore.

The Pantograph Punch puts it bluntly: "With actors, it's about the performance; with actresses, it's about the person." So what's the ideal person? Well, it is the young, conventionally attractive women who are the uncontroversial favourites of the media.

The comparative youth of women to men is undeniable. The average age of Best Actress winners is 36; for Best Actors, it's 44. Supporting Actresses are usually around 40; Supporting Actors are 50. This makes sense, since a survey of 2,000 screenplays from the '80s to the 2010s shows that women speak the most dialogue when they're aged 22 to 31. For men, the most common range is 42 to 65 (followed by 32 to 41). It's inarguable: As they grow older, roles for women decrease. In 2015 Maggie Gyllenhaal, then 37, told media website The Wrap that she was recently deemed 'too old' to portray the love interest of a 55-year-old man. Olivia Wilde is nearly 10 years younger than Leonardo DiCaprio, yet she was similarly 'too old' to play his wife in "The Wolf of Wall Street." An incredibly deep pool of examples like these are

all coming to light, with even the most famous actresses speaking out about 'Hollywood ageism'.

There are also the types of roles that the Academy sees fit to commend. According to a graph from Fusion.net, women most commonly win awards for playing wives or entertainers. There's nothing wrong with an onscreen woman being a wife or girlfriend: the problem is when these are her only defining traits, pushing her to the margins of the narrative. The same survey claims most men win awards for playing criminals or military. In the last five years, though, actors have mostly won acclaim for playing famous historical figures - think of the awards given to Colin Firth for "The King's Speech" in 2011, Daniel Day-Lewis for "Lincoln" in 2013, Eddie Redmayne for "The Theory of Everything" in 2015, even Leonardo DiCaprio for "The Revenant" this year. There aren't nearly enough movies focusing on women in general, let alone famous historical women. The San Diego State University's Centre for the Study of Women in Television & Film found that women comprised just 22% of protagonists in the 100 top grossing films of 2015.

Writing this in a feminist magazine seems like preaching to the converted. But it's important to realise just how embedded in the system these trends are - as well as how much they intersect with other diversity issues. White women might win for different reasons than men, but they're still winning. In the Oscars' 88 ceremonies, Halle Berry is the sole woman of colour to score

the Best Actress statue (men of colour have fared slightly better, with six Best Actors.) More than anything, what this Oscars problem reflects is the problem in popular media as whole. We've got to up the number of starring roles for women, particularly women of colour. Perhaps it's too optimistic, but with more complex main characters for actresses, we might see a change in the 'kinds' of women who win Oscars and the roles they win them for. To paraphrase Viola Davis' Emmys speech from last year: You cannot win awards for roles that are simply not there. ■

READ MORE:

- "Film Dialogue from 2,000 Screenplays, Broken Down by Gender and Age". <http://polygraph.cool/films/>
- "See the Entire History of the Oscars Diversity Problem in One Chart". <http://labs.time.com/story/oscar-diversity/>
- "It's a Man's (Celluloid) World: Portrayals of Female Characters in the Top 100 Films of 2015". http://womenintvfilm.sdsu.edu/files/2015_Its_a_Mans_Celluloid_World_Report.pdf
- "The Archetype of the Best Actress and the Problem with Hollywood". <http://pantograph-punch.com/post/best-actress-and-the-problem-with-hollywood>
- "What's the Prime Age to Win an Oscar?" <https://www.overthinkingit.com/2013/02/19/oscar-winners-age-chart/>
- "The Oscar Goes to: Men Who Play Criminals and Women Who Play Wives". <http://fusion.net/story/269883/oscar-best-actress-roles-sexism/>



AUSA – 125 years of men

Some concerning facts about
the history of an Association
that is meant to be at the
forefront of progressive thought
and change in New Zealand.

WITH WILL MATTHEWS

RESIDENT

RESIDENT@AUSA.ORG.NZ

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This year AUSA turned 125. To celebrate, the Association had a reunion. Old friends reunited and new friendships were made. At the end of the night, a photo was organised with all of the AUSA Presidents in the room. As the photo was lined up, one thing was very obvious.

Every AUSA President in attendance, past and present, were men.

It wasn't just because all the ex-Presidents who were women had left (although one had). In the entire 125 years that AUSA has existed, it has only had ten women Presidents. Hardly a decent track record when you consider that AUSA and the student movement as a whole has supposedly been on the front lines of progressive reform in New Zealand for well over a century.

We don't have a lot of information about some of the Presidents, including Dorothea Morell (1942-3), Frances Spence (1951-3) Trish Mullins (1984) and Lesieli Oliver (2007), but it's easy to see from the ones that we do know a lot about is that the few woman AUSA Presidents have had some seriously hard times during their terms. It is also easy to see that each and every one of these women have kicked some serious ass despite all of the shit.

Elected in 1979, Janet Roth, a radical feminist and future Communist League candidate, was removed from office for 'being too much of a feminist'. Yes, you heard right.

Elected in 1990, Ella Henry bossed through her time at AUSA. As a young single mother, Ella not only ran AUSA for a year, but also ran against Phil Goff (who had just introduced the student loan scheme as Minister of Education) in the Roskill seat. Ella won away enough of the left-wing vote to ensure that Goff lost the seat to National's Gilbert Myles for three years. Take that, student loans. Ella was also the first Maori woman elected as AUSA President.

Next up was Kate Sutton in 2004. In many ways, Kate didn't have a great time of it. At several points in the year attempts were made to remove Kate from office. One of these was because she was so alarmed at student behaviour during the annual 'Drinking



Horn' that she called the police. No one likes their party to be broken up, but would the reaction have been as extreme if Kate was a man and not an 'interfering woman'?

Arena Williams became President in 2012, and was the second Maori woman to be elected. Arena had a notoriously difficult year, including being personally harassed during her attempts to handle a nasty skirmish between pro-life and pro-choice groups on campus.

Following Arena in 2014 was Cate Bell. Cate had many achievements as President, including managing to put AUSA in financial surplus for the first time in many years. While she was doing this, Cate also managed to find the time to get married! However, instead of focussing on the strength of her character and talent needed to maintain that work-life balance, Craccum magazine was more interested in making crude jokes about Cate and her Tongan/New Caledonian husband (which were withdrawn after AUPISA confronted the magazine).

Where are some of these women now? Well, we know of a couple of them. Dr Ella Henry is a senior lecturer at AUT. Kate Sutton has been a high-ranked candidate for national parliament and is now working to support communities in Malawi. Arena Williams works as a lawyer in the Maori division of a

Elected in 1979, Janet Roth, a radical feminist and future Communist League candidate, was removed from office for 'being too much of a feminist'.



big corporate. Cate got headhunted right out of AUSA and is now a Senior Consultant in Advisory Services at Ernst and Young. Writing as the latest in the line of a legacy of male Presidents, I can quite honestly say that I will not be nearly as successful as my women predecessors. The sky is the limit for these fantastic women, who had to put up with the crude drawings on their campaign flyers, read the derogatory statements in *Craccum* and fight against jeering crowds. AUSA has been lucky to have them, but why has there only been 10 of them?

Side note: The 2016 Craccum Editors have been great, but Craccum has hardly been a beacon of women's rights in the past. Over the last few years, the AUSA Women's Rights Officers have taken the Craccum Editors to the AUSA Media Complaints Tribunal for, amongst other things, printing an article in which a writer wrote about slapping a woman student with a jandal, and making a joke about the murder of Reeva Steenkamp by Oscar Pistorius.

It's not all doom and gloom. Throughout its history AUSA has been a (relatively) consistent advocate for the rights of women on and off campus. Today AUSA still maintains the Womenspace, funds and runs a Womensfest and provides breastfeeding spaces to student parents. AUSA is also a strong supporter of the Thursdays in Black national movement and participates in the Take Back the Night campaign, as well as conducting its own audits on safety in and around the University Campus. However, the track record of AUSA on women's rights is tarnished by the screaming absence of women in the upper echelons of the Association itself over the course of its 125 years. Additionally, most of the few women who have risen to lead the Association have experienced serious discrimination during their terms.

There are small glimmers of hope though. In 2014 students elected an Executive with women as the President, Administrative Vice President and Education Vice President. The 2016 AUSA Officers team is similar, with women holding the Administrative, Education and Welfare Vice-Presidencies. The 2017 year looks bright too, with 12 women elected out of the 17 available positions on the Executive, and two women elected as *Craccum* Editors for the first time in donkey's years.

This is promising, but if AUSA wants to live up to an otherwise impressive record of achievement and support for women, then the next 125 years need to be better. ■

DID YOU KNOW?

AUSA's 'Women's Rights Officer' position was not created until 1979.



'CRACCUM' is a jumbled acronym. It stands for Auckland University College Men's Common Room Circular.




Until 1973 AUSA had a 'Man Vice President' and a 'Lady Vice President'. The MVP was tasked with all of the meaty policy and administrative work required to run the association while the LVP was essentially responsible for 'mothering students'.



In 1999 students demanded a referendum on the abolition of Womenspace. Thankfully, a majority of students voted in favour of the continuation of the space.

This referendum also included the motion 'THAT the AUSA student body no longer support executive positions which discriminate on the basis of gender, race or ethnic origin, those positions being Women's Rights Officer, Maori Students Officer, Pacific Islands Students Officer, and Overseas Students Officer.'

The 2017 year looks bright too, with 12 women elected out of the 17 available positions on the Executive, and two women elected as Craccum Editors for the first time in donkey's years.



this house believes hegemonic masculinity can be dismantled

A debate by the University of
Auckland Debating Society

WITH BELLA ROBINSON

"In gender studies, hegemonic masculinity is a concept of practices that promote the dominant social position of men and the subordinate social position of women. Hegemonic masculinity proposes to explain how and why men maintain dominant social roles over women and other gender identities, identities which are perceived as 'feminine' in society." – Wikipedia

On the Affirmative

Hegemonic masculinity is a system of ideal traits, behaviours and features that a man in any given society is expected to live up to. It proposes that men are rewarded for striving to achieve the "correct" form of masculinity and are marginalised for displaying "incorrect" forms (for example, homosexuality), or by displaying femininity.

Society polices masculinity through every part of culture, including through peer groups, the media, social institutions (school, the family, prison etc) and sport. On side affirmative, we believe that hegemonic masculinity can be dismantled for three reasons. Firstly, because ideal forms of masculinity are encouraged and learned, by extension they can be unlearned. Secondly, few men actually stand to benefit from this system which makes it easier to dismantle. Lastly, we are happy to stand for a dismantling process that will take time.

To the first point, hegemonic masculinity is performed and reformed because it is what men are taught to do. There is no question that men are taught to repress traditionally feminine thoughts, feelings and actions. Men are encouraged to emphasise forms of masculinity that are revered by society. If this is a learned state of being, then it can be taught differently. It would only take one generation to reject these social norms to break the cycle.

To the second, men themselves would want to get behind a movement which aims to dismantle hegemonic masculinity because hegemonic masculinity presents them an unattainable and unreachable goal. An exemplar of hegemonic masculinity in New Zealand may be Richie McCaw and not every man can be Richie McCaw. No one is without flaws. When men realise the unfairness of being punished by society for acting outside of rigid expectations, they are likely to feel the harms of the system personally. When this happens, men should be willing to challenge the norms that exist. If no one follows the "rules", then the rules lose power.

To the third, no social movement has ever achieved its goals overnight. Although we cannot suddenly convince men to all at once give up on trying to achieve and produce results of ideal masculinity, this doesn't mean we are unable to move forward in a positive direction. If we can continue to raise the status of femininity, challenge ideas of gender dichotomies, address homophobia, support affirmative action and tackle sexual violence, we are adding pressure in the direction of the society we want to see. We have already seen exponential progress towards equality off the back of the social movements of the 1970s. If conditions need to be different in order to dismantle hegemonic masculinity – then we can change them!

We absolutely have faith in society's potential to throw hegemonic masculinity in the bin. Sooner or later everyone will realise it is more harmful than helpful and stop engaging. The key is knowledge and community; small and large actions alike will build up over time to tear the system apart piece by piece. ■

On the Negative

Hegemonic masculinity as a concept is something that is abstract, ingrained, reconstituted and reformed over and over, day after day. The reason hegemonic masculinity exists is that it is a trap and a cycle that safeguards itself from destruction because it is flexible and adapts to new trends. There are three key ways that this can happen. Firstly, because the masculine ideal can morph over space and time it can absorb resistance. Secondly, any resistance that does happen can simply be disempowered. Thirdly, dismantling the system would generate substantial backlash.

To the first point, although the social norms surrounding what exactly the ideal form of masculinity is are always changing, we can observe common elements. The problem is less about each specific trait but rather have more to do with the structures, processes and ideas which give certain characteristics power. As long as this process is poisoned by things such as homophobia and anti-femininity, whatever we do to morph, change or resist hegemonic masculinity will be futile. For example, we have seen the emergence of a form of masculinity which favours intellect and reason over aggression and brute strength. Just because the form of masculinity has changed does not mean it has been dismantled.

To the second, any individual or group that tries to dismantle hegemonic masculinity by resisting it and acting contrary to it becomes subordinated. Even if some men are able to create a space in which it is accepted for them to be feminine, they will still do this at a cost of being seen as 'less' compared to those who are conventionally 'masculine'. The end of this point means that people who are 'feminine' will almost always continue to be subordinated to people who are 'masculine.' This doesn't solve the problem.

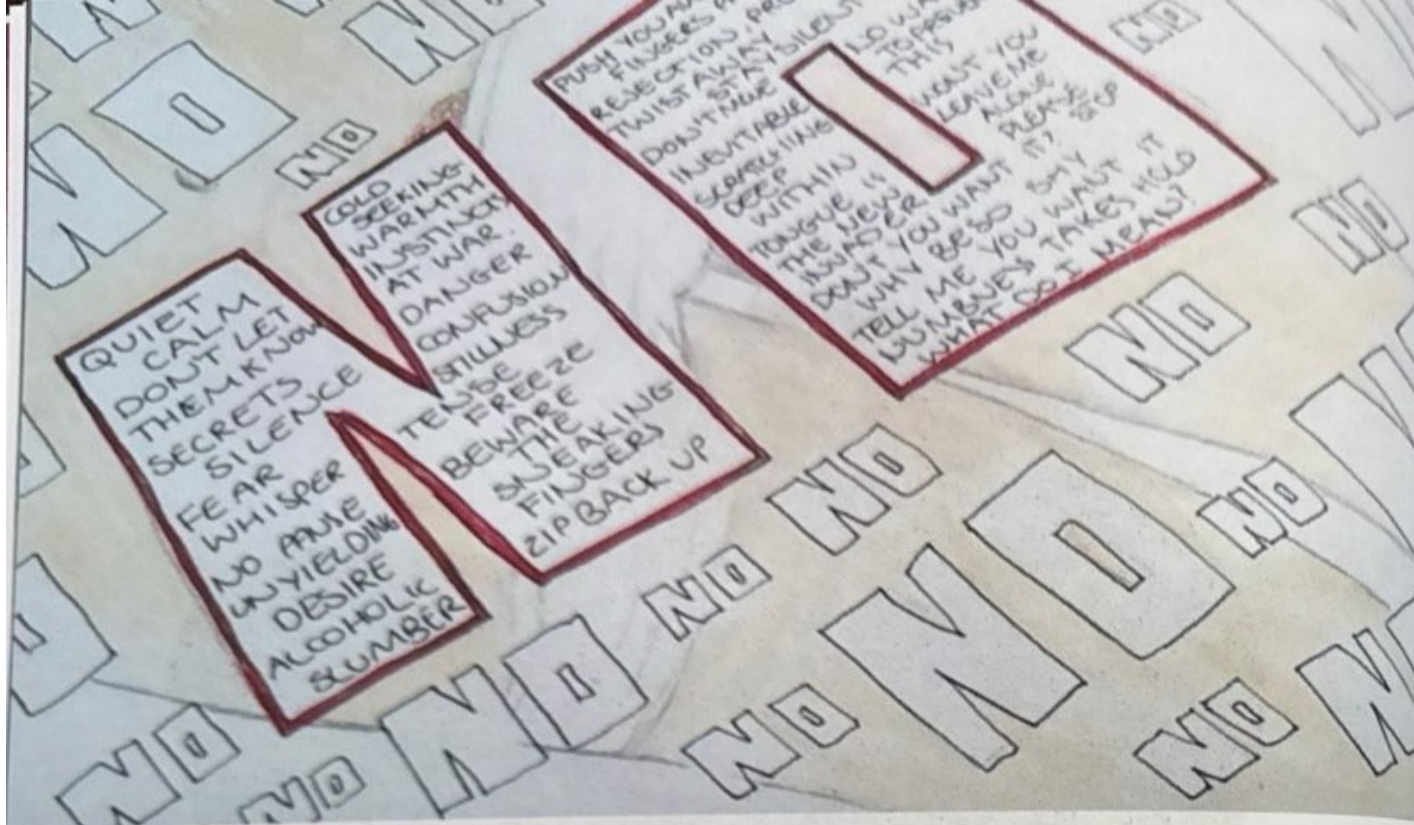
To the third, hegemonic masculinity is so rooted in society that to challenge it would cause substantial backlash. This is because hegemonic masculinity gives power to those who are least likely to want to change it. For men, they are coerced into thinking that the status quo is natural and that anyone trying to change this is a "crazy feminist" attempting to destroy them. Trying to change what is a huge part of the status quo is difficult enough without being completely disempowered to do so.

Overall, on Team Pessimism we are sorry to announce that hegemonic masculinity is here to stay. We'd love for this to not be true, but it seems to us that dismantling it is an uphill climb that never ends, because if you get to the top you'll find that your goal has simply just moved to a different hill. ■



A large, solid black silhouette of a person's head and shoulders is positioned in the foreground, facing right. The person appears to be looking out over a body of water. The background is a vibrant, blurred sunset or sunrise scene with warm orange and yellow hues near the horizon, transitioning into a clear blue sky above. The water in the distance reflects the colors of the sky. The overall composition is artistic and evocative, suggesting a moment of reflection or contemplation.

Part II: Personal Narrative



#allvoicesmatter

CONTENT WARNING: RAPE

Jennifer Muhl talks about her personal experience with yes-culture

Rape culture is a term used to describe the normalisation of sexual violence and victim-blaming. It is related to "yes-culture," which refers to the idea that children, particularly girls, are taught that they need to be polite and obliging. Yes-culture results in a silencing of women's voices, since it is the loudest voices that are listened to and not the ones which seek to avoid inconvenience and "rudeness". Taken together, the interplay between rape culture and yes-culture is intensely harmful.

I'm still scared sometimes. When I'm alone with a man, or anyone, who expresses interest in me I feel nervous, shaky, out of control. I don't know if I can control what will happen next. I am told #notallmen but I have lived #yesallwomen and one speaks louder than the other. I don't claim to speak for all women. I speak for me and my lived experience, privilege and all. Sometimes I wonder if I speak at all.

Since childhood I've been indoctrinated into "yes-culture". This is the idea that

submission, silence and acquiescence is the way to live, to make life easy and to avoid a fuss. This idea that saying "yes" even where it inconveniences you is the right thing, the polite thing to do. And heaven forbid you be impolite!

I wasn't always a "good girl." I didn't always say yes. I was opinionated and stubborn and never backed down until it was trained out of me. After you say no for long enough you give up. Sometimes life makes it too hard to be yourself.

Though it certainly did not begin then, I have since noticed the lack of value society places on a woman's voice. When I noticed this I was told it was because I was a child and not because I was a girl. Now that I've reached adulthood, the people telling me to be polite are my peers, so what's the excuse? I notice this in groups where I'm asked for my opinion then told I am wrong. I notice this when I am told by men that my explanation of a woman's experience is incorrect. I notice this in instances where my body is desired but my thoughts are ignored.

I still remember the night he held me down. I didn't know him before then, but his friends told him to get with me. He tried to take my pants off and I said no. He tried to kiss me and I said no. I

lost count of the times I had said no. I couldn't leave, I didn't know where I was, I was drunk, I had no phone. I needed to stay there that night and so eventually I gave up. He was confused. "Why are you shy?" "Don't you like this?" He thought he pleased me, did me a favour. He thought he respected my wishes but he forgot all the times I had told him no.

I escaped the person who robbed me of my "no" but that fear of inconvenience and of being rude is pervasive and lasting. I am a lucky one, though. I know this. Although my experience scarred me, it did not take my life, my soul or my being in the way so many similar experiences can. However, that was not the only time my voice was ignored. I've been groped on the street, mansplained to, catcalled, the list goes on. If this is what life is like for me with all my privilege, how much worse is it for others?

This is not just about rape culture; this is about all the ways women's voices are ignored or devalued. This is about all the times a louder, male voice has been prioritised. We've been spoken over, talked down, silenced for too long. Take back the voices of women. Take back our right to say no and teach those around us to listen.

#allvoicesmatter ■

#ilooklikeascientist

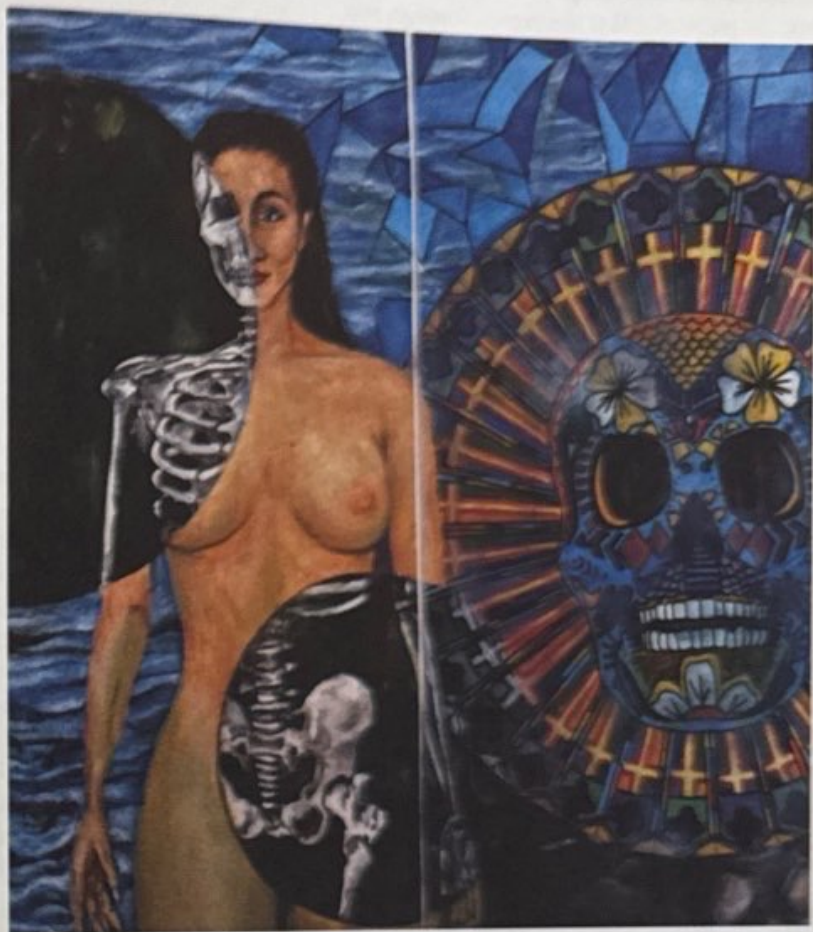
The Undergraduate Version with Lucy Ingram

To the boy in the shopping mall who laughed in my face upon hearing I was studying science, I realize that I was rather cold to you after that. So, I thought that I would explain why. It wasn't just because you had already followed me around for ten minutes despite my clear discomfort. It wasn't just because you ignored my asking to be left alone. Hell, it wasn't just because you acted as if you were doing me a favour by talking to me. Oh no, those are all things that girls get used to pretty quickly. It was a little more than that.

It was because just the day before I was talked over three times by a boy who decided my contributions weren't worth listening to. It was because in a tutorial, a boy was outraged when I disagreed with him on a solution and even more so when it turned out I was correct. It's because people talk in lectures noticeably more when we have female lecturers and because I've been in labs where people were astonished that I knew what I was doing. It's because when I answer someone's question, they immediately go and ask someone else to repeat the exact same thing.

It was because my best girlfriends in Year 9 went out of their way to drop out of the top maths stream. It was because they suddenly gained a bunch of new 'friends' from doing that and because other girls told me that I would never get a boy unless I lowered my grades. It was because I was the only girl in the mechanics workshop on pathways day and I was told not to worry because nobody needed me to get my hands dirty. It's because I said I wanted to do astrophysics and the careers advisor told me to be 'realistic'.

It was because when I corrected my friend's dad after he boasted his deeply inaccurate version of how tides worked, he laughed hysterically for fifteen minutes. Hysterically. It was because after he then looked it up with glee,



poised to school me on the subject, he didn't talk to me for the remaining two hours of the trip when I was correct. It was because the owner of the backpackers lodge told a group of my friends that we shouldn't be studying science because 'women don't have the right brains for it'. And because my friends told me not to be provocative when I told him that he was wrong. It was because they were more disturbed at the idea of me using my voice than at the outright sexism of a stranger. It was because they rather maintained the status quo by not standing up for themselves. Because by doing so they normalised his behavior and endorsed

that girls should be seen and not heard. It's because people are more concerned with policing how women speak than listening to what they are saying. It's because it's something I am expected to just accept, and I refuse to accept it.

It was because the world would rather pressure someone to resign for sexist comments than actually discuss the culture that leads to those statements being thrown about in the first place. It's because responding by resignation sends the message that they are more concerned with appearing politically correct than they are with actually engaging with the issue. It's because any

"...when I corrected my friend's dad after he boasted his deeply inaccurate version of how tides worked, he laughed hysterically for fifteen minutes. Hysterically."

similar incident turns into a game of reputations and wordplay, rather than become an indicator that social change is required. It was because one person making a sexist statement is only a symptom of a much deeper sociocultural problem. By pressuring that one person to resign, you solve nothing and you do nothing but shut down discussion when it is exactly what is needed. It was because sexism doesn't restrict itself to a few people making inappropriate comments. Because the nature of a social problem means we are all involved, whether we want to be or not and we all have a responsibility. It's because ignoring a problem and pretending it doesn't exist doesn't solve it. Because, particularly with issues of inequality, not all of us have the luxury of ignoring it. It's because this is not an accusation, but an appeal for awareness. Because after every time a person or a scientist resigns following sexist comments, I am reminded that this is still an issue the world would rather shut down than talk openly about. It's because this is why some people aren't even aware that gender inequality in science is a problem.

It was because every time I did well in maths at primary school, my extended family was disproportionately impressed. It was because adults would tell me not to get my outfit dirty instead of encouraging me to explore and be curious. It was because I watch them tell my little cousins the same thing, while the boys play outside and discover. It was because my little cousin used to ask questions and now she just asks to borrow lip gloss. It was because the toys aisle told me that microscopes were for boys. Experiments were for boys. Puzzles were for boys. Thinking was for boys.

It's because you were just the tip of the iceberg and I have no choice but to look below the water. It's because your response was the mouse from that story and my boat was already packed with experiences. It's because I refuse to be discouraged, but I am forced to wonder how many girls make a conscious or unconscious decision not to follow their science passions because of the accumulative sum of these little things which taken together become something more sinister. How many young women have been lost from the scientific community? And where is the tipping point at which we lose them?

Well, maybe it was when all they ever got for Christmas was makeup kits and freakydeaky plastic babies. Maybe it was when their female role models made a big deal about how they have never been that great at maths. Maybe it was when they watch movies where the main character deliberately fails calculus to become more attractive to a guy (Mean Girls, I'm looking at you). Maybe it was when their careers advisors dismissed their ambitions. Or, maybe, it's moments like this when a random guy in the mall laughs in your face and then says,

"You don't look like a scientist." ■

Being a Feminist

Sarah Butterfield reflects on her experience as a faithful feminist

"Girls have to wait till they're married to have sex," a girl in my youth group pompously told me as the newest Christian. "What about boys?" I asked. "They can have sex before marriage," the girl explained to me. "Really?" I asked in surprise. "Yeah," she answered, "it's in the Bible like a bunch of times."

This was just one of the weird conversations that I had as a new Christian with other clueless Christians. Although my Youth Group leader quickly corrected the girl, I find it really interesting that this girl believed that boys did not have to adhere to the same standards as girls, and that I so quickly believed her.

In the past I never really saw the need for feminism. Women could vote, own land, work and do anything that men could do. Plus all feminists were crazy, hairy women who burned their bras and hated men. I, as a good Christian girl, would never have dreamed of being so drastic and 'anti-Christian'. So, it wasn't until this year that I really started to reconsider my position. I started to look at my Church and think back over my past church experiences. Things that at the time I thought were normal or the status quo, suddenly started to look a lot like sexism. I started thinking about the lack of female leadership in my church, the use of patriarchal language, and the way that the Church had been treating me as a young woman.

Lack of Female Leadership

As an Anglican, I'm really proud that my denomination was one of the first to ordain women. However, despite this awesome legacy, there is still a limited number of female priests in charge, and those in charge face a different set of challenges compared to their male counterparts. In some Anglican Churches, it is rare to see women at the front of the Church running the service, preaching, praying or leading the Eucharist. Instead, women leaders at church tend to be behind the scenes preparing the morning tea, rocking babies at the back, or teaching Sunday school. I don't want to minimise the important tasks that these women are doing, but I do think it's problematic that we are so used to seeing men as preachers, especially considering the important part that women had in ministry in Jesus' day.

There is no doubt that the Bible was written in a patriarchal society. For this reason, there are many troubling passages about women in the Bible. However, in the Bible there are also stories about incredible women leaders. It humbles me to imagine the struggles and oppression that these women would have had to struggle against in this male-dominated society.

A particular biblical woman who inspires me is Junia. Junia's name is only mentioned once in Paul's letter to the Romans, but Paul says of Junia,

"my fellow Jews who have been in prison with me. They are out-

nd a Christian



standing among the apostles, and they were in Christ before I was." - Romans 16:7.

Junia is the first and only female in scripture who is identified as an apostle. It is not only incredible that Junia is the only female apostle, but also that she is called outstanding amongst them. The great tragedy about Junia is that the patriarchal church became uncomfortable with the recognition of an apostle who was female, so theologians changed 'Junia' into its male form, 'Junias'. Eventually, the name was changed back to its feminine form, but I wonder if this discomfort with female leaders continues to exist in the Church today.

Patriarchal Language

I think it's fair to say that Christianity has been used as a tool for suppressing and silencing women. For this reason, a lot of the language that Christians use when talking about God is informed by a patriarchal society. To counter this, there was a movement in the 70's to use both male and female language when talking about God. Whilst this movement changed the way that language was used at the time, I would argue that currently most Churches

do not see the issue with using male language when talking about God. The problem with this is that God is neither male or female. In Genesis we are told that God created both male and female in his image. This is not to say that God is a hermaphrodite. Rather, God is spirit in the form of the father, son and holy spirit.

My Experience

For a long time I believed Christian women were supposed to look and act a certain way. I thought Christian women should be modest, gentle and aspire to be good wives and mothers. It used to really upset me that I could never quite fit this perfect model. I felt ashamed that I would rather argue about theology and politics than discuss babies and weddings.

This guilt was reinforced by the messages that I was taught at Church about being redeemed through motherhood, that I needed to 'guard' my heart and that my purity was essential to a healthy marriage. I know now that there is no perfect model of what a Christian woman should look like. In fact, Jesus didn't come to save the perfect people; he came for the people who were struggling and that were seen by everyone else as worthless or damaged. The gospels and Jesus' experience on earth did not validate the existing social structures. Instead, Jesus came to liberate the most marginalized groups of society and interrupt the social constructs of the world. It is the most marginalized and vulnerable

groups in society to who Jesus ministers and seeks. And it is these people who are the most willing to hear Jesus' message.

For me, the biggest thing about being a Christian and a feminist is to acknowledge and name sexism when I see it in my Church. I think that it is in the naming that people can no longer ignore the hurt and damage caused by sexism. Furthermore, in addressing sexism, the Church will move towards the vision of community that Jesus articulated.

"There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus." - Galatians 3:28. ■



"I started to look at my Church and think back over my past church experiences. Things that at the time I thought were normal or the status quo, suddenly started to look a lot like sexism."

Going To Bali Saved My Life

Georgina Shearsby-Roberts talks about her battle with eating disorders and the sanctuary she found through travel

Sitting in a hospital bed, my protruding bones ache against the stiff mattress. The heart monitor beeps mind-numbingly slowly in sync with my pitiful heart-beat. My head aches, my body aches, my heart aches. I listen to mum holding in sobs in the corner. The back of my throat is raw from the tube stuck up my nose feeding a strange sticky, yellow liquid into my shrunken stomach.

To be honest, I don't want to live. I'd rather it all stopped. At least that way I could take away all the pain.

I am a perfectionist. A Virgo. An only child. An anxious ball of nervous energy at the best of times. While these traits are innocent enough, for me they were very nearly lethal. I've never done anything by halves. Got an A? Should've been an A+. Ran 10km? Could've pushed myself to 12. Came second? Next time I'll be first. At face value, being ambitious seems healthy and having goals is good. But, for me, constantly striving to be perfect meant

I became my own worst enemy.

I was sitting on that hospital bed, weak from months of near starvation,

excessive exercising and addictive anxiety. My failing organs should have been the alarm shouting "stop killing yourself!" that I needed, yet strangely it wasn't.

In today's world, where perfection is praised and weakness means vulnerability, it can be easy to succumb to the dangers of perfectionism. For others, this means staying overtime at work, pulling an all-nighter before an exam or spending hours styling their hair before class. But, for me, this desire to be perfect led to an obsession that would, like a leech, suck the life out of me for the better part of my teenage years.

When someone mentions eating disorders, it is guaranteed to generate the assumption that it's a first world problem, a 'white-girl' issue, or simply a desire to be thinner. The reality for myself, others, and I imagine some of you reading this is quite the opposite. When life becomes uncontrollable, eating becomes the only source of control.

When 2016 began, I'd been stuck in quasi-recovery for years. It was an imperceptible state of limbo - so comfortably set in my destructive ways and unaware of my own detrimental actions, yet experiencing an underlying frustration that I couldn't remedy.

Deciding to go to Bali changed that.

Deciding on a whim to abandon my home (then push past

the immediate "what the fuck have I done") and live with strangers in a foreign place changed everything. It was petrifying, but overwhelmingly it felt right. Going to Bali meant giving - no, throwing - away control. It was wrapping a blindfold over my eyes and trusting my gut (ironically) to guide me in the right direction.

When preparing for the trip almost every part of me wanted to back out and stay in my little control cocoon, to resist change and avoid anxiety. And that's why Bali was the medicine I needed. Everyone's journey is different, but after years of doctors, therapists and tears, I didn't need pills, I didn't need therapy and I definitely didn't need more people telling me I "needed to eat".

All of this was because the worst part about mental disorders, anorexia included, isn't their manifested physical aspects. Rather, it is the part of your brain that cannot comprehend change. It is the part that wants above all else to convince you it's better this way. It is a compulsion that will continue until it kills you.

I chose to throw myself in the deep end and save myself. To finally tell the niggling voice at



the back of my brain that I could break free and let myself live.

Travelling is the ultimate state of un-control. The flights, the people, the places and even your behaviour are all unpredictable. You never come back the same person who left that airport at god knows what hour in the morning. The delays, the uncertainties and the insecurity literally forces you out of your bubble and into a world where living becomes the most important thing. Experiencing everything possible is the perfect reason to abandon who you thought you were to become someone you never knew existed.

I went to Bali to break free. I'd never travelled before and had never left small town New Zealand. But I knew I needed this. Writing this now, I've changed. My body looks different. My thigh gap has now been replaced with a butt, my collarbones have been replaced with boobs and my abs are covered with a wonderful layer of protection that will enable me to have kids someday - a reality I thought was gone. I can wear a bikini without being self-conscious of my pointy bones, I can lie on top of boats basking in the sun without wincing in pain, I don't bruise upon touch, I don't shiver in 30 degree weather, I can ride a bike to the beach with friends without my heart struggling - the list goes on - and I smile.

But, most of all, my mind is free. It had been so long since I'd truly laughed. I couldn't remember the last time my cheeks hurt from smiling and now I have met people who make me nearly pee myself in hysteria. I don't have a panic attack if the

menu doesn't have a "safe" option, or if I have dessert every night of the week, or maybe don't eat a single vegetable in a day.

Travelling has changed my perspective in more ways than I can count. While it may be considered desirable to have the "self-discipline" to turn down that slice of cake, opt for the salad over the burger or gym seven days a week, in the real world you are worth so much more than your myfitnesspal total or waist circumference. At the end of the day, people won't remember you for your abs or your control at the dinner table; they will remember the times you laughed yourselves silly over pizza, discovered secret waterfalls and ate hot chips watching the sunset on the beach.

I've realised the way I was living - avoiding carbs, exercising to compensate for eating and isolating myself from everyone I loved - wasn't living, nor was any of it allowing me to progress. There is a lot of truth in the saying that "the definition of insanity is doing the same thing and expecting different results". I have learnt more about myself while being away from home than from the entirety of my teenage years.

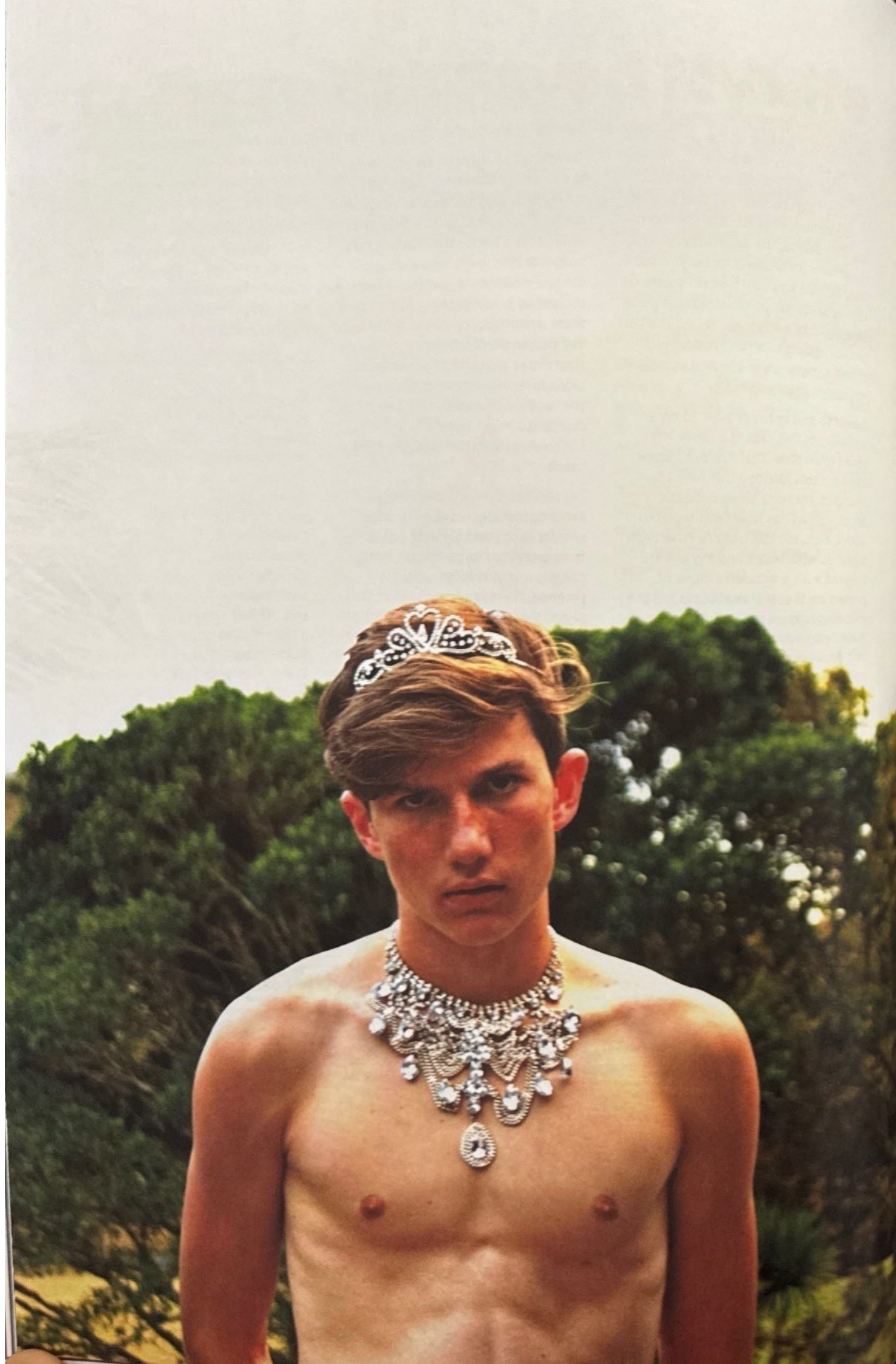
This was all because of making one small decision to go. To leave. To jump and, instead of fearing the

descent, embracing the air rushing past and smiling knowing that Bali was the remedy I needed. I did this, I saved my life. And if I, somebody the medical industry would call a "chronic case" (someone unlikely to ever recover), can be free then you can, too.

I've found the most beautiful moments in life happen in the spaces you're not prepared for - the totally unplanned, uncontrolled and unexpected times you let your guard down, let go of control, and just live.

Going to Bali saved my life. The memories I've made will remind me of the possibilities of letting go. My teenage years were wasted stressing, avoiding, and starving. I lost years of my life; I literally cannot remember them. But now, I don't want it all to end. I've had a taste of a life worth living and I never want it to stop. ■





Putting the T in LGBTI+

Lara Croft speaks to the Trans community on her experience as a trans woman coming to grips with her sexuality

As I lay in my plaid one evening, it suddenly dawned on me that despite my appearance and efforts, I'm viewed as Trans. It seems daily that I have to come out. Secretly, I'm Trans.

Let me start over. I'm a Lesbian, first and foremost, and a woman (a damn sexy one too). The thing is, we live in a world where society imbues norms and gives us endless prescriptions on what to follow. Sometimes, however, we break the rules. This is where Transgender folks step in (binary or otherwise). Sweeping through this male-dominated, gay landscape, I do my best to 'pass.' But when is it ever considered enough?

It is a strange mix living as a woman. At times I am accepted into the fold with questions on periods, boys or girls (let me tell you the stories) and where I got my eyeliner from. Yet, conversely, I encounter stares, frowns or verbal sentencing when I wait patiently to pee as I check my phone amidst the washing of hands, application of make-up and embarrassed first years. Perhaps it's my outfit choice? Dresses are often met with greater suspicion than my skinny jeans.

Again, I find myself at odds from being accepted as the woman I am. I question my feminist motives at times. It is ok for me to be vocal? Am I representing myself as Lesbian or as Trans or as Woman? Sometimes that becomes a blur and other times I guess I 'out' myself more than I should. For me, this is difficult. Part of me wants to reconcile the innate sense of womanhood that I exist within, despite the body I have. Part of me tells myself it is merely society's perception of a 'woman' which derails what I see every day in the mirror. My body, I'll have you know, is perfectly capable of fulfilling your fantasy. Technically I have what is conventionally a 'nice body,' idealized to the nth degree, but again it doesn't necessarily align to the concept I have of myself. This realization when getting intimate with others can be scary and, at times, dangerous.

Then, there is the invasive "you're a woman?" mindset. It's the question

rather than the statement this time and it is always something which stops me in my tracks. Home life can be pretty shitty for Queer people, so my question to you is: what are you doing about it? My community, and yours, is marked by suicide – actually the highest in social circles. This isn't okay. We live in the 21st century, it's 20-fucking-16 and so you would think people would be progressive citizens. We have had increasing media coverage for Trans people recently. This has included Trans people being visually portrayed in a number of TV programmes and ceremonies (yes, Jenner got those awards). But is this enough? Some regions in the United States refuse service to homosexuals. Other regions pledge staunch support to single-gender bathrooms. The worst regions do both. Luckily, we have artists such as Springsteen and Adams using their star power to remove bigotry, and even a President motioning for universal acceptance (even if it isn't federally binding). We have come a long way. But, that rainbow is far from complete.

As noted in this year's Pride Week 'Coming Out' Panel, we each have a journey. That journey ultimately corresponds to living fully as ourselves, to our greatest achievement and everything that means to you. Obviously, we need to approach this from a 'safety first, kids' perspective. It is no good coming out if it means we lose all protection and dignity from wherever we are living, and I know this well (hoo-ray for 'home!'). This can be expressly applied to Trans people, where we are confronted with higher homelessness rates especially amongst our Maori and Pacific families. We all need to support each other, even if that means a

high-five, a hug, a bit of coin when it's needed or simply a place to stay for the night. Trans people feel greater pressures – not only are they grappling with a sexuality that is not often perceived as wonderful (not all of us are the typical celebrated gay man) but we are also trying to understand and express our gender in front of many disappointed and threatening eyes. Unfortunately, those eyes often belong to those whom we considered to be our closest and dependable supporters grown from blood; our families.

Personally, I have grown to understand myself to be the woman I long desired and innately am. And, sexuality-wise, this understanding has allowed me to move back into a sphere which includes women in my relationships. I can positively identify with being Lesbian. As a Trans person, you have to revise every aspect of your being. This is especially so knowing the inevitable bridges that will collapse. To all those who are struggling: It's ok. Breathe. Understand and see yourself. You are greater than you'll ever know, badass and loved. Aim for the stars!! Or the books, because they are just as magical as you are. Most importantly, though, you know yourself. You are valid and what you experience is real.

Really, the T is one part of the LGBTI+. Yet, it can be ignored, revoked or made invisible. Don't let this happen. We must stand together and shoot down farcical responses to invalidation and to encourage instead the lived realities of Queer people. We must all make known our support in whichever way we feel most comfortable. Be Proud, be Queer, be an Ally. Most importantly, just be yourself. ■

"Part of me wants to reconcile the innate sense of womanhood that I exist within, despite the body I have. Part of me tells myself it is merely society's perception of a 'woman' which derails what I see every day in the mirror."

What It's Like to Be a Queer Muslim Woman

Nabilah Johan offers insight on the intersectionality between religion and sexuality

I'm a Muslim woman, and I'm queer.

When I first found out what the word 'gay' meant and that I might be one, I went through that dreaded stage of denial and confusion. It doesn't help that I'm a Muslim as well; homosexuality is deemed unlawful and sinful. No one close to me ever brought up the topic of sexuality. I went to a *madrasah* (a school where I took religious subjects on top of secular ones), so asking my other religious friends about something that is so sinful and shameful is definitely out of question.

The only reference I found in the Quran to homosexuality was that of the people of Lut and how they were punished. There were so many rulings made by Muslim scholars, but the main thing I took away was that it is okay to have feelings for persons of the same sex so long as I don't act on those feelings.

Yet, years of repressing all those feelings only served to make me feel more guilt and shame. I was thankful that nobody suspected something was amiss. I didn't date a single boy in the secondary stage of *madrasah*, and people didn't question that because they assumed I was being super religious and really careful. Little did they know that I was actually being discretely gay.

"I often find myself pondering questions traversing topics of faith and sexuality, most of which are just variations of 'Should I just renounce parts of my faith so I can fit in better into queer spaces?'"

It was only in my first year of Uni, when I met an openly gay flatmate, that I realised it might be possible for me to reconcile my faith and sexuality. My flatmate was so comfortable in her own skin and I wanted to feel the same way. I wanted to be comfortable being who I am and I finally made a conscious decision to stop hiding.

I slowly came out to people who I was sure were really open-minded. The first time I did so I barely whispered "I think I might not be straight." Now, I still find the idea of having to come out to people a bit daunting, but am able to do so more confidently. I haven't really come out to any of the Muslim people I know, mostly because I don't think they're open-minded enough to accept the fact that I'm anything but straight.

At the moment, I'm still not 100% confident that I can pull off this whole being queer and Muslim thing. I try to practise my religion to the best of my ability, which means wearing the hijab. I don't often see narratives of queer Muslim women being portrayed in the media. However, when I do, I feel discouraged. This is because the queer women portrayed in the media often do not wear a hijab and have renounced parts of their faith.

Trying to fit into queer spaces seems to be a daunting task for me as well. I would definitely stick out like a sore thumb and some of the queer people and feminists I know are often averse to all things Muslim, especially the hijab, which is an important aspect of my identity as a Muslim woman.

Currently, I'm still figuring out how to be a queer Muslim woman. I often find myself pondering questions traversing topics of faith and sexuality, most of which are just variations of "Should I just renounce parts of my faith so I can fit in better into queer spaces?" I still don't have the answers to these questions but, for now, I'll just play it by ear.

I'm a Muslim woman, and I'm queer. It is extremely hard for me to reconcile my faith and sexuality. However, this doesn't stop me from trying ■

***THURS
DAYS
IN BLACK**
Towards a world
without rape
and violence

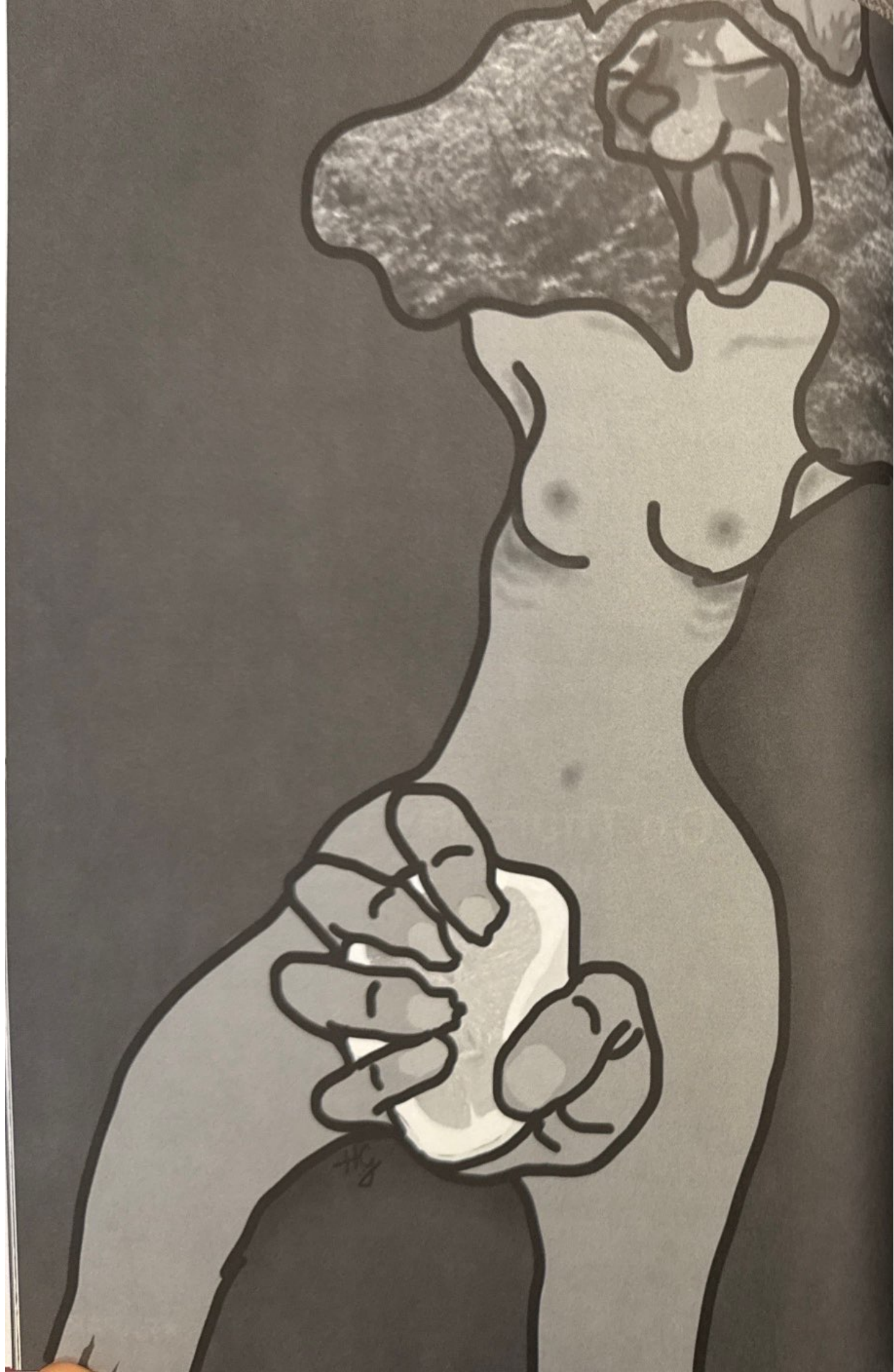


**On Thursdays,
we wear black.**



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***RĀPARE**
KĀKAHU PANGO





Part III: Arts and Poetry

The War Poets

The poet writes his lines but

We women too, must clothe ourselves in words.

With wet ink on our

Fingers

On our toes, we must

Unpick the edges of the battlefields

Make sense of grief.

What can a woman say about war?

She sees his suffering from the sidelines.

Her job is to ravel up loose ends, sew hearts back together –

Listen.

The truth is

We all have to speak sometimes.

Lift up our shoulders

Straighten our backs.

We must take back

The places in our heads

We must use words

To shout our grief.

Drape fire and screams on paper

Unravel

Our war too. ■



Ode to a Jam Donut

I miss jam donuts their stickiness always sticking
To my mouth top Coating my gums in frosting

Jam donuts
I go nuts
For your ungreedy giving of that sugar rush setting me up high
Glucose springing in my step all because of those
Unabashed calories which you don't
Try to hide
Opening creamy pathways for my tongue to slither down
You give the best French kiss, raspberry oozing onto taste buds
Getting sweeter only sweeter
The more intimately we get to know each other
Two dollars fifty and you set me up for sensual pleasure

Who needs boys when you have jam donuts ■

Response to Grace Nichol's 'Beauty'

Beauty is an
every woman
fat thin smiling
long hair entwining
forgotten dust of memory
kisses clinging to her cheek
hair bright strands of kaleidoscope
the sun shines through its peep holes
and falls on her
every skin. ■

LOVE

i love this boy
with sea pebble eyes
and wind fingerprints in his hair
rough edges still a little unsmooth
time to time
but want you to know
he loves me not perfect
but loves me enough
we could be boys and boys
and girls and girls
and the sunlight would still filter through
our fingers
the same ■

Boys Will Be Boys

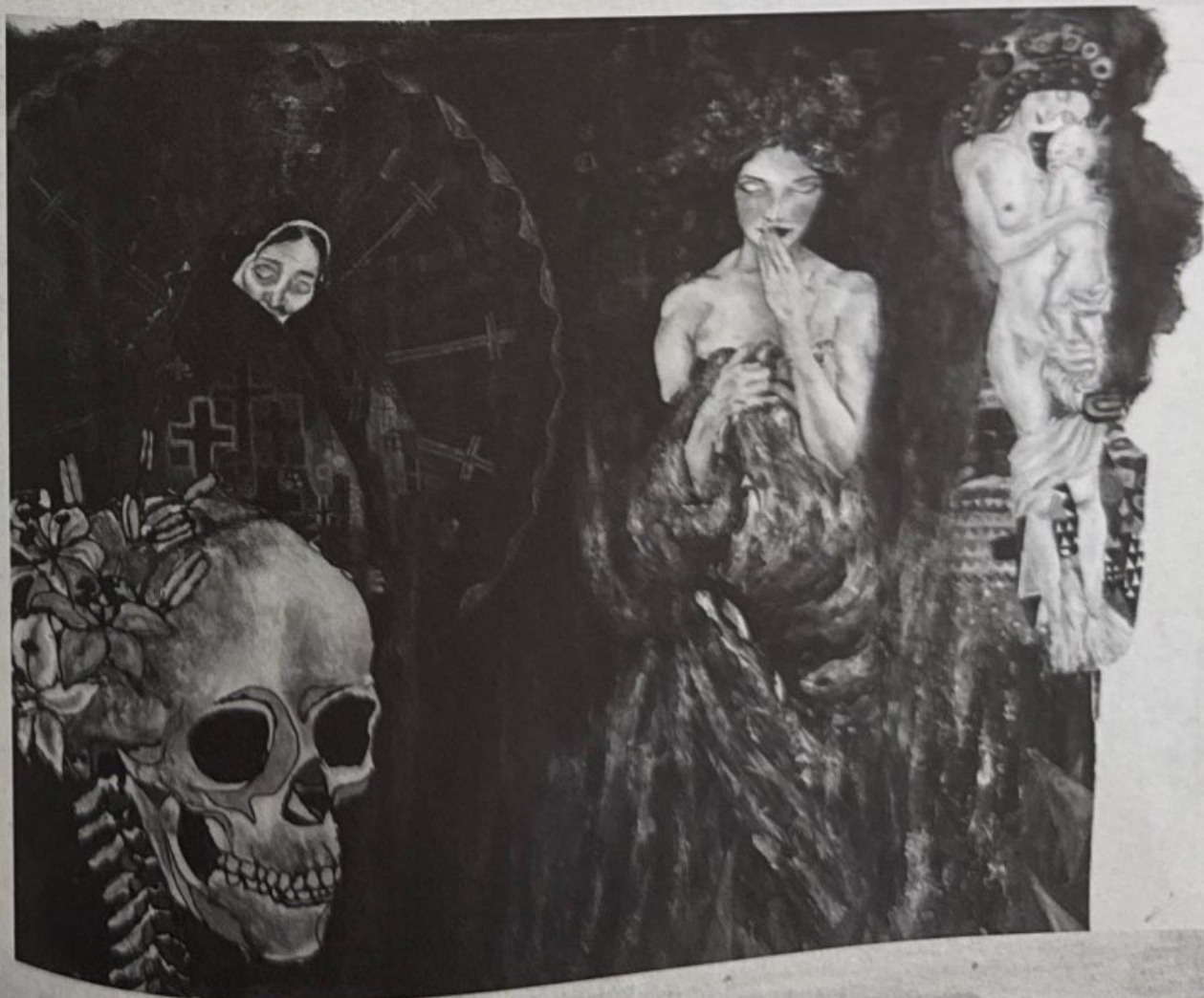
She used to sleep with a nightlight,
 Afraid of monsters and ghouls and grizzly bears,
 Used to make her mother check inside the wardrobe,
 She didn't want to be devoured in her sleep.
 She always slept with her feet under the covers.
 No arms hanging off the edge of the bed,
 Who was living under there?
 She clutched her teddy bear tightly.
 In the daylight
 She fell to the ground with laughter
 As her brother tickled her.
 Between giggles she'd beg him to stop
 But she was smiling, so she must have been enjoying it.
 "Boys will be boys" their father said.
 These days nightlights are phone calls to friends on
 the walk home,
 Making sure she gets where she needs to be.
 These days monsters and ghouls are hunters with
 hounds,
 They no longer linger inside wardrobes but in street-
 lamps and dark alleyways.
 To be fair, not all of them smell like lurking shadows.
 Some of them taste like boyfriends and husbands
 and teachers and pastors,
 Following the scent of young girls who do not yet
 know their power.
 These days walking down the street can feel a lot
 like a bear attack:
 Do not be afraid,
 He can sense your fear,
 Do not run,
 He is faster than you,
 Stand your ground and make lots of noise
 But don't scream rape,
 Scream fire,
 Or bear attack.
 Clothe yourself in body armour
 For the bullets that ricochet long after he pulls the
 trigger / trigger / trigger.
 Have you taken self defence classes?

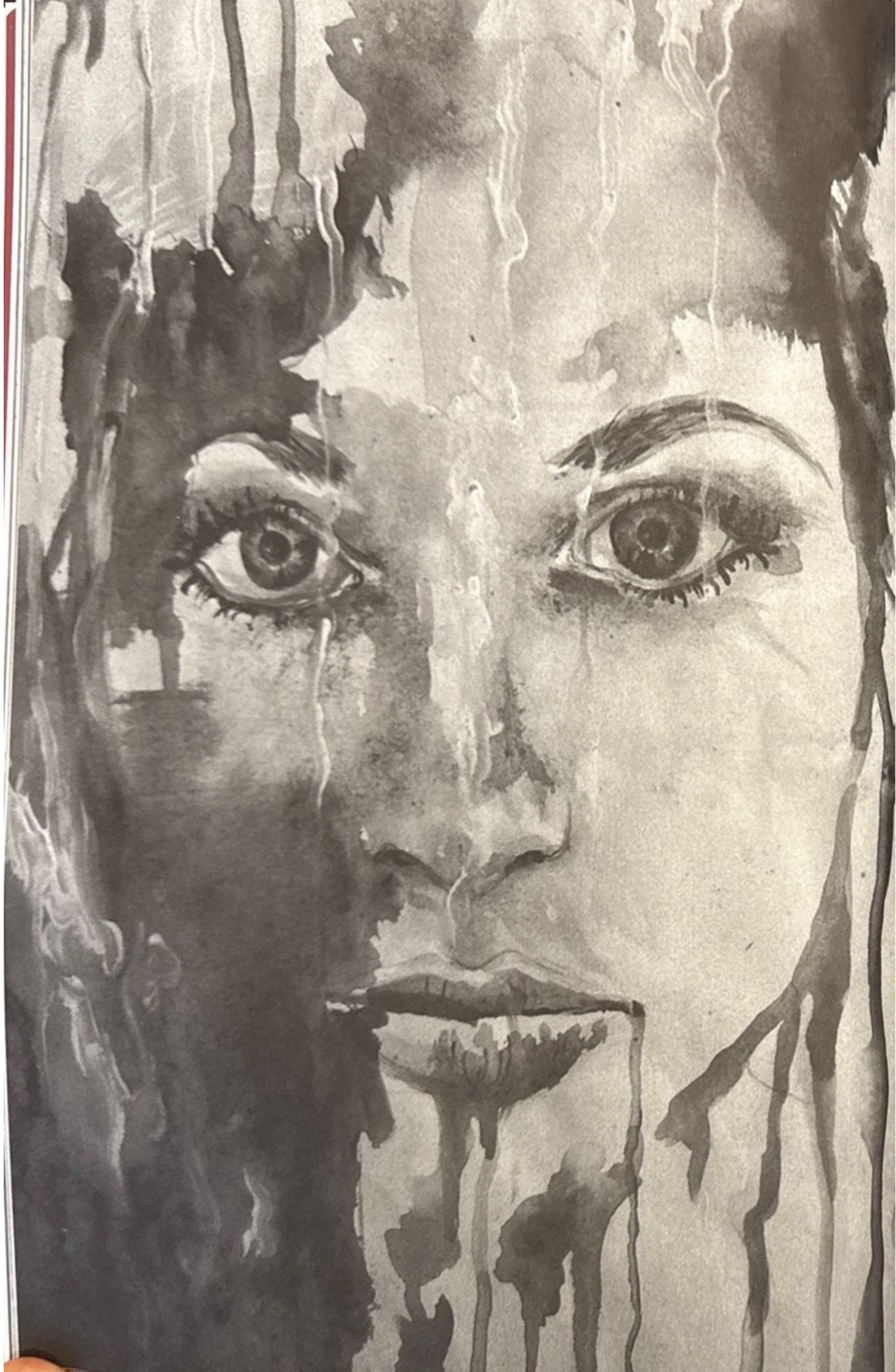
You never know when you'll need to survive.
 Protect yourself from men who are fearful of their
 own extinction.
 Do not wrap yourself around metal jaws,
 He is predator,
 And you were never meant to be prey.
 She was pure when she met him and
 He used her because she'd been used less
 But now that he'd used her
 He saw her as useless
 So she ended up on the news.
 "Police work tirelessly to piece together this morn-
 ing's events" says the reporter on the television
 A vision
 Nobody should have to witness
 A witness
 Who wishes they were walking past a moment
 earlier
 Because maybe they could have saved her,
 Maybe they could have made her
 Life
 Last a little longer.
 Teddy bears don't comfort us anymore,
 One sudden movement and they could turn deadly.
 Teeth marks look a lot like love sometimes,
 It's easy to get them confused.
 Tastes like fists around neck,
 Choking on emergency line phone calls
 The reporter on the TV says solemnly,
 "Can you imagine if she was your sister or your
 daughter?"
 Was it not enough that she was a person?
 Before she was a sister or a daughter or a mother or
 a friend
 She was a person.
 She was not made for you.
 We are not made for you.
 But I guess boys will be boys.
 It's no wonder so many women are still afraid of the
 dark. ■

SPEAK LOVE TO ME BABY
- terrible prose that you will never hear in bed

Do you have protection?
Because I want to break down your emotional walls,
I want to tear off your insecurities
And give it to you good (respect)
Press your lips up to the mirror
Put your hands in my wallet
Give me hours and hours of passionate conversation
Whisper seductively in my ear
About how your anxiety affects your ability to engage socially
Tell me how badly you want it (equality)
Get under the covers of candid chatter
Give me all your wit, and all your fears

About socialism, and the 11.8% difference
Between being indispensable
And being a woman.
Blow me (away with your knowledge of conspiracy theories)
Let's fuck (with the current societal structure)
And fall asleep after coming (up with a plan to overthrow the establishment)
Let me give it to you slowly (all my love)
And ask for your hand (or your favourite pseudoscience)
So we can peruse this life of sin
And exhume the world of injustice. ■





Darkest Love

You were so full of doubt, unsure where to turn. Your brain yelled for you to be rational, while your heart sang a more reckless tune. I stood on the side lines always watching, always waiting.

It did not take long for me to slip into your mind, to curl my icy fingers round your heart. You were so tired of listening to the voices in your mind; tired of your heart leading you into pain. I helped you through it. You let me in, trusting me to keep you from harm. I led you to the edge of the darkness that now fills you, like an inky stain upon a snowy backdrop.

Slowly that stain began to spread as you moved further away from the light. Together, we fell over the edge. I held your hand through it all; the pain, the self-loathing, the loneliness. You had my love, my hate, my understanding. I was always there to make sure you didn't give up completely, or didn't go too deep.

With each new scar I was there to numb the pain. I was always there. Your brain fell silent as my dark influence filled your every thought. I helped you build the cold stone walls that surrounded your tattered heart, and protected you from the pain and disappointment of life.

I couldn't protect you from yourself, no matter how hard I tried. But we had always known that.

Only you could do that.

You let me guide you. Each moment of weakness led to a bittersweet release. Each new scar carried the memories of all you had suffered. You grew stronger with time.

My influence began to fade like the greying skies of

dawn. You slipped like water from my fingers, growing further from me with each new day.

Finally, you left me. You managed to escape the black abyss we had fallen into together. Now you left alone; a rose so delicate, yet so strong. Your time with me slipped from your mind like the sands of an hourglass. Our time was up.

But it's not over.

I will always chase you. I will always be watching from the side lines. You cannot escape me. I will linger in the shadows of your mind. I will rest in the darkness that dwells in your heart. I am the inky stain upon your soul.

You may run forever, but you will never stray far from the edge. You can never go back to life you had before. The remains of our time in the void are printed upon your flesh like a tattoo no eye will ever see.

You will come back to me. Even if for a fleeting moment, you will be mine. A moment of weakness. A new scar to join those now healed. A bittersweet moment of release when it all becomes too much.

Each time you break, I will be there to hold you together. I will strengthen those walls around your heart. Even when you gain the strength to leave me, to manage on your own, I will always be with you.

I will always watch from the side lines.

People will come and go. Loved ones will hurt you. Friends will leave you and make you feel alone. The memories will fade with time like photographs left in the sun. Family and friends are the ones who can leave and come back. I can't. I will always be here.

Depression never leaves. ■

The Tampon of Despair

My tampon is full of blood
I send texts I regret
Buy wine I cannot afford
Your opinion is too heavy
It is all I can carry
When faced with other lighter
Crosses to bear
I want to feel only one thing
Your love
Acceptance
Approval
Vindication
But you will not and cannot give it
So the tampon swells and clots with my sorrow
Filling my insides with gore and repulsion
The tampon of despair ■

**CAN PEOPLE
NOT MAKE
COMMENTS ON
MY BODY.**

HAIKUS

Kea

(About a counsellor)

Speaking of selfish
Ness, she's entitled to none
When she's paid to care

Medusa

(About a 'monster')

R'ped and turned to snakes
Misunderstood feminist
Or symbol of rage?

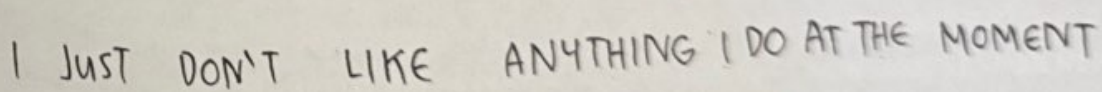
Sasha

(About a survivor)

She's innocent, but
Morality lost out to
The justice system

**A different
reality is
possible.**

Individual: Sexuality - Gender Identity - Disability status (if any)
 - Class - Race - Ethnicity - Religious Affiliation
 - Marital Status (if any)



the people we love.

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AUSA PRESENTS...



WOMENSFEST

19th-23rd September 2016

MONDAY 19TH SEPTEMBER

9:00 - 11:00AM: **SUFFRAGE DAY BREAKFAST @ WOMENSPACE** [SELF-IDENTIFYING WOMEN AND NON-BINARY PERSONS ONLY].

6:30 - 8:30PM: **LEMONADE MOVIE SCREENING @ WOMENSPACE** [ALL WELCOME].

TUESDAY 20TH SEPTEMBER

1:00 - 3:00PM: **TEA FOR TRANS @ QUEERSPACE** [ALL WELCOME].

6:00 - 9:00PM: **ART OF NEGOTIATION: FINDING YOUR VOICE @ TBC** [SELF-IDENTIFYING WOMEN ONLY].

WEDNESDAY 21ST SEPTEMBER

1:00 - 2:00PM: **WOMENSFEST STUDENT FORUM @ QUAD** [ALL WELCOME].

5:30 - 8:00PM: **REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS PANEL @ TBC** [ALL WELCOME].

THURSDAY 22ND SEPTEMBER

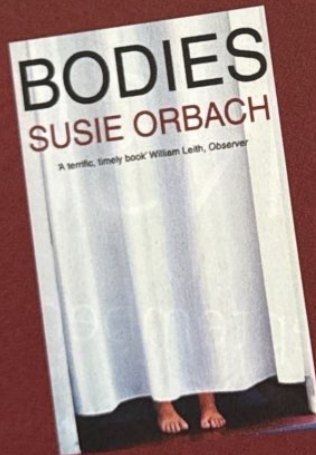
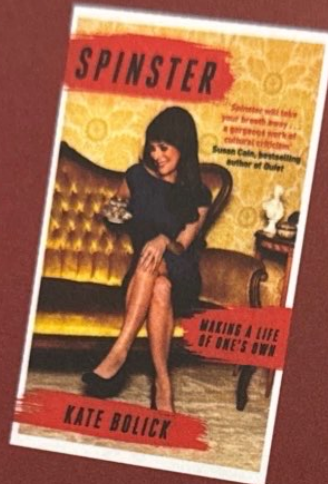
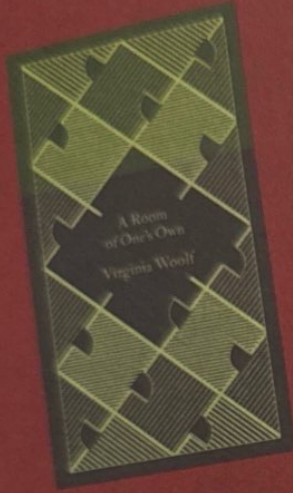
11:00 - 1:00PM: **THURSDAYS IN BLACK: LET'S TALK @ STUDENT JOB SEARCH OFFICES (SJS)** [ALL WELCOME].

6:00 - 8:30PM: **PUBLIC DEBATE @ ENG 403-402** [ALL WELCOME].

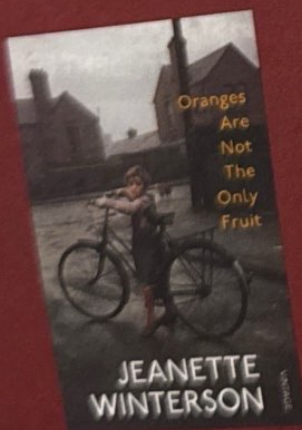
FRIDAY 23RD SEPTEMBER

6:30 UNTIL LATE: **CFC PUB QUIZ @ WHAMMY BAR - 183 KARANGAHAPE RD** [ALL WELCOME].

'For most of history Anonymous was a woman' Virginia Woolf



Bad
Feminist
Essays
Roxane
Gay



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