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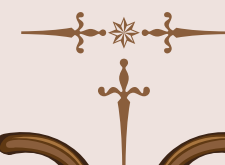
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For the longest time, I didn't consider myself a feminist. Whenever the f-word came up in conversation, I had visions of sweaty, overall-wearing men-haters who were bitter because they couldn't get laid. I had better things to do with my time than paint angry placards or go protesting up Queen St. Like shaving my legs, for instance, or wearing underwear. Besides, I wasn't bitter. I didn't hate men.

But then I realised that the real reason I didn't consider myself a feminist was because I didn't actually know what feminism *was*. I'd fallen prey to stereotypes in the same way that giggling tweens everywhere have succumbed to Justin Bieber's charms: with alarming ease. I may as well have casually asked my dreadlocked neighbour where to get some sweet ganja, or demanded that my parents help me with my MATHS108 assignment "cos, like, you're Chinese. Aren't you people supposed to be good at this kind of thing?" Because feminism isn't about being angry. It isn't about hating men. It's about equality.

Feminism has fought for a lot of things throughout history: for the right of women to vote and to own (and not *be*) property; for equality in the workplace; for access to contraception and abortion; and for an end to both sexual and physical violence. What sound like basic human rights, and what we take for granted, was something people once had to fight for – and what some are still fighting for today.

Over the years, feminism has become increasingly sensitive to the ways in which gender intersects with other facets of social inequality, including age, ethnicity, religion, class, and sexuality. Feminism today also recognises that gender is socially constructed – that, in the words of Simone de Beauvoir, "one is not born, but rather becomes, a woman" – and exists on a continuum. It recognises that it isn't irreconcilable with femininity. It celebrates female sexuality.

Kate showcases the work of some of the most talented feminists I know, and without them, this magazine would never have been possible. Hopefully you enjoy reading it as much as we enjoyed making it: moderately.

— Rosabel

P.S. I am kidding. It was the best time.

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Welcome to this year's edition of *Kate*. Putting this magazine together has been quite a journey. When I first decided to get it off the ground, I didn't have any clue about the challenges involved in publishing a magazine. To know that – despite all these challenges – the magazine will go out to hundreds of students is quite exciting.

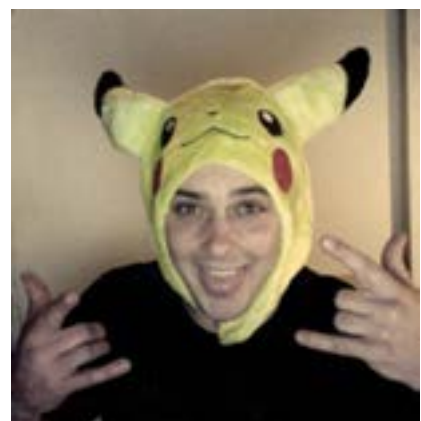
Kate commemorates Kate Milligan Edgar (who the information commons is named after). She was the first woman in the British Empire to gain a degree, graduating with a Bachelor of Arts in 1877. Edgar was pretty great. After completing her degree, she joined the suffrage movement, and worked to extend educational opportunities to women. *Kate* also honours Kate Sheppard, the leader of the suffrage movement in New Zealand.

This year's *Kate* includes both female and male contributors. This approach is unconventional for a women's magazine, but it means we have articles written from a broad range of perspectives. What's important is that the purpose and feel of the magazine stays true to debating, recognising, and celebrating our feminist ideals.

Kate is conveniently published the same week as the AUSA Womensfest. There is a debate organised by the Debating Society and a series of workshops being hosted by local organisations – to find out more, check out www.ausa.org.nz or visit Student Central.

Here's to many more years of *Kate*!

— Soraiya



Aidan helped. The End.



Loveliness and the Labia

I learnt of my vagina long before I knew it had a name. It wasn't through inquisition or sexual awakening; I simply became conscious of it pressing against itself as I stood, sat, moved. I didn't dwell on what it meant, but enjoyed its existence as I enjoyed all the bodily faculties available to me.

Growing older, one's own skin and body too easily become templates for all sorts of projections. Culture, as they say, gets in. I learnt as one does that vaginas are political. They mean something, and that meaning is mapped out by their functions and uses, most prominently those related to heterosexual relations (the word 'vagina' is Latin for sheath. As in, for a sword).

I also learnt that women's genitalia are as varied as their faces. Some are frilly, some flare out, some are voluptuous, some are dainty. There are 'innies' and there are 'outies'. Their colours range over pinks, mauves and browns, and each responds to touch differently, each a loveliness unto itself.

I was taken aback for a moment when I learnt that cunts too could be cosmetically enhanced by plastic surgery, and have been for the past fifteen years at least. In hindsight, it isn't that unthinkable that cosmetic vaginal and vulval reconstruction happens. Upsetting, maybe. But not unthinkable. After all, the scene has been set: we have braces, boob-jobs, eyelash extensions,

penile augmentation, skin grafts, hair grafts, the reassignment of gender, and brazilians for men and women alike, and that's just naming a few. Over time, more and more aspects of the human body have come under vanity's gaze and become candidates for perfection.

If vaginal rescaping was formerly deemed impossible or unpalatable, things have since

"I'm not one to pander slavishly after genital ideals propagated by porn. Big dicks, big tits: big deal. But possessing a pussy, one is bound to wonder (hopefully casually): what's good?"

changed. Put it down to the mainstreaming of pornography: these days, even straight women and monogamists of whatever sexual preference can see the genitalia of lots of other women. The bulk of these anatomies have been digitally or surgically airbrushed, but for those of us who have not had the pleasure of bedding many ladies, they are the point of reference and, by default, they shape expectations.

Elizabeth Haiken, author of *Venus Envy*:

A History of Cosmetic Surgery, remarks that "before crotch shots were published, nobody was interested in this." Dr Gary Alter, the fittingly named plastic surgeon famously associated with vaginal 'rejuvenation', calls it the 'Penthouse Effect'. His clients allegedly come in wielding glossy porn magazines, demanding that he "make mine look like that."

Like many of you, I'm not one to pander slavishly after genital ideals propagated by porn. Big dicks, big tits: big deal. But possessing a pussy, one is bound to wonder (hopefully casually): what's good? Am I okay? Even people who first hear of vulval reconstruction through criticism of it are startled into wondering how their goods measure up to what's 'good'. It goes to show how easily seeds of 'what to want' and 'what to tolerate or change' can be sown.

Judging by the before-and-after shots boasted by plastic surgery websites, it seems what everybody wants is the same: slim, straight and narrow, minimal ornamentation.

Reduction of the labia minora, the inner lips of the vulva, is the most requested procedure. Other procedures on offer include: trimming elongated or uneven labia, scraping excess skin off the clitoral hood, plumpening of the labia with a fat transplant, liposuction of pubic flesh, tightening of the vagina walls and surgically creating new hymens. To warrant these measures, age, human diversity, childbirth and active sex lives are cast

as traumas. Their physical effects – larger labias, relaxed vaginal muscles and what have you – are held responsible for great discomfort, plummeting self-esteem, and thwarted sex lives by proxy.

Take a look at these testimonies from *Shine* and *Cosmopolitan*:

“My sex life has improved so much since the operation — we have more sex now than ever before. I’m much more into my boyfriend and now that I’m tighter, I’m much more confident about initiating sex. Even better, my boyfriend is enjoying sex with me more, as there’s much more stimulation for him too.”

“I was so thrilled by my new vagina. Dan and I ‘tried it out’ after just four weeks. What a difference — it was like my whole sex life was beginning again. Suddenly I discovered how amazing oral sex can be because I could finally relax and be myself during sex. I didn’t have to worry about my boyfriend seeing me naked.”

Reading between the lines of these and other testimonies, surgery salves sex-lives by modifying psychological outlooks via the transmogrification of flesh. When it comes to sex, the body is mind incarnate. Our thoughts embodied in hands, necks, mouths, throats, cocks, cunts, and sphincters. Feeling appealing means *being* appealing. It really is all in the mind. Most of the women getting the procedure recognise this. “Once you get a hang-up it just grows and grows. It’s all mental,” comments a woman interviewed by Salon.com’s Louisa Kamps. “If you see something affecting your relationship, then, yeah, save yourself the head trauma and get it done.”

There are still risks, though. Dr Alter insists that he avoids cutting near the clitoris to guarantee your orgasm’s safety under his knife. But according to Dr. Norman Schulman, chief plastic surgeon at Lenox Hill Hospital in New York, Alter’s logic is impossible: “There are women whose nerve centers are collected at the clitoris, women whose nerve centers are collected at the labia, women whose nerve centers aren’t even in the genitalia.”

Needless to say, beautifying the human body is not a contemporary phenomenon, neither is it culturally exclusive. Somewhat ironically, vaginoplasty’s West African cousin comes to mind. FGM (female genital mutilation OR modification, depending on your diplomacy) is more or less demonised in popular media. It is outlawed in several American states by a constitution that relies on FGM’s specific tribal and cultural context to distinguish it from plastic surgery of the same region.

FGM takes a variety of forms but basically,

the clitoris is scraped down and the lips sewn up. The idea is to wrench physical pleasure from sex in an effort to keep women chaste. The oppressive motives in this are blatant. But cultural expectations — however subjugating — have an interesting way of sneaking in and making themselves at home in people’s ideas about what they want to look like. Case in point: an Egyptian mother whose daughter awaits excision expresses passionate distaste for the appearance of long labia in a nineties documentary, *Hidden Faces*. “Do you want her to be like a boy with this floppy thing hanging down?” she asks, painting the offending feature in the air with her hands. “It should be straight. Shhh. Smooth as silk.”

Anthropologist Christine Walley discovers

“The feminist’s freedom to choose and the freedom to choose as a consumer are two very different creatures... one springs from an ethos of equality and the other from dissatisfaction and greed.”

something similar amongst the teenage girls she teaches in West Kenya. Her students display neither ignorance nor naivety when she gently asks them about the pain and loss of sexual sensation their infibulations entail. They assure her they are aware, already, of these consequences. They are also well familiar with criticisms of their custom (which has been illegal in Kenya since 1982), and on some levels, they concur with these. But much to their teacher’s mystification, their inductions to ladyhood make them feel prouder and prettier all the same.

The Egyptian ladies, the Kenyan girls, and the women confessing to *Cosmo* may come from very different cultural backgrounds. But in their differences lurks this sameness: ‘beauty’ precedes politics and is a way out of shame. It is conformity to populous ideals and it is also a state of mind. It’s a pity a person’s notions of beauty and ugliness cannot be resculpted as easily as a vulva can. Dr. Nada Stotland, president of the Association of Women Psychiatrists acknowledges that energy should really be used to help people feel proud of their bodies. “But at the same time,” she adds,

“you can’t entirely denigrate the idea that a body feature could cause a person enough psychic pain to warrant surgery.”

With vaginal alteration, we are up against a philosophical knot: the freedom to opt out of ‘psychic pain’ *seems* to be part of the family of freedoms fought for by feminists and humanists alike. Labiaplastologists obviously think so. And the delight attested to by women who’ve had their bits surgically prettified cannot be denied. The technology exists, after all. As does the need to use it. The market has spoken and who am I to tell it to shut up? Even if the ‘freedom’ it speaks of feels tainted.

Rachel Bowlby brings intellectual relief to my vague sense of ill-fit between liberation and labiaplasty. She points out that the feminist’s freedom to choose and the freedom to choose as a consumer are two very different creatures. Either one may be intended when that gift-horse ‘choice’ is evoked, but one springs from an ethos of equality and the other from dissatisfaction and greed.

The onus to resist buying into the ‘Penthouse Effect’ doesn’t rest solely with women. Or with men, for that matter. Many people as horrified by labiaplasty as I might disagree, as they link its injustices to the huge history of males designating feminine form and behaviour through art, literature, medicine and politics. This dynamic cannot be denied, but both genders must take responsibility for perpetuating ideas about what twats should look like. Beauty — said to be the harmony of form and function — loses something spectacular when its essence is sought in appearances alone. If there is a social divide here, it seems it is not between men and women, but between those who understand that aesthetic beauty means more than what is prescribed by popular culture, and those who have yet to figure this out.

Culture can’t be unlearned. The ideas drawn upon to formulate it, however, can – and must – be elaborated beyond those we are fed. Women’s genitals are tricky in this respect because they get so little airtime outside of porn and seduction. So inform yourselves: if a show and tell session with girlfriends doesn’t take off, I suggest beginning with porn made for lesbians and the book *Femalia* by Joani Blank, which compiles several photographs of female vulvas without conferring values onto their different forms.

Perhaps saying this to console someone whose self-loathing collects between their thighs has a smidgen more weight than having your mum vouch for your coolness? I don’t know. I can only hope their reasons for feeling how they feel are considered and well-informed.

— *Mythily Meher*



IS THE BATTLE OVER?

Like many social movements of the previous century, feminism in the early twenty-first is preoccupied with its continuing relevance in the minds of both its supporters and detractors. How does one keep the issue fresh, as it were? Are the same problems that once inspired women to take up the cause still relevant to young people today? Or, as some people have argued, has the 'battle' been won?

It is curious, but not entirely surprising, that the language used to frame the debate surrounding feminism's progress draws upon that most 'masculine' of enterprises: warfare. We talk of a 'battle' for progress, the 'fight' for our rights, and (perhaps) the 'triumph' or 'victory' of the cause. In the context of women's liberation over the previous century, this militaristic framework was reflective of the aggression that supporters of universal suffrage and pay equity (amongst other issues) had to face. In contemporary debate, however, this language draws upon a body of rhetoric that has systematically promoted antiquated notions of masculinity and femininity, and continues to do so.

It's a miserable truth that militarism – the mindset that a nation should protect its interests with a strong military force, and be prepared to use that force aggressively should they be

threatened – still prevails in many parts of the world. Women's role in militaristic endeavours is also increasing, largely thanks to feminism's achievements, and when talk turns to women and the military, the issue of female service people tends to dominate. In cases where this involvement is voluntary, such as in New Zealand, women in the military deserve respect for what is undoubtedly a challenging role.

The increasing presence of women in the force often overshadows the still-pervasive ideologies and assumptions that are fundamental to the way the military works. The operations of nationalised armed forces have, in the words of theorist Cynthia Enloe, "depended on, and thus manoeuvred to control, varieties of women, and the very notion of femininity in all its myriad guises."

Studies of militarism and gender point to the ways in which women play crucial roles in the performance of the war myth: as soldiers' wives, as mothers who 'produce' future soldiers, as loyal and patriotic guardians of the home front. While few official documents around such policies are obtainable, long-standing assumptions about male soldiers' sexual 'needs' still result in an acceptance and tacit promotion of prostitution within the military. Aside from the myriad problems that such policies entail

for the women who provide those services, the military institution believes that by providing an outlet for sexual frustration, the likelihood of soldiers (a) becoming involved with or (b) raping local women will be diminished.

The absurdity of this mindset was made painfully clear when in 1995 two American marines and a soldier raped a twelve-year-old girl on the Japanese island of Okinawa, host to a U.S. military base. In their testimony, they mentioned their financial inability to hire a prostitute as a motive for their rape. While the incident itself is a shocking and painful story, the way in which the military's public relations unit responded to the rape offered a keener insight into the militarised mindsets that contributed to the rape. When questioned about the attack at a press conference, Admiral Richard C. Mack responded, "I think it was absolutely stupid... For the price they paid to rent the car, they could have had a girl." I can't think of a better response than that of U.S. Senator Dianne Feinstein: "Your guys still don't get it... Rape isn't about money and it isn't about sex. It's about power over women." Unfortunately, this incident is not an isolated one, and until the gendered assumptions made within militaries are acknowledged and dismantled, I fear it will not be the last.

—Tania Sawicki Mead

Photography by Chelsea Jade Metcalf

Finding the 'ME' in Feminism

What does it even mean to be a feminist today? After all, women can vote, direct companies, divorce their husbands and have abortions – what else is there to fight for? What is the state of feminism in 2010: who are its leaders and what are they doing?

In the 19th century it was a different story. If Beyonce had called out to “all the women who independent” in 1850, very few women would have thrown their hands up. Victorian women had sweet FA in the way of rights, and putting a ring on it only made things worse. Among other things, married women weren’t allowed to own property, open bank accounts, refuse sex with their husbands or have a say in how many children they had.

Naturally, not all women were enthralled by this. Some decided to try and do something

about it, and so began the first ‘wave’ of feminism. Emerging in the UK and US around 1850 and led by middle-class white women, it focused primarily on getting women the right to vote – this was eventually achieved, with New Zealand paving the way in 1893. Early feminists were also concerned with introducing new marriage laws and improving access to education and employment.

The 1960s marked the birth of second wave feminism. This, too, was concerned primarily with the plight of middle-class white women. Notable writers of this movement included Betty Friedan, whose book *The Feminine Mystique* criticised the media-driven stereotype of the happy suburban housewife, and Germaine Greer, who boldly declared that “all men hate women” in her 1970 bestseller *The Female Eunuch*. Feminists of this era fought for the end of discrimination against women, often by employing hardcore activist tactics (for the record: apparently no bras were ever actually burned).

Third wave feminism spans from the early 90s to the present day. Because I’ve been alive for all of that period, I reasoned that I’d be able to remember some of its victories, and name a few of its leaders. I struggled. Were the Spice Girls feminists? Probably not. They coined the phrase ‘girl power’, sure, but as feminist writer Jennifer L. Pozner’s points out, “It’s probably a fair assumption to say that “zigzag-ha” is not Spice shorthand for ‘subvert the dominant paradigm’”.

I found it hard to come up with any definitive modern feminists, which is probably because there is no stereotypical mould to fill. Third-wave feminism embraces diversity, and marks a shift away from the previous waves of feminism by rejecting the idea of a universal female identity. This means that a modern-day feminist could take any shape or form. Third-wave feminism encourages women to express their femininity in whichever way they choose – be it by playing rugby, baking cupcakes, or starring in films like *Lord of the G-Strings* or *Forrest Hump*.

One of third-wave feminism’s goals has been to reclaim derogatory words like bitch, whore, spinster and cunt. I’m sceptical as to whether this has been achieved given that I had to wash my hands after typing that last one, but apparently it’s more empowering to use these words than to censor them. Thanks to this initiative, we now have books like *Cunt: A Declaration of Independence* by Inga Muscia on our shelves.

Often hailed as a symbol of third-wave feminism is early-90s underground punk movement ‘riot grrrl’. At the time, I wasn’t aware of riot grrrl, or any of the bands who formed the movement, but that isn’t surprising given that I was five and they were singing about rape, domestic violence and lesbian sex. Riot grrrls

achieved little mainstream recognition, but they did succeed in scaring a few people – most notably, the crowd at the 1992 Reading music festival. It was here that riot grrrl Donita Sparks removed her used tampon and threw it into the crowd, yelling “Eat my used tampons, fuckers!” before some poor fan copped it. It probably didn’t do much for feminism’s image, but it did go down as one of the most unsanitary moments in music history.

Feminism today seems less organised and less politicised than it used to be. It’s also far more inclusive. In her blog *Angry Young Woman*, an angry young woman explains that unlike previous movements, modern day feminism gives women of colour, disabled women, lesbians and transgendered women a feminist platform to speak from, while at the same time allowing them to focus on their own agendas.

A few years ago, t-shirts with the slogan ‘this is what a feminist looks like’ emblazoned across the front emerged, celebrating the diversity of modern-day feminist. A range of celebrities were seen wearing these shirts on the This is What a Feminist Looks Like video, including, shock horror, men.



So if Bill Bailey is a feminist, does that mean I could be too? I decided to answer this question the only way I knew how – by taking a dodgy internet quiz. Yes, I think abortion should be legal, Yes, I think women and men should receive equal pay, and No, I don’t think the word woman should be spelled ‘womyn’. That’s myntal.

According to okcupid.com, I am a feminist. A “pro-choice, sexually liberated, and generally leftist” one at that. I’m relieved. I may not litter my sentences with the C-word or pick outfits with empowerment in mind, but I do believe that women and men should be treated as equals. Yes I decide, I’m in the F-club and proud.

Then I come across a quote from *The Female Eunuch*, and suddenly wonder if I’m not quite there yet. “If you think you are emancipated, then you might consider tasting your menstrual blood,” advises Greer. “If it makes you sick, you’ve got a long way to go, baby.”

— Alice Galletly

Photography by Chelsea Jade Metcalf

When Something SNAPS

"Can't go 'round saying a guy's got a small donger. What did she think would happen?"

— Anon. on the Clayton Weatherston case, overheard at Shadows, September 2008)

Othello: "She turn'd to folly, and she was a whore." / Emilia: "Thou dost belie her, and thou art a devil."

— (Othello V.ii.133-34)

Ramage was found not guilty of murder by a jury of seven men and five women, based on the partial defence of provocation. Julie's duplicitous, cruel behaviour was such that the long-suffering, lovelorn father of her children couldn't take it anymore. His lawyer described her behaviour as "the fly that lands on the bonnet of a car teetering on the edge of a cliff." That sounds innocuous - yet everything from Julie's libido to her menstrual cycle was called into issue (we all know what women are like around that time - she must have started abusing him dreadfully).

In New Zealand, much was made of the way Sophie Elliott's family had to see her private life and good name dragged through the muck as her killer, Clayton Weatherston, launched an unsuccessful attempt at the provocation defence in our court system. Spare a thought for Julia Ramage's twin sister and children. Over days of trial time, they were forced to watch those same tactics pay off.

The appearance of the provocation defence in these cases proved so unpalatable to the Victorian and New Zealand public alike that the outcry led both jurisdictions to abolish it entirely. So is an article on provocation now simply an interesting curio? Not quite, I discovered - it *is* interesting for what it was, but it also continues to raise questions in its absence. Especially because many lawyers appear to favour its retention, and especially because the question of what happens to female abuse victims who kill - some of whom were often cruelly and systematically left out of provocation's scope, and some of whom benefited from it themselves - remains in the air.



Hutt Valley-based criminal lawyer Greg King was one of the defence counsel that ran Weatherston's provocation claim on his behalf. Like his co-counsel, Judith Ablett-Kerr, he

received unspeakable threats as Weatherston tried to point the finger at his victim during his strange turn in the witness stand. Yet, as he points out, "this isn't something dreamt up by clever, desperate defence lawyers. And if the defence can't raise any case at all for it, a judge won't let it through. It's been on the books in New Zealand since 1911. It's existed even longer."

But no sensible argument for the retention of provocation would want to start from its origins. It developed to cover the conduct of men who generally hadn't had to defend anything else they did in their lives, to cover their suffered occasional fits of jealousy and wounded pride. It's perhaps not such a coincidence that its development and refinement coincided with the gradual criminalisation of duelling in Western Europe (around the 17th to 19th century). Men who felt the need to avenge their dignity with bloodshed swapped the risk of sanction for legal justification. By the start of the nineteenth century, English law had the acceptable scenarios for provocation boiled down: coming to the aid of a kinsman, a *husband* discovering *his wife* in the act of adultery and a father discovering someone in the act of sodomising his son.

Behind all three, of course, lay the law's perennial concept of the reasonable man. A defendant seeking to argue provocation had to be judged by the standards society had set down for the average Joe, of average self-control and average temperament. Would the particular slight in this case have been enough to tip that ordinary sort of chap over the edge? That a lover's infidelity or the odd flash of homosexual panic apparently *could* constitute provocation is something the law - indeed, public policy - still finds itself grappling with 200-odd years later.

By the time provocation appeared on ours (and the UK's) statute books 50 years ago, courts were clearly uneasy with those early, limited scenarios. More than that, there seemed to be a note of

It didn't take an Iago to make James Ramage kill his wife, Julie. Nor had the Australian company director ever felt isolated at suburban dinner parties by the colour of his skin. There were no malevolent outside forces - just a stifling, unhappy marriage that had run its course into middle-age. Ramage asked her over to their matrimonial home one wet weekday lunchtime and begged for one last chance. Then he punched her and strangled her to death. He put her lifeless body in the boot of his Jaguar, then buried her on a remote bush property. He spent hours cleaning up. Then he turned himself in at the end of the night.

We can't know what happened for sure at that final meeting, but we do know what Ramage's counsel told a Melbourne jury: Julie had been having affairs. She had hidden her new relationship from him. She had given him false hope of a reunion. She had laughed at his renovations on the house. Renovations for her. She had told him that having sex with him "repulsed" her. 25 years. He was so angry. He was *so* angry.

discomfort about what the defence effectively said about human nature. Some things – some *people* – can make us so angry we can't *help* killing them.

Those who argued for the abolition of the defence claimed that people who break like this *shouldn't* be excused. King labels such arguments "absolute rubbish. I, for one, can imagine situations where – and I'm not saying I would be proud of it – but I would just lose my power of self-control, you know? We're emotional beings. We're not robots. Sometimes we just lose it." He describes a woman he successfully defended using provocation in 2009. She came home to find her child being sexually abused by a neighbour, lost all control, and stabbed him. "I don't think that's an unsympathetic example to give to parents."

You can sense an attempt to shift away from the bad old days of provocation in the (now-repealed) section 169 of the Crimes Act –

(2) anything done or said may be provocation if in the circumstances of the case it was sufficient to deprive a person having the power of self-control of an ordinary person, but otherwise having the characteristics of the offender, of the power of self-control.

– as well as in the number of thoughtfully reasoned and argued judgments that came in its wake. Provocation came to be directed at a particular 'characteristic' – either a mental or physical quality – that might somehow differentiate the offender from reasonable people, while simultaneously appearing to demand the reasonable person's standard of self-control and restraint. "Walk a mile in their shoes?" I ask King. "Not quite." He laughs.

"By the start of the nineteenth century, English law had the acceptable scenarios for provocation boiled down: coming to the aid of a kinsman, a *husband* discovering *his wife* in the act of adultery and a father discovering someone in the act of sodomising his son."

It constructed an awkward hybrid that juries were left to consider in evaluating a person's guilt – okay, you need to imagine they're just like you, only, they're not, because of this mental/physical deficiency they have, so try to imagine how that good, reasonable self-control of yours would work alongside having that mental or physical deficiency. You get the idea. But it often made for complicated instructions to juries.

Interestingly, when it came to matters of 'characteristics', judges would often use the example of someone having a 'physical deformity or infirmity' – and that's interesting because it conjures up another provocation scenario that might not fill you (or me) with as much outrage as the one at the start. Imagine a 17-year-old who had disfiguring scars on his face from burns

he received as an abused child – losing control, lashing out, and killing one of his high school bullies as their taunting hit fever pitch. I put my hypothetical boy to King. "Good scenario – the example you give is how provocation and how characteristics work."

But it's a slippery slope – a physical characteristic of the killer partially explains or excuses why he did it? Try dick size, then. Or the tricky matter of sexual potency. Because men kill women who jeer about those, too. And then argue provocation for it, successfully or not.

Yet even as provocation produced these unpleasant trials and unpleasant outcomes wherever it was preserved, it was helping those who had often been its victims in the past. Take Epifania Sulape, who was subjected to bashings, machete cuts, and infliction of a venereal disease through her husband's repeated infidelities. She killed him with an axe about a quarter of an hour after he told her he was abandoning her and their children for a younger woman. She was charged with murder. Provocation made it manslaughter.

There's no suggestion that these victims – terrible specimens though they may have been – deserved to die violently. Yet there was also a recognition by the law that the people who killed them shouldn't be considered on the same footing, with the same sentences, as ordinary murderers. In the meantime, provocation as a defence seemed to stretch itself beyond its definitional boundaries, providing ever more complicated instructions to juries in the process.

King attributes this to the way courts and lawyers were struggling to fit the partial defence

behind bars. She had come from a background of horrendous sexual abuse. She ran away from home at 12 only to end up working the streets. Finally, at 16, she killed her abusive partner and pimp. The Court of Appeal that set her free established that provocation could be cumulative rather than a simple 'heat of the moment' brain explosion to pass muster.

But there lay the cruel, blunt disparity behind provocation. It was never intended to cover premeditated killings, and despite the horror of their circumstances, a number of women who have argued it did make that decision to end things – to kill their abusers or tormentors – ahead of the act.

It's a blunt *physical* disparity. Men are bigger and stronger than women. A man can lose self-control with less concern for his own well-being or life. Conversely, a 1983 study by Australian legal academic Jocelynn Scutt depicts a haunting mirror image of the kind of acts of violence that women surveyed *didn't* perform:

"no woman punched her husband about the head or shoulders...no husband was attacked in the groin...husbands were not kicked and stamped on with heavy work boots. None were pushed against a wall or flung across a room; they were not held down in threatening positions. Strangling and choking were not used."

When his wife or partner makes him snap, a man can kill her there and then. If a woman did the same against her oppressor, chances are she'd wind up bloodied and beaten – or dead. Men don't need to premeditate a thing. Does this sound the death knell of the defence on a logical basis? It's a partial defence founded on flurries of passion, not premeditation – but men don't need to premeditate to kill their wives. So it was diverging – attempting to excuse a traditional set of circumstances (for men) alongside concessions to female abuse victims. Between a rock and a hard place. I put this disparity to King.

"It's true. It's not sexist to say provocation is based on your stereotypical male response. It's a powerful response and it's an immediate response. There is some suggestion that women perhaps just don't operate in that way. That the male psyche just snaps, and the female psyche is more of a slow boil over. The person who broods, stews, and boils over is disadvantaged. And the woman may have to sneak up. And that's been seen as more pernicious than just strangling someone."

"Having said that, there have been cases which started to recognise that. There is no longer that need for immediacy or a proportionate response. There's a growing recognition that people lose self-control at different ways and different times."

But then, it was gone. Provocation was repealed 116 votes to five in Parliament, and nothing else was instituted in its wake. I ask King what would happen to my scarred boy now. "He'd be hard pushed to avoid a murder conviction. The defence is gone."



In 1995, an English woman named Emma Humphreys had her life sentence for murder downgraded to manslaughter after a decade

Provocation was repealed in Victoria following a formal investigation. It was replaced with defensive homicide – a new partial defence that specifically assisted victims of abuse, while specifically spurning those who were victims of their own emotional and sexual jealousy.

King believes the government was too hasty when it repealed provocation, and is too cautious now to raise the idea of a new defence to murder to a seething public.

But – pardon the irony – didn't provocation have this coming? I put to King the suggestion that the courts should have drawn lines on scenarios where provocation could never be raised. Weatherston's being one.

"I disagree. When a person has lost their power

"When his wife or partner makes him snap, a man can kill her there and then. If a woman did the same against her oppressor, chances are she'd wind up bloodied and beaten – or dead."

of self-control, they've lost their power of self-control. Trying to define it and trying to exclude different fact scenarios for public policy reasons is in my opinion unworkable. There's no logical or philosophical basis to it. To draw a line and say 'we're not going to tolerate this sexually-related crime' is to my mind completely flawed."

It's true – it's a hard balance. And the hasty repeal of a law due to a sudden media storm is to be balked at. Then there's the thought of those provocation cases that may come up that *can't* be dealt with elsewhere. If we still have a place for sympathy for some of those who lose control, are we to simply recognise it when they get sentenced – *as* murderers?

One thing's for sure. The scope to use the defence as James Ramage did, and Clayton Weatherston tried to, isn't coming back. And as a male, I say 'good riddance', because it felt like the law was telling me that as a reasonable man, I have this awful uncontrollable fury at my periphery – that every dark thought I've ever had at being spurned, unlucky or unreciprocated *could* have a legitimate end in snuffing out what I desired. If I can't have it – if I can't have her – no one can. I don't want this out clause. I don't want to be part of any group in society that can justify doing this to women.



— Joe Nunweek

Five Reasons Why the Concept of 'Feminism' Confuses and Scares *Your Man*

1. It means he'll probably have to stop hitting you.
 2. He's scared that Freud's whole penis envy thing will, in the spirit of 'fairness', culminate in him having to switch to 'bottom' every second night.
 3. He worries that no matter what the fuck he does, on the topic of opening doors for you, he's still a 'dickhead'.
 4. He knows it means letting you win more fights in the name of 'equality'.
 5. He's pretty damn sure it means more cunnilingus for you and less rough anal for him.
-

Thursdays in **BLACK**

Many women live in fear, and it's time to speak out and say we've had enough. One in five women have been physically abused by a partner, and one in four are likely to experience sexual violence or abuse at some stage during their lives. Our sisters, our mothers, our grandmothers and our daughters could all be victims of violence. We want our community to be a safe place not only for ourselves, but for our friends and family.

The Thursdays in Black campaign began in the 1980s by the World Council of Churches to protest against violence. The campaign soon spread, and has been embraced worldwide as a strong voice against societal inequalities.

Wearing black on Thursdays demonstrates a desire for a community where we can all walk safely without the fear of being beaten up, verbally abused, raped, or of being discriminated against due to your sexual orientation, political affiliation, religion, gender or ethnicity. It shows that you want to be free.

The Campus Feminist Collective sells Thursdays in Black t-shirts and give out free stickers in the quad every second Thursday. Events around the country are organised for Thursdays in Black National Day of Action on the 27th of May, so look out for details of what's happening on the day and come along to show your support. By simply wearing black on Thursdays, we are uniting as a university and joining the global campaign against violence.

For more information email campusfeministcollective@yahoo.co.nz

POKING THE NUB: GAGA DOES FEMINISM?

It's 10pm, last week, and I've just finished cringing through an awkward interview Lady Gaga gave last August to a Norwegian journalist. "You see what I'm best at is my pop-cultural performance art quality," she says, before licking her hand and waving it at the camera. "I have a vision. I have an endless muse-like vision of monsters and playgirls."

She seems on edge and cranky, and moments after making a good point about the sexual double standard in the music industry, goes on to say: "I'm not a feminist. I hail men, I love men, I celebrate American male culture – beer, bars, and muscle cars."

That seems pretty clear – especially when taken alongside fantastic Gaga quotes like "Pop stars should not eat," and "I don't know if this is too much for your magazine, but I can actually mentally give myself an orgasm." It becomes easy to write her off as another auto-tuned automaton – albeit one who appears on breakfast television to promote AIDS awareness amongst women.

But then in December last year, she admitted to being "a little bit of a feminist," whatever that means. And even if she's agnostic on the subject, people are drawing links between her lyrics, her outfits, and feminist causes. Maybe she's caricaturing the entertainment industry's obsession with the female figure by making her costumes intentionally absurd, and maybe her lyrics carry a subtle anti-marriage flavour. Or maybe she doesn't know if she's a feminist yet.

✱

It's 7:30pm, a month ago, and I've just finished watching the music video for Lady Gaga's 'Telephone'. I'm confused.

The song is exquisitely banal. It's about a woman at a club who doesn't want her telephone to keep ringing. Although it will undoubtedly win commercial success, my confusion centres on the music video, which Gaga has suggested is a critique of middle-American culture. In it, she becomes incarcerated in an all-female prison before being bailed out by Beyoncé, with whom she then embarks upon a murderous poison-rampage. The climactic scene sees them dancing in matching American flag-coloured bikinis to a roomful of dead roadside diner patrons. It is bewilderingly arousing.

Lady Gaga – AKA, Stefani Germanotta – may

be an Italian-American from New York City, but there her resemblance to the sub-human detritus of *Jersey Shore* ends. Despite the grotesque costumes and nasal, Fran Drescher-esque conversational tone, the kids go crazy for Gaga. At a Japanese concert, one young woman leapt onto the stage and knelt in front of Gaga before attempting to join the dance routine. Startled, Gaga kept singing as several of the real dancers picked up the fake and hurled her offstage.

Gaga has a sort of charisma and savvy not usually associated with the 'pop star' label.

✱

It's 12:20pm, two weeks ago, and I've just finished watching a link posted on Facebook, in which Lady Gaga speaks passionately to Queer fans at a National Equality rally. Bisexual herself, Gaga has called her LGBT supporters 'inspirational', and her speech on their behalf in front of the US Capitol Building is moving.

"She's flamboyant, androgynous, and quite clearly doesn't give a fuck about what people think of her."

Gaga carries immense gay cred. Even if she isn't a hermaphrodite (persistent 'GAGA HAS A PENIS' rumours have proven sadly inaccurate), she's flamboyant, androgynous, and quite clearly doesn't give a fuck about what people think of her. At least, that's the image she's chosen for herself, and with a performance as consummate as Gaga's, the 'act' is as good as reality. Whether her *avant garde* sensibilities spring from her legitimate aesthetic tastes or are simply a clever marketing ploy is ultimately irrelevant. She's an icon.

The qualities that make her popular with gay fans also signal her potential as a feminist rallying point. Third-wave feminism in particular advocates being true to yourself, and this is an ideal Gaga

espouses with conviction. Her 'fame monster' concept (the idea behind her most recent album, about the dark side of celebrity) lends itself to repackaging: Gaga could become a 'girl monster' overnight, if she wanted.

That's the nub: if she wanted.

You get the impression she's conflicted. On the one hand, she's a strong and independent woman making a career for herself in a hostile industry – but on the other, she enjoys rough straight sex with men. She wants to be a feminist, little 'f', without being a Feminist, a man-hating dyke. The problem is that this stereotype, if it ever existed in reality, certainly no longer applies to the modern Feminist movement. But Gaga, always wary of appearances, doesn't want to associate herself with a group of people that she suspects – perhaps rightly – is reviled by the general public. She wants to be edgy, but not too edgy.

So Gaga has feminist affinities implicitly, rather than deliberately. Does it make a difference? Not really. As long as she's inspiring women to follow their dreams and campaigning for a more equal society, she could eat puppies during live performances and crazed Japanese women would still beg to service her. Of course, if she actually woke up to the third-wave principles her act embodies, she could do the movement a powerful good. But realistically, she's a 24 year old pop singer. At 24, Britney Spears got married and had a baby. I think I'd prefer my little sister watch 'Telephone' over 'Hit me baby one more time'.

— MATTHEW HARNETT





YES M E A N S YES!

POSITIVE SEXUALITY, CONSENT, & AN END TO SEXUAL VIOLENCE

When we talk about consent, we often use the phrase *no means no*. It emphasises the need for sexual partners to be aware of each other's limits, and to be responsive when someone decides that they don't want to do something. It sounds straightforward enough, but viewing consent in this way is incredibly problematic due to its reductive simplicity: you can't categorise consent into either a 'yes' or a 'no', and attempting to do so has harmful consequences, both in terms of sexual assault and our understanding of sexuality in general.

She didn't say Yes, but she didn't say No

In many sexual assault cases, the perpetrator will argue that the victim 'didn't say no' and thus, by implication, consented. This is dangerous territory. I mean, imagine you're six tequila shots into the night and you're flirting with the cute guy you just met and you decide to go hunt down a kebab and then the next thing you know he's got his hands up your skirt and you don't know what the hell is happening. Or, imagine your relationship is falling to pieces. You're always fighting with your boyfriend, but as you're falling asleep one night he decides he's feeling a little frisky. He tells you he loves you. You don't say no. You don't know how.

By placing so much importance on this word, we've created an atmosphere where the burden is on women to actively say no. And if they don't, it means they're saying yes. There needs to be a shift from this attitude to one where both partners are responsible for ensuring mutual consent.

No means No and Sex-Negative Culture

Our narrow conceptualisation of consent is symptomatic of a broader sex-negative culture where we're subject to a sexual double standard. Sexually active men are described in a positive light, whereas females engaging in

the same behaviours are viewed negatively, and are branded with terms like 'slut' and 'whore'. Women are expected to be sexual beings, but they're also expected to be passive in fulfilling their desires.

Sex-negative culture is also grounded in the historical idea, often propounded by organised religion, that sexual desire is sinful and weak. For men, it's a potentially risky distraction – an Achilles' heel to be shielded and concealed for the sake of their economic and social prestige (nothing like an ill-considered extramarital affair to take you down, right, Tiger?). For women, it's something more dangerous and unnatural, a force to be contained, harnessed and repressed.

Sexuality is not viewed as an essential part of a person, but as something separate that briefly, guiltily manifests itself in the physical act. Relegating sexuality into this exclusive, negative context codifies gender expectations around sex, while constraining sexual interaction to 'permissible' acts that often reflect society's own power dynamics. As a result, it reinforces specific understandings of sexuality, including an acceptance of male sexual aggression toward women and the perception that non-heterosexual sex is perverse.

Creating Positive Sexuality

In order to fight sexual violence and expand the dialogue regarding consent, we must re-evaluate how we understand sexuality. Brad Perry, the sexual violence prevention coordinator at the Virginia Sexual and Domestic Violence Action Alliance, explains that we should endeavour to create a "culture where people experience sexuality in a state of well-being – a culture incompatible with sexual violence because of a deeply shared belief that sexuality is a precious part of everyone's humanity." In the culture Perry's asking us to imagine, sexuality is seen not as a personal weakness but as a personal strength.

Presently, sexuality has become oversimplified and distorted, creating rigid, even stereotypical sexual identities ('red-blooded' lads, 'loose' girls, 'promiscuous' gay men) without making concessions to the particular needs or feelings of the individual. As a result, our society blocks healthy understandings of sexuality. Positive sexuality, however, enables all manifestations of sexual identity to be acknowledged and viewed as valid.

Reconceptualising Consent

When our idea of sexuality changes, we create a new way of looking at consent. The phrase changes from 'no means no' to 'yes means yes.' This new form of consent emphasises the need for sexual partners to communicate and respect each other's desires. It also permits an open dialogue about sex, instead of focusing only on whether an individual does not want to engage in a particular act. All individuals benefit when they actively search for consent because they better understand the desires of their partner or partners.

This reframing of consent and sexuality challenges our subsisting rape culture. Often tolerated or condoned in popular media, rape culture normalises male aggression and violence against women. It places sexual assault prevention on the shoulders of the victims rather than the perpetrators. Because positive sexuality encourages a woman's voice and control during sex, it challenges the beliefs and attitudes this culture is founded on.

We must create a culture that allows for the safe exploration of sexuality, and which values and respects each person's sexual identity; a culture that finds sexual violence culturally abhorrent. Actively seeking consent in one small step that all individuals can take to help build a sex-positive culture.

— Toni Haraldsen

Photography by Zara Siggilekow



If they made celebrity star maps of people in advertising, our small nation would be disproportionately well-dotted. As in music, art and filmmaking, New Zealanders exhibit a natural instinct for storytelling that leaves the rest of the world awestruck. To us, it's no big deal. We're just doing that thing we do.

Yet it wasn't so long ago that we were still subjects of Her Majesty's stiff upper lip. Those BBC accents we so eagerly adopted meant that the voices that spoke our local stories were not recognisably our own. Over time, we relaxed into our accents and learned not to recoil at the sound of them. And so emerged a nation.

Through the 80s and 90s, advertising campaigns played a significant role in that burgeoning identity. The nostalgic voice of Len Potts reminded us that we were all New Zealanders, just like the folks at BNZ bank. The Mainland Cheese old men championed the slow food movement before slow food was even a thing. And with Barry Crump at the wheel, even Toyota could be a local brand.

Even so, by 1989, New Zealand's advertising industry was a subdued beast. The foreign networks had swept in and taken their pick of the country's best agencies and creative minds. But this was the year that one extraordinary agency fought back against the cultural invasion and won for long enough to leave a permanent mark on our culture.

Growen was the brainchild of ex-Colenso Managing Director, Steve Stefansson, who had grown suspicious of an industry that he, in a 1987 press release, proclaimed to be "going vigorously soft." Research gathered over his 13-year career had convinced Stefansson that New Zealand consumers were motivated primarily by the one thing he believed they lacked in

their everyday lives: candid communication. He saw room for an agency that embraced the country's DIY ethic, producing low-budget work that played to our national values.

In February of 1989, Stefansson recruited a relatively unknown Creative Director, James Eely, to help bring this vision to life. Eely brought with him a modestly-sized Rendell's account, while Stefansson had been making important inroads with their valuable competitor brand, DEKA. In an unprecedented deal made behind closed doors, Growen was awarded both accounts, doubling its annual billing predictions in a single week of business.

Eely's modern style and Stefansson's bold strategic approach immediately set the agency apart. Top listed companies were clambering for meetings. Aware of their distinctive offering, they chose to be selective about the brands they worked with, turning down clients as significant as the newly privatised Air New Zealand based on creative differences.

In the wider industry, some dramatic changes were taking place. The financial market continued to struggle under the weight of the 1987 crash, and advertisers had become increasingly aware of how sensitive their consumers could be. It was no longer considered appropriate to portray the nuclear family as any kind of ideal, or to speak to women strictly as homemakers. So Stefansson took a different approach. He insisted the modern family was one that could accept its flaws and imbalances, and proposed that women be celebrated for their domesticity in exciting new ways.

That proposition – a celebration of domesticity – lay at the essence of Growen's classic campaign for Big Fresh supermarkets. Recognising the inherent sexuality

of grocery shopping, the line 'Where do you get Fresh?' was born. It showcased the seductive nature of ordinary supermarket situations. Suddenly, selecting vegetables was a sensual act. To cook and feed a family was an epicurean pleasure. It was a theme reinforced through the Big Fresh décor, which featured oversized robotic vegetable characters that would thrust suggestively at shoppers below.

By June, the agency had grown to include more than 300 staff, making it the largest and most profitable



advertising business in New Zealand. But cracks were beginning to show. Stefansson and Eely were often seen lunching at separate tables in Auckland's trendy Ponsonby Road district. Boardroom tensions were reportedly dramatic, and a real sense of chaos was beginning to play out in their work.

In a move denounced by his business partner, Stefansson promoted his 24-year-old wife, Hannah Mitchell, into a Creative Director role on the Rendell's account. There, she won over female consumers by asserting their importance and suggesting that there were some things that men would never understand. To Eely's dismay, the campaign was an enormous success, securing Mitchell the top

THE MAN WHO CREATED NEW ZEALAND CULTURE

— Jono Aidney

accolade at the 1989 Axis advertising awards.

Hannah Mitchell's new role took its toll on her relationship with Stefansson, and in August the pair permanently separated in both respects, with

By October 1989, the empire Stefansson and Eely had built together was in incredible shape, but there were telltale signs of an agency that had expanded beyond its means. They not only refused to share an office, they preferred not to share a boardroom. Eely was

often heard making snide remarks about Stefansson's faith in his now ex-wife, and meetings were conducted from separate rooms, connected only by teleconference.

But that wasn't the only tension in Stefansson's world. When his ex-wife had departed for Saatchi & Saatchi, she had taken with her the Rendell's account that launched her career. This was the first in a string of clients to follow Mitchell over to the multinational. The sudden exodus left a hole in Growen's billings and deeply affected agency morale.

The anger that had pent up in Eely brought on a rare form of pelvic cancer, and although his doctor advised him to retire, he was determined to see Growen restored to its previous glory, if only to command a better price from one of the many multinationals hungry to buy.

A week before Eely's death, he committed one final award-winning campaign to New Zealand advertising's hall of fame. Like the cancer that had besieged his body, the campaign he had written for DEKA was ridden with spite. Spite for Hannah Mitchell, his one-time colleague, and spite for the advertising industry – the beast that had delivered him fame and fortune, but had ultimately demanded his life.

The campaign was a direct imitation of Mitchell's innovative Rendell's work. However, rather than portraying things that men didn't understand, Eely pointed to elements he thought beyond the grasp of women. Things like literature, art and music. It was a bold statement that left audiences violently divided, but Eely never had the chance to watch the drama play out. After a massive rectal haemorrhage, he died in a private room at Auckland's Mercy Hospital.

In those last few days, Stefansson spent every waking moment at Eely's side. It

seemed that their intimate relationship – once defined by tension – had subsided. The industry saw the reconciliation of a passionate creative partnership between two great minds that had finally, and fatally, rediscovered what was truly important. But hospital staff saw it differently. Eely had passed with pen and paper in hand, suggesting a grim attempt by Stefansson to catch every last drop of the dying man's creative essence.

With no candidates deemed suitable to carry the creative baton, Stefansson took on the role himself. It was a decision that sent clients scrambling for the door, and which would have required over 300 redundancies to balance the accounts. Buy-out opportunities were a distant memory, and Stefansson found his personal assets under threat. Rather than



Mitchell taking a Deputy Creative Director position at Saatchi & Saatchi and moving out of their inner-city apartment. As Stefansson's world crumbled around him, he produced some of his most interesting and courageous work.

The voraciously awarded Georgie Pie campaign, 'They'll love you more', brought imbalances in New Zealand family law to the forefront of media attention. The campaign featured a father scorned by the system, desperately trying to win back the affection of his young children.

Three television spots were shot by director Harry Sinclair, each 45-second masterpiece concluding over a hot pie at the popular fast food restaurant. The father in the commercials, played by the late Bruno Lawrence, was far from the ideal – he was unkempt, foul-mouthed and neglectful. But New Zealand audiences fell in love with his plight. The campaign quickly extended to magazine, radio and press, and remains amongst the country's most dramatic advertising work. When the campaign ended seven years later, disappointed customers protested in the most powerful way they knew how. They stopped eating at Georgie Pie restaurants. Within two years, operations throughout the country had ceased.



face the humiliation of a cosmic downsize, Stefansson chose to bow gracefully out, closing Growen's doors behind him.

Thus ended a most turbulent year, sprinkled with business wins, award shows, deaths and divorces; an event that changed history forever. At a tangible level, Growen's influence is evident in the New Zealand advertising archives, which remain generously littered with the agency's work. That their vision forever changed the way brands speak to their customers is a fascinating notion. But changing the way a nation thinks of itself goes beyond the natural powers of commercial advertising. That is an achievement which can only be described as cultural engineering*

So You Want To *Enrich* Your Life by Getting *Tattooed*

Advice from Ben Jenkins, Tattoo artist

Deciding what to get is a good place to start. I'm all for spontaneity: that's how I ended up with Prince's logo on my foot in bubblegum pink. But for the most part, it's wise to contemplate your design for a while. My Standard Three teacher, Miss Jackson, taught me that 'My body's nobody's body but mine', and even though she was talking about molestation at the time, the same principle applies for tattoos.

It's not my job to tell you what to get, but let me just say: If you're 18, from a loving family, and are in your first year of a law degree with aspirations to join the Bar, I might politely suggest that you don't get "FIST FUCK" tattooed

across your knuckles. But my Mona Lisa may be someone else's scrawl on the wall in the bathroom of the Wine Cellar, so ultimately the choice remains unreservedly in the hearts and minds of the tattooee. But where to begin?

Getting names tattooed has been a convention for some time. This does not, however, always mean it's the best of ideas. Your dear mother's handle or that of a departed loved one are all well and good – a tasteful way to show one's devotion or commitment to a memory. The nickname of the guy you hooked up with at Flight Lounge three weekends ago when you were pilling your face clean off who you "like, totally fell in love with at first sight, and, like, I'm totally sure he's the one, and it fully wasn't the drugs talking" emblazoned permanently on the side of your neck – "you know, like in that chollo writing, how all the Mexicans in L.A do it. I mean, I've never been there myself, but I've seen it in the movies and shit" – probably isn't the wisest investment in body art. Even if your recently discovered 'soulmate' thinks it's a great idea, maybe you should give it a couple of decades, just to be sure.

This brings me to my next point. Having a support crew on hand is often a great way to help you deal with the situation, but choose carefully. Bringing Nana along to hold your hand is a terrific bonding experience. Bringing along your BFF who has taken it upon themselves to keep your best interests at heart is not always as good as it sounds. If you've been contemplating the piece you are about to get for the past two years, and are dead set on getting it on the inside of your bicep, the last thing you need is an overly opinionated pal saying "I think it would be better on your right breast". When the stencil is on your arm and you're excited about the prospect of finally getting what you want, and your artist is just as happy with it as you are, you don't need some twit throwing their two cents at your nervous and unusually impressionable state of mind. Just because this friend once saw their neighbour's cousin's sister's boyfriend's uncle's former cellmate's pet frog getting a tattoo done by a spaz with an acupuncture needle and some Indian ink out of the back of a rusty orange Holden Kingswood does not make them an authority on the subject. If you need advice on the flow your piece has with your body, maybe you should talk to your artist. They've probably not only seen a few tattoos being done, they most likely make their daily bread day-in day-out living, breathing and sweating tattoos. It's a reasonable assumption that they might have some good ideas.

Before you begin getting your skin perforated, it pays to prepare your body and mind. You may be nervous and undoubtedly one of the first questions you'll ask your tattooist



is "Will it hurt there?" Yes, yes it will hurt. I'm sticking a fucking needle into your skin. You know this already, but it will never be as bad as you will have prepared yourself for. To reduce the stress of the procedure, eat well before going to the studio, and keep your fluids up. I've watched people crumple like limp sacks and felt the tingly warmth of vomit on my skin, all because someone has freaked out or their blood-sugars were too low.

Regardless of what you end up getting done, it will always be a documentation of yourself at that particular point in time. There are a lot of tattoos out there that you see and immediately think "Holy crap that crap is crap." But that crappy crap is *your* crap. As meaningless as a tattoo may appear to others and maybe even to yourself, it always tells a story about who you were when you had it done. Maybe you got a tattoo of a dolphin when you were 15 – this suggests that you liked dolphins, and perhaps all water-bound mammals. It also implies that you were feeling rebellious, or perhaps in a hurry to grow up and show the world that you can do what other consenting adults can do. Therein lies the beauty of this job. People exploring and understanding themselves is at the heart of tattooing. Helping people reflect on regret, demonstrate convictions, come to terms with grief, overcome fears, show pride in their achievements or simply helping them to beautify their body and become part of a culture embedded in our society are just some of the perks of being a tattoo artist. That, and being able to tattoo 'FUCK' on yourself when you're bored at work.



You can find Ben at Streetwise (Level 1, 292 Broadway in Newmarket) or whisper sweet nothings in his ear by calling (09) 520 6754



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Issues



Counting Down Disney's DAMES

For decades, Disney's canonical animated films have delighted millions. As children, and then again as adults, we experience these films several times over, often in one home-video sitting. But children, as you know, are impressionable wee things. If they see a kid smacking another kid on the face before grabbing their lollipop with their greedy sticky hands, they learn that smacking a kid on the face means sucking on candy for the rest of their lives. If they see a lion cub run away from home because they think they're responsible for their father's death, they learn that they, too, should run away from home should they ever kill their father in a freak wildebeest stampede.

So, for the well-being of your children, and your children's children, we examine and rank Disney's most famous female protagonists based on their ability to promote gender equality and feminist ideals.* Hold on to your nostalgia folks, you're in for a bumpy ride.



8 Wendy Darling – *Peter Pan* (1953)

Coming in dead last we have Wendy. I hated Wendy when I was little. I thought it might have been because she had cooties but now I know the truth. Wendy is so docile and submissive to Peter's white male privilege it's sickening. Peter's only recognition of her worth is domestic, after she sews his shadow back onto him when he crash-lands into the loft of the Darlings' bourgeois London townhouse. His view of her changes little as the story progresses.

Constantly the damsel-in-distress, Wendy's only purpose appears to be as the surrogate mother to Peter's Lost Boys, a rag-tag group

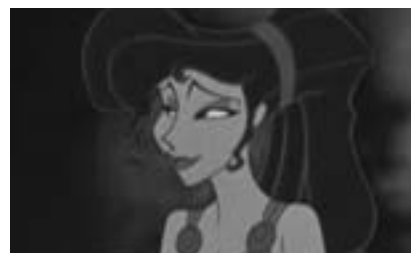
of children forced to wear animal skins for clothes, clearly suffering the consequences of a neglectful single dad. Wendy, you fail at life — and at feminism. The second-wave revolution was just around the corner, and by God I hope you were the first against the wall*



7 Jessica Rabbit – *Who Framed Roger Rabbit* (1988)

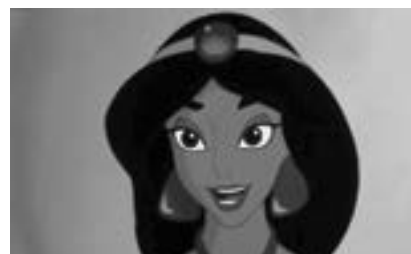
Yes, *Who Framed Roger Rabbit?* is a Disney movie. Look it up. Jessica Rabbit is characterised as a huge-chested, tiny-waisted femme fatale. Only she's married... to Roger Rabbit. This is weird for several reasons. First, I don't consider femmes fatales the epitome of empowerment. The modern femme fatale is a character model popularised by Raymond Chandler novels and films noirs adapted from Raymond Chandler novels. Unlike the femmes fatales of times passed (Lilith from Jewish folklore, for example) these incarnations suggest that women who have full control of externally-enhanced sexuality aren't to be trusted. It doesn't matter how transgressive these troubled broads appear, they're still objects of desire and are still defined entirely by the whims of the male protagonist. Case in point: Jessica Rabbit.

Now that I think about it, she's not even a true femme fatale. She's happily married; the protagonist's desire for her does not lead him into mortal peril; and her unattainable desirability drives no-one insane, nor does it lead to her own tragic death. She just talks huskily and is ogled by all male characters (and audience members). Her most famous line — I'm not bad, I'm just drawn that way — is fitting*



6 Megara – *Hercules* (1997)

Any female lead destined to hook up with a demigod is bound to be relegated to stereotypes and clichés. This is a shame, because they almost scored a home run. Hercules characterises Megara as a witty, curiously detached femme fatale-wannabe with romantic musings and strangely Yiddish mannerisms. That's cool, but no amount of witty banter will distract from her damsel-in-distress-ness. She does make a deal with Hades to save Hercules though — like how she made a deal with Hades to save her ex-boyfriend before the film began — except she dies and has to have her soul rescued from the underworld. If I'd made Hercules I would've had Megara be the demigod with super strength and had her spend the whole 93 minutes engaging in verbal ructions with James Woods' Hades. Then I could call it HERcules. Genius. Ancient mythology be damned*



5 Princess Jasmine – *Aladdin* (1992)

Jazz rocks. Despite being royalty, she is grounded, level-headed, and falls in love with Aladdin for who he is, not what he is (which is, technically, Scott Weinger, who played DJ Tanner's boyfriend in *Full House*). While a damsel-in-distress for a teensy part of the movie, the extenuating circumstances are

both elaborate and awesome. I will excuse mildly stereotypical gender role situations if *giant fucking hourglasses* are involved.

The failing of Aladdin (and others) is what I like to call Idiot Single Dad Syndrome. That is, any narrative where the main conflict arises solely due to the patriarch's stubbornness or pride, a situation that can only logically precipitate because there is no mother figure around to tell said patriarch to shut the fuck up and stop being such a proud self-righteous douchebag. This is the case in Aladdin where the Sultan adheres stringently to the law that Jasmine must marry a prince, only to have a change of heart and abolish this law at the film's dénouement. Well la-dee-fucking-da, you fucking beige ball, why didn't you decide that earlier on? Oh that's right, then there wouldn't be a movie. Fail*



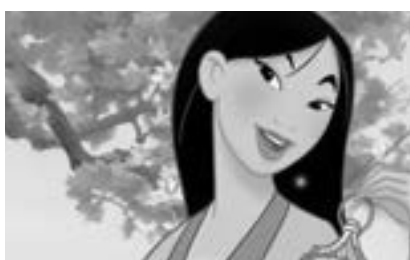
4 Pocahontas – Pocahontas (1994)
Pocahontas is a bastion of independence and Native American spirituality and values in the pale face of white European colonialism. Idiot Single Dad Syndrome plays a subtle role, but on the whole things are grand, if a tad historically inaccurate. Pocahontas is the noblest of savages, following both tangible objects (her heart) and the intangible (the wind), while talking to old willow trees and perching on high places as feathers and dandruff swirl around her, an effect that James Cameron would eventually steal (along with the basic story) for Avatar.

I should write more about her but I feel uncompelled to do so. Maybe it's because Mel Gibson was the voice of John Smith, or because the only comic relief came from a raccoon and a hummingbird, but the movie as a whole just isn't very memorable. Still, Pocahontas is a well-rendered character, and the story ticks all the right boxes required to retroactively assuage white male guilt. Thus, I place it commendably, a feat that retroactively assuages my own white male guilt*



3 Jane – Tarzan (1999)
I love Jane. She's one of Disney's most fleshed out and realised heroines, helped in no small part by Minnie Driver's wonderful voice-acting. Jane earns the bronze for several reasons, chief among them being her relationship with her dad, who is totally gay. Don't believe me? The signs are there: Jane's father is voiced by the late great Nigel Hawthorne, most famous for his role as Sir Humphrey Appleby in the sitcom Yes, Minister and Yes, Prime Minister. In 1995, Hawthorne was outed in the lead-up to the Academy Awards. Though sexuality of an actor does not dictate sexuality of the role, Jane's mother is absent, yet there is no Idiot Single Dad Syndrome here. Jane's father is loving, sensitive, and easy-going. Traits which lead me to believe he isn't heterosexual. Unless of course the story is just, you know, well-written.

Jane is independent and inquisitive, constantly seeking the natural beauty in her surroundings. She also becomes Tarzan's teacher, educating him about all aspects of his origins. Tarzan becomes enamoured with her, fully appreciating her qualities without a hint of the sexual inequality present in his gorilla family. Finally rejecting the patriarchy of Victorian England, Jane gives in to her love for Tarzan, becoming the new member of the Gorillaz. Her father comes too, yet is not subject to the Hollywood Law of Cliché Coupling (where all sympathetic characters pair up and find love or companionship before the end of the story), furthering the gay rumours. Unless he shacks up with Tarzan's gorilla mother, which, let's face it, would be totally hot*



2 Mulan – Mulan (1998)
Mulan is the most overtly feminist tale Disney put to celluloid in the '90s. So why

doesn't it place first? Sure, she rejects the rites of domesticity reserved for females in her society, and poses as a male in order to have her skills and attributes appreciated on an equal level. However, by fable's end, the status quo doesn't appear to have significantly changed. After running rings around 90% of the idiot males in the story, she returns home as a hero, yet the society that forced her to change her appearance in the first place shows little signs of reform. The audience doesn't notice this – they're too busy wondering if she'll get together with the hunky Li Shang. Mulan becomes the exception, not the rule, and this rousing tale leaves a bitter aftertaste*



1 Belle – Beauty & the Beast (1990)
Belle wins. To date, Beauty and the Beast is Disney's greatest achievement, and one they will never better. I'm not going to explain the plot, or how Belle is beautiful both inside and out — you all know it. Any movie with purposefully facetious dialogue like "it's not right for a woman to read. Soon she starts getting ideas, and thinking..." is a winner.

What I do want to talk about is the feminist debates surrounding the film. Critics point out that Beast abuses Belle by roaring at her when she enters the West Wing, as well as throwing objects around in her presence, equating to an abusive relationship that marginalises Belle when she decides to conveniently ignore these incorrigible actions and fall in love with Beast anyway (Beast saving her life is not an adequate reason for forgiving these actions, supposedly). This is a fair point to make, but I must point out a curious nature of the Beast that sometimes goes unnoticed: he's a beast.

As Belle begins to fall for Beast, he becomes more human, standing upright and wearing progressively more and more clothing and no longer losing his temper. While I am hesitant to justify anthropomorphised creatures when they act in an animalistic manner, how else was the Beast supposed to appear beastly? Be voiced by Colin Firth and say "I say, I do object to you being here, you must leave with utmost expediency, please"? Nonsense. It must also be pointed out that after breaking the spell, they don't get married. Suck it, institution*

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Disqualified: Princess Ariel – The Little Mermaid (1989)

Princess Ariel fails to achieve a ranking on account of her being both feminist and anti-feminist in equal measure. Permit me to explain: Ariel sacrifices her voice so she can walk like a human and seduce Prince Eric, betraying two integral aspects of her identity for a man. She later leaves her Merpeople completely by permanently transforming into a human and marrying Eric. Not very feminist.

Ariel is also the only female Disney character (as far as I'm aware) to be portrayed naked, her nudity alluded to by shadows and well-placed long red hair. The villain, Ursula, is portrayed as an old woman with a provocative, sexual nature (assisted by the fact that she's a cecaelia — half-human half-octopus), hinting that if you're old and ugly but sexually aware, you are a disgusting witch. Not very feminist.

It's worth nothing that The Little Mermaid kick-started the Disney 'renaissance' of the '90s, and was, to a new generation of children, a film where the titular character was female — showing young girls that yes, they could be the star of their own story, unlike Aladdin, Hercules, The Lion King and Tarzan. They would only repeat this with Mulan nine years later. For these reasons, I feel like I cannot rank The Little Mermaid, and must leave it as a separate entity unto itself. (Also note the heavy Idiot Single Dad Syndrome in this movie, and don't get me started on the Haitian characterisation of Sebastian the lobster).

This rank is not necessarily to say what you should or shouldn't watch. Rather, it's for the sake of awareness, role-models, posterity and a better tomorrow. It's my hope that, in time, a deep understanding of Disney will bring humanity into a whole new world, with a new fantastic point of view. No one to tell us no, or where to go, or say we're only dreaming.

* Please note that only human characters are ranked. I don't care how feminist Nala from The Lion King or Bianca from The Rescuers or Lady from Lady and the Tramp are; they are fucking animals*

—VALENTINE WATKINS

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sexism is

sexism is funny
sexism is good
sexism is a social disease
why sexism is wrong

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I'm Feeling Lucky

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why are feminists |

why are feminists ugly
why are feminists so ugly
why are feminists pro choice

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I'm Feeling Lucky

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New Zealand

why can't men |

why can't men commit
why can't men ejaculate
why can't men hit women
why can't men multitask
why can't men say i love you
why can't men express their feelings
why can't men be faithful
why can't men have babies
why can't men and women be friends
why can't men wear skirts

Google Search

I'm Feeling Lucky

My Body? *My Self?*

A review I saw of Ang Lee's *Taking Woodstock* made the point that when you compared the original footage of Woodstock to that used in the film, one of the biggest differences was the appearance of the men. No soft, slim, slightly flabby bodies of men in their early 20s dancing in the mud and rain, as in the original footage; in the movie you saw rock hard gym-toned perfection. And that is increasingly the way men, and gay men especially, are conditioned to see themselves. This is how we are supposed to look, apparently, and some of the guys I see out and about make Michelangelo's David look out of shape.

But we do live in our bodies. Even though we

industry that feeds us as undesirable, in contrast to the 70s and 80s when there was an emphasis on gay men appearing masculine and rugged.

But I don't fit the current mould – I even have a hairy back, and I have no desire to pretend to be anything else. Why should I? More and more, gay men are being marketed to in very much the same way that straight women are. All the marketing techniques so relentlessly employed by the industry to capitalise on women's 'anxieties' – how they look, their weight, the clothes they wear – are now used on us, and many homos take it for granted that this is how things should be and how they should look. Body fascism and the beauty myth aren't just for women any more.

**“If at nearly 50 with a
body like mine I can still pull,
is it really worth
all the effort and angst?”**

take them for granted when everything is fine, we are very much our bodies. Face it: no body = no you. This is really brought home when something goes wrong with them, and this has certainly been the case for me, dealing with the effects of long-term HIV infection and all that goes with it.

Yes, by body is flawed, but I still have fun. Some might say too much. I like fun, and I like the ways my body can give me, and others, fun. Yes, even HIV+ gay men in their 40s still fuck. I know only too well that my body isn't perfect, especially in the way that gay men today are taught to think of a perfect look, but I still like myself and what my body can do. Mostly.

*

I'm constantly bombarded with images of 'perfect' male bodies. Beautifully sculpted, airbrushed men with physiques requiring years of work in a gym selling me everything from insurance to sex-toys. There's been an increasing trend over the last 20 years to show these men as hairless, shaved, lasered or waxed. Beards, moustaches and chest hair are seen by the

Yet all of our bodies are flawed in some way. I know mine has lots, but I've known and had affairs with spectacularly handsome men who still aren't satisfied with how they look: they need to do more work on their pecs, their abs, get rid of that little bit of fat, have that hair on their shoulders lasered off, get their teeth whitened. It never ends.

How did we end up in this position? The early Gay Liberation movement was politically radical and wanted to change the world and how gay men saw themselves. Instead of being sissies who hid in the shadows, they called on us to come out and be proud of who we are. We've come a long way since then, and not in the direction that might have been expected.

You might ask "What's wrong with working to make your body look and function as well as possible?" To which the answer is "Nothing, if it's really what you want to do." But do you? Or have you been conditioned to think it's what you want? And do you really have to have a perfect six-pack to be functioning and looking your best?"

The thing is, this pressure for perfection



*Like a pearl necklace from
Dan Carter, negative body issues will leave
you cold, flaky and irritated.*

doesn't just affect gay men. Straight men are getting more and more caught up in this as well. Feminism showed women that they didn't need to shave their legs or armpits to be who they are, but today most of the Feminists I know do prefer that look. I teased a dyke friend about her shaved legs a few weeks ago and she said "well, I just think it looks better." She's a politically aware woman, and knows that the idea of how we look isn't just something that happens or is 'natural' – it's socially constructed.

And now men are shaving their bodies too. Instead of being liberated from body fascism, as feminism wanted women to be, men have now succumbed to it. My point is this: These changes in how we view ourselves creep up on us, but don't just come out of nowhere. Someone somewhere is making a buck out of this, and by increasing the number of men who aim for a totally unnatural style of physical perfection, they get to increase their market share. Unrealistic expectations of what we should look like and be like don't make us happier, they raise our anxieties and leave us feeling like we'll never be good enough, while making money for those who sell us the image and products.

And hey, if at nearly 50 with a body like mine I can still pull, is it really worth all the effort and angst?

— Michael Stevens

When Feminism Walks Down the Aisle

Marriage is one of those words in the English language loaded with contradictory meanings and connotations, and over time it's become one of those things that people just *do*. Yet in New Zealand, marriage rates have been trending downwards for some time, and the age at which people are getting married is climbing. People are simply placing less stock in the institution of marriage. Or are they?

Despite the apparent collapse of society's support for marriage, my Facebook news feed takes great pleasure in informing me that many of the people I went to high school with are getting engaged or married. Battling this flood of status updates ("ZOMG Barry just proposed!!!!") are other friends choosing not to wed, some even advocating getting rid of marriage altogether by repealing the Marriage Act 1955.

Criticisms of marriage are not new. Isadora Duncan, a well-known 19th century ballet dancer famously declared that "any intelligent woman who reads the marriage contract, and then goes into it, deserves all the consequences." The idea that marriage is a negative, even oppressive institution for women is a hotly debated topic within feminist thought. Some feminists argue that while the general concept of marriage is not negative, the practices that have evolved and become associated with marriage *are*: The male asking the bride's father for his daughter's hand in marriage, the father giving the bride away, and the virginal white wedding dress stem from patriarchal concepts that devalue women by presenting them as 'property' of her father, with her only value being virginity. Other critics point out the heterosexist nature of marriage and the continued exclusion of the queer community.

Feminist thought frequently challenges the assumption that the 'ultimate life goal' for women is to get married and have children. Despite these challenges, old traditions still remain. The values of modern women are as diverse as the many viewpoints in the marriage debate, from advocates of both marriage and civil unions to those who oppose 'marriage', however it manifests itself. Since the legislation in New Zealand means that de facto couples get the same legal rights as married or civil unioned couples, some question the need for marriage at

all. While, some would argue that the state needs to recognise partnerships for various legal and property reasons, it is questionable why the state needs to recognise this in the form of marriage.

Emily, a 23-year-old law graduate, sees marriage as an inherently religious institution. "It's fine if people want it, but I'm not sure if it's for me... if my partner wanted to get married, and it was important to him, then I probably would." But it's not only the religious aspect

the only significance of marriage remains a piece of paper. Arna, a school teacher in her late 20s, opted for a civil union a few years ago. "I wouldn't have married. I view it as a religious thing, and we're both atheists. Also, civil unions are open to everyone, and I was active in the campaign while the [Civil Union legislation] was going through." Arna and Tori both cited the public commitment aspect of ceremonies as important, and Arna emphasised that "it's really an affirmation of your desire to be together — it's a verbal commitment and a celebration of your relationship. And a new dress."

The question remains, can marriage be considered a feminist act? All of these women consider themselves feminists in some form while holding diverging views on the subject. Tori, the least willing to identify as a feminist, explained why marriage could be seen as more feminist than in previous generations: "These days, women don't need marriage to get ahead or for security, it's much easier to have a career and a family, so in a way, women are making active choices to get married, rather than falling into it because it's the thing to do. In that way, it can be quite empowering."

The founder of the blog Feministing.org, Jessica Valenti, recently got engaged, causing a significant amount of debate in the feminist community. Valenti wrote back, stating that her feminism would be incorporated her into her wedding, and her marriage. "It felt good, feminist even, to write about an institution so wrought with sexism, and discuss ways to make it our own."

While marriage will probably stand the test of time, the form this institution takes will continue to evolve from its current form. As social creatures, human beings have always created public ways to recognise private arrangements. Marriage has not been static and unchanging. The question for young women and young feminists today is whether the institution will evolve into a more inclusive and less sexist practice, and how much involvement the state should have in these changes. With marriage as increasingly diverse as feminism itself, the answers will be interesting.

— Sophia Blair



Can marriage
be considered a
feminist act?

of marriage that concerns Emily, but the commercialisation of marriage and weddings commonly referred to as the 'the wedding industry complex': "It sometimes feels like marriage legitimises feminist women to spend a whole heap of money on one day - something that we'd normally look down on."

Tori, a medical science student, defines marriage as "commitment, security, family and love." Tori and her partner have been together for six years, and will be wed as they approach the seven-and-a-half-year mark. Like most married women, Tori will be taking the last name of her partner. "I've never been that keen on my own last name," she explains. "If you're going to marry someone, last names are important. It's about family." Emily was less enthused about taking her partner's name. "I don't see why I should change my name, it's mine, part of my identity... it also conjures up those ideas about ownership and property."

Changes to New Zealand law now recognise de facto couples as possessing the same legal status as civil unions or marriages. For many,



When the women's liberation

movement started, it's safe to assume that turning vaginas into twenty-four hour glittering discotheques was not in their vision. Fortunately, we've moved on from the structured era of the modernist feminist, so if you want your vagina to be a thumping mix of disco lights and bad taste, may I present you the wonderful world of vajazzling.

Vajazzling is a trend sweeping L.A. that involves sticking rhinestones on your vagina. It appears to have started with Jennifer Love Hewitt. Typical. When promoting her new book *The Day I Shot Cupid* on American late-night show *Lopez Tonight*, she announced that there was a chapter in it about "vajazzling" her "vajajay". Stating

that it looked "cute", she informed George Lopez that she was, at that moment, covered in "hot pink" crystals and encouraged all women to take part in the \$2 shop craze. Viral explosiveness ensued and the next day – proving that no one had anything better to do than search 'vajazzling' in the not-so-vain hope of finding Jennifer's exposed and encrusted muff – it became one of the most searched terms on Google. Cool.

With a thirst for information and an image search quickly underway, the questions weighing heavy on my mind were soon answered in the glittering form of an x-rated Christmas tree, a Google-grid of tiny decorated vaginas all looking for a home. Barely three clicks away and I found *Lizzy the Lezzy*: a cartoon featuring a lesbian agony aunt with a zest for decoration, *mons pubis* style. It was all pretty disturbing and as I listened to her haunting song of decoration, I felt myself slip further down the rabbit hole. My favourite 'v-jaz' video asked the question "and what could be more awesome than a decorative surprise?" I didn't have an answer, only more questions. I then became distracted by the grey goo dribbling down my arm. Just my brain, no need to worry.

As the fog lifted, I realised this was just an extension of Japan's *kawaii* culture of turning everything into a 'cute' commodity. And what could make an already glamorous assortment of pink folds cuter? Rhinestones, of course! The world makes sense again. Wait, what's this jizz-azzling? That's another story, another gender.

— Charlotte Stevens

RECIPE

Nanna's Nanas: Banana & Creamy Caramel Cupcakes



I love presenting my flatmates with a bunch of these babies as the weather starts to cool. Plus, they can be made impulsively when you discover those lost bananas at the bottom of the fruit bowl. Blackened and abandoned, they make a wonderful treat. Makes 12 cupcakes.

YOU WILL NEED:

80g of butter (room temperature)

2/3 cup of sugar

1 egg

2 Tbsp of milk

½ tsp of bicarb soda

2 bananas

1/2 tsp of baking powder

1 1/4 cups of flour

FOR THE ICING:

50 g of butter

125 g of cream cheese

½ cup of brown sugar

½ cup of icing sugar

1 tsp vanilla essence

*

1 Place the butter and cream cheese (for the icing) in a bowl so they can come up to room temperature. Line your muffin tin and turn your oven up to 180°C.

2 Cream the butter and sugar in a bowl until well mixed. It should go a lovely yellow colour and look smooth and creamy. Add the egg and beat well.

3 Measure the flour and baking powder into a separate bowl.

4 In another bowl, break up the peeled bananas and mash with a fork. Add the milk and soda and continue mashing until it looks sloppy and not at all like something that should go in a cake.

5 Add half the flour mixture to the butter mixture and mix in slowly, then half the banana mixture. Repeat this last step and give it a good beating, scraping any mixture that has crept up the sides.

6 Scoop the mixture into your lined muffin tin – about 2/3 full for each paper – and bake for 15-20 minutes. You'll be able to tell they're ready when you press lightly on them and they bounce back, or when a skewer inserted comes out clean.

7 Turn them out onto a wire rack and let them cool while you make the icing:

8 Your butter and cream cheese should be up to temperature by now. If they're not, the heat from your hands will do wonders while you mix them. With a knife, cut through the butter and cream cheese until they're in smaller and smaller cubes. If you prefer, mix together with an electric whisk. As they come together, move into a whipping motion and add the brown sugar, icing sugar and vanilla essence. You might like to add more or less of any of the ingredients to suit your tastes.

9 Make sure you ice these once they've cooled, otherwise you'll be serving melting hob knobs. Pile the icing high so people can scoop it up with their fingers and praise you highly with mouths full of cake.

— Emily Clark





SO YOU NEED AN ABORTION

In Aotearoa New Zealand, as in many other countries worldwide, abortion continues to be an area of hotly contested and emotionally charged debate. Although our abortion laws are considered restrictive compared to those of other OECD countries, most women are able to obtain an abortion should they need one.

SERVICES THE UNIVERSITY OFFERS

If you've had unprotected sex, the morning-after pill is available from the Student Health Centre for free (with a nurse or doctor consultation) or at the campus pharmacy for \$3 with a prescription. Without a prescription, it costs around \$35-\$40. If you think you might be pregnant, a visit to the Student Health Centre

may be the cheapest way of finding out. It's free if you're enrolled at the practice; otherwise, it's the cost of a casual visit to the doctor (\$35-\$60, depending on whether you have a Community Services Card or are an international student). If you *are* pregnant, all blood tests and doctor consultations are free under maternity coverage.

You can also ask for advice on all aspects of sexual health and fertility. The Head of Counselling, Lesley Mackay, is a former Family Planning counsellor, and many of the nurses there have had years of experience caring for women faced with an unplanned or unwanted pregnancy.

If you are considering an abortion, you can arrange to have a consultation with a doctor at the Student Health Centre. This will usually result in a referral to the Epsom Day Unit, a publicly funded medical centre that provides safe, legal, women-centred abortion services to anyone residing in the wider Auckland area (Mercer to Warkworth). The procedures they offer are free to those who are eligible (to check your eligibility, see www.moh.govt.nz/eligibility).

The Epsom Day Unit operates under a two-appointment system. The first appointment involves seeing a doctor for assessments, contraceptive planning, and education. Counsellors are also available on-site if needed. Waiting time for this appointment may be up to three weeks, depending on the gestation of the pregnancy and how busy the clinic is.

The second appointment involves a consultation with another doctor for the legally required second referral. This usually happens between one and seven days after the first appointment, although urgent appointments are available for those in the late part of their trimester (13 weeks). Post-procedure counselling is also available on-site.

ABORTION LAW AND YOU

In New Zealand, abortions are regulated by the Contraception, Sterilisation and Abortion Act 1977. The Act stipulates a number of conditions which govern whether a woman can be legally granted an abortion. These include whether:

- ⚠ The pregnancy would seriously harm the life, or the physical or mental health of, the woman or baby,
- ⚠ The pregnancy is the result of incest, or
- ⚠ The woman is severely mentally handicapped.

While other grounds for consideration include the person's age and whether the pregnancy is a result of rape, these aren't reasons unto themselves for granting a legal abortion.

THE ABORTION (F) LAW?

Many health professionals believe that abortion isn't a legal issue at all, but a

health issue. There's no justification for the criminalisation of abortion beyond a moral belief that it violates the sanctity of life.

Regardless of moral convictions, a number of issues highlight the need to review our current abortion legislation:

1. Despite the implications it had for women's healthcare, only 4 out of the 87 MPs – less than 5% – who voted on the Contraception, Sterilisation, and Abortion Act in 1977 were women.
2. The current legislation is based on a report put forth by the Royal Commission of Contraception, Sterilisation and Abortion. At the time of the Act's passage, academics insisted the report was biased and poorly argued. Dr Tony Johnston, speaking at a Family Planning conference in 1977, remarked that if the report had been submitted to him by an Honours or Masters student, he would have returned it to the author. If this is the case, how did this document form the basis for legislation in the first place, let alone continue to guide its interpretation today?
3. New Zealand, as a country, has departed from the 'moral standards' which guide this legislation – standards that were influenced by the Church, which were not objectively valid in 1977, and which are even less valid now.

Following the gradual decline in the strength of these moral arguments, there have been numerous attempts to establish other reasons to oppose abortion, most of which are based on the health and well-being of women. These include claims that abortion increases the risk of depression and suicide and, more recently, that they cause breast cancer: a claim for which there is absolutely no empirical support.

Not only are these claims scientifically unfounded, but the insinuation that women are at serious risk of mental instability is somewhat demeaning. Most women remain psychologically healthy after having an abortion, and the minority who are genuinely at risk of developing depression are those who have acted contrary to their own deeply held beliefs, or who have been pressured into taking a course of action they didn't want to take.

Although the choice to have an abortion does come down to a yes/no decision, it's also important to move beyond this black-and-white divide. Abortion can be a tragic experience, a significant source of loss and grief, but pregnancy itself is dangerous and potentially traumatic as well. In New Zealand, around half the women who have abortions were using contraception at the time they fell pregnant and, as Lesley MacKay points out, "most women don't want to have an abortion. They just want to not be pregnant, and those are two different things."

— Anna Fay

JAMES DOBSON JIMMY D

At first glance, the label Jimmy D seems characterised by a dark, moody aesthetic. Designer/founder James Dobson is the first to admit he's drawn to '90s grunge: deconstructing the era and the attitude attached to it has been integral to his body of work. Under closer inspection, though, Jimmy D is defined more by contrast. Pitch-black T-shirts are offset by startling white prints, and floor-length gowns are made entirely of cotton, showcasing the versatility and sense of humour for which the Auckland-based designer has become renowned. "I'm definitely drawn to that angsty aesthetic, but I get over it as well." He explains. "I don't want to be too serious or too intellectual, so I like to put a bit of light relief in the collections."

This contrast of dark and light, together with Dobson's strong narrative focus, has given the label its broad appeal. "When I'm designing I don't have a specific person in mind. It's more about the clothes and the feel of the collection. I know it will attract the right person in the end."

Discovering magazines such as *Pavement* and *The Face* while at high school in Upper Hutt marked the point at which Dobson 'noticed' fashion. Layouts shot in someone's garage presented fashion as accessible and stripped of any pretension. "It wasn't in a glossy white studio. It wasn't Louis Vuitton or anything like that. It was New Zealand labels." After completing a Bachelor of Design at Massey University majoring in photography, Dobson spent a year abroad and then moved to Auckland in 2003. The following year, Jimmy D was born. What was striking even in his early collections was a strong creative vision, and a sense of style marked by layered silhouettes and androgynous shapes.

He now co-owns the Children of Vision boutique in St Kevin's Arcade, where Jimmy D is sold alongside labels such as Bernhard Willhelm of Paris and Melbourne's Material by Product. He enjoys the effect the clothes have on each other. "I like people interpreting my pieces in their own way and mixing them with other labels."

Despite this collective approach, both Dobson and his work retain a strong sense of quiet individuality, a quality he recognises and nurtures. "I'm not at all interested in trends, or what was on the catwalk this season. For me, it's about people seeing something new in what I'm doing, feeling inspired by it and wanting to dress in a way that reflects who they are." He's happy when people make his designs their own. "I don't want to create clones. I don't like the idea I'm telling people how to dress."

*Dress by Jimmy D
Macramé Knit bracelet by
Sophie Laurs
Rings: Model's own*

*Photography:
Hans Edward
Stylist: Anja Bucher
Hair: Bex at Toni and Guy
Make up: Aimee at MAC
Model: Dominique
at August*





EMILY MILLER-SHARMA *MADAME HAWKE*

Sitting with Emily Miller-Sharma in the backyard of her Kingsland flat feels a bit like being at the theatre. The twenty-six-year-old, who has been designing for the label Madame Hawke for just over two years, punctuates her sentences with gestures and dramatic expressions, so it's hardly surprising that her philosophy behind clothing is that it's a type of roleplay: "As soon as you put something on," she declares, "it alters the way you behave."

Madame Hawke is sold in Ruby boutiques throughout New Zealand alongside clothing under the Ruby label. Miller-Sharma likes to think that the people she designs for have the same fun approach to dressing, and envisages someone "wearing a reasonably expensive dress who's gone round the back of a party, jumped the fence, and are sitting on the grass having a smoke." At the same time, she's acutely aware of the effect that clothing has on a person's identity. "It's your second skin and the first space you inhabit – an extension of yourself. It has huge power over the way you experience your day, functionally *and* emotionally."

Miller-Sharma began sewing in high school after tiring of unsuccessful shopping trips. She studied Fashion and Textiles at Massey University in Wellington and found inspiration living with other designers, musicians and "general creative riff-raff."

Her path has been linear, without any "weird type of indecision" along the way. After working as a pattern maker in Auckland, she spent time overseas, among other things working as a tour driver for New Zealand band So So Modern, making their costumes as they travelled. In 2007, she returned to Auckland and began designing for Madame Hawke after her parents' company bought the Ruby franchise. What was initially considered an intermediate position grew into a full-time role and Miller-Sharma worked tirelessly to build up the label while remaining true to the brand's original style.

She tries to avoid rules in fashion, and designs using bright colours and bold prints, producing ranges that include party dresses, structured pieces and casual wear. When women dress, she emphasises, they shouldn't be limited by social constructs of what is and isn't acceptable. "We should be able to have a level of overt sexuality without being ridiculed or denigrated for it. It's a part of who we are, so let's embrace it."

— Sylvia Varnham O'Regan

*Dress and Jacket by Madame Hawke
Shoes by Opening Ceremony*

TOP FIVE

—Ladies—

of the

Old Testament



Most women in the Bible are either whores or housewives, kind of like in *The Sopranos*.

Fewer than 200 of them are named in the Old Testament and, regardless of where they sit on the prostitute-housewife continuum, most have questionable morals. But the Good Book is still home to some rockin' bitches:

5 & 4. THE DEBORAH & Jael TAG TEAM (*Judges*)

— This dynamic duo take down Sisera, the (until then) undefeated champion of the Canaanite army. According to the Midrash, Sisera's voice could kill a wild beast in its tracks and his beard could catch enough fish to feed his entire army when he bathed in the Kishon.

Feeling the good vibes from God, Deborah convinces the general Barak to raise an army against Sisera. With God on their side, Barak's ten thousand men rout Sisera's army while he

flees on foot. He makes the mistake of turning up on the doorstep of the certified killergirl Jael. She plies him with milk before driving a tent peg into his temples, fastening him to the ground while he sleeps.

3. ESTHER (*Esther*)

— The Jewish Queen of Persian King Ahasuerus, Esther has a whole holy book named after her. She becomes Queen through a biblical version of *The Bachelor*, except the bachelor is a sleazy old widower who killed his first wife for disrespecting him.

At the suggestion of his Prime Minister, Haman, the King orders the murder of every Jew in the Kingdom (Haman's reason? He was slighted by a Jew). After a bit of fasting, Esther uses her feminine wiles to convince the King not only to renounce the order, but to kill Haman and allow the Jews to arm themselves. Buoyed by her success, she then convinces him to let the Jews kill their enemies' wives and children and plunder their estates for two days.

2. THE DAUGHTERS OF ZELOPHEHAD (*Numbers*)

— Jane Kelsey has these women to thank for a job. After their father Zelophehad died, these five sisters were in a tricky spot: religious law stated that only male heirs could inherit their father's property, but they had no brothers.

Striking a major blow for women's rights, they file the world's first lawsuit to claim the property. The lawsuit makes it all the way up to God who orders Moses to hand over the land and let the women get on with it.

1. EVE (*Genesis*)

— Deborah and Jael took on a general, Esther challenged a King, the Daughters of Zelophehad picked a fight with the laws of Israel but Eve topped them all by going toe-to-toe with God. She defied his instruction - originally issued on pain of death - not to eat from the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil. The temptation of the fruit - contrary to popular belief - was not that it was forbidden but that it would "make one wise": granting humans self-awareness and the ability to distinguish and choose between good and evil.

Eve ate the fruit and God went nuts. Pain in childbirth and barren soil were just a couple of the going away gifts he gave Adam and Eve when he expelled them from the Garden of Eden but it's a deal we shouldn't look back on. The ability to choose between good and evil, to sin and make mistakes, adds a richness that defines the human experience. Without her, we'd be stuck in a staid, sinless existence, lolling about in God's back garden.



POPPING

YOUR

Cherry Bier



As an avid beer enthusiast, I generally try to encourage others to share my passion. Sadly, all too often I come across people who aren't keen on giving beer a go, usually because they find it too bitter. I can understand why the bitterness of beer might put people off. Personally, I love the taste of bitterness. I once exclaimed (somewhat truthfully) to my flatmate that "I like my women like I like my beer: bitter." His (somewhat truthful) reply was "well, I like my women like I like my food: bland." But I digress.

When it comes to beer, there's actually a wide range of flavours available, including beer for those whose tastes lie within the realms of sugar and spice and all things nice. A fantastic example of a sweeter style of beer is the Lambic fruit beer of Belgium. Lambic beer is interesting in many ways, including its use of wilder yeast rather than specific cultivars, and the way it blends together young and aged beer to get the right flavour. But for now, my focus is on the addition of fruit to the brew.

I grabbed a bottle of Kriek Boon from the

Mt Eden Foodtown. It had a beautifully fruity aroma, as one might expect, and the cherries really added a lot to the flavour. It was sweeter than your average beer, but retained a complexity of flavour that was immensely enjoyable. The sweetness was balanced by a slight acidity, preventing the beer from being overpowered by one sensation.

This might be a good place to start if you aren't normally a beer drinker. From there you could try new beers and discover tastes that you enjoy. I know that my interest in beer began with Belgian brews and my preferences developed from there - maybe one day you'll even love beer as much as me. Oh, and for the guys out there who would shun a cherry beer because it's too girly: Get over yourself! Stop basing your preferences on image and base it on what tastes good. Lambic beers are fantastic, and you should give them a decent try. If you can't find Kriek Boon, Belle-vue and Timmermans both do good renditions of the style, and can be found at Belgian beer cafes and good supermarkets.

— Stephen "it really is my name" Bier



Tonight's Gonna be a GOODNIGHT

(Yeah Tonight's Gonna be a **Good Good** night)

When I was 15, my boyfriend tried to introduce a frozen Mars Bar into our playground antics. "C'mon," he whispered, drooling awkwardly on my neck. "It'll be fun." The thought of chocolate dripping stickily down my thighs left me squirming uncomfortably on his parent's leather couch, and I stammered something about being late for dinner before grabbing my Theta Mathematics textbook and fleeing out the door.

Seven years later and I still shudder involuntarily at the thought of having candy rammed into me, no matter how sweet. At first I thought it was simply refined sugar that made me uneasy, but I realised it was more than this when my boyfriend suggested buying me a vibrator. "No!" I yelled. "I don't need one. I can manage just fine on my own." He stared at me as if I'd just suggested removing the feta off our pizza because 'one type of cheese is enough'. "I know you don't need one," he shrugged. "I just thought it'd be fun." That word again. Fun. Sex: fun? It didn't seem so unreasonable. Sex is good. Fun is good. Surely the two weren't mutually exclusive?

But rational thought has no place in the bedroom, and I still couldn't help but feel that fucking was serious business. No. Let me rephrase. *Making love*. We're talking about the most sacred, most exquisite emotion in existence – the holy grail of human sensation – and let me tell you something buddy: butt plugs ain't part of the recipe.

Recipes do, of course, get revamped all the time: we make turkeys out of tofu and salami out of chickpeas, and though sex toys aren't exactly a new innovation, it *did* seem foolish to keep the silicone away. When I told my best friend, she flashed me a look of concern. Casting furtive glances across the party at my boyfriend, she whispered conspiratorially: "Can he... can he not make you come?" It wasn't an uncommon reaction, as I soon realised. Ema Lyon, director of d.vice, explains that it stems from three main misconceptions people hold surrounding the use of sex toys:



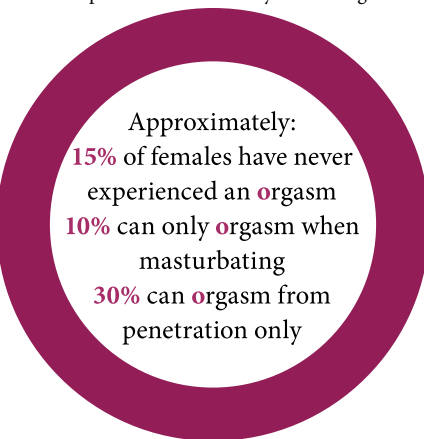
Myth 1: Sex toys are just for masturbation

Sure, a lot of sex toys *can* be used for masturbation, but they don't have to be exiled to the confines of your midnight whimsies. In fact, the most popular toy at d.vice is the We Vibe, a rechargeable tong-shaped vibrating contraption that the woman wears during sex. "This part," she explains, pointing to one half, "presses against your g-spot as well as vibrating against his shaft, and the other part stimulates your clitoris." Its popularity stems from the fact that it isn't penetrative in the same way that vibrators are, and is specifically a toy for couples to use.



Myth 2: If you need sex toys, your sex life must be suffering

More often than not it's the opposite, since it takes a certain level of comfort, trust and intimacy in a relationship to try new things. Ema also points out that sex toys can be a good



mediator for communication. It's easier, for example, to tell your boyfriend that he's putting too much pressure on your clitoris with the vibrating jelly bunny head than to tell him he's licking you way too hard and his stubble is rubbing you raw.

Myth 3: Your partner will feel inadequate if you start using a sex toy

For a long time, I certainly thought this might be the case. I'd feel a little intimidated if I knew my boyfriend was going home every night to his fleshlight and his pictures of Zoëy Deschanel. But I quickly realised that toys aren't a replacement: they're simply an accessory. A vibrator isn't going to cuddle you after you orgasm, nor is it going to take you out for eggs benedict the next morning or reluctantly watch *Gossip Girl* with you.

What a vibrator *does* do is help you explore your own body. While showing me the range they had on offer, Ema commented that a lot of women come into the store with the complaint that they can't orgasm during sex. What many of them fail to realise is that only a small minority of women can actually orgasm from penetrative sex alone and in most cases, clitoral stimulation is essential. Using toys like vibrators can help you discover what you respond to best, and couple-based toys let you maximise your sexual experiences. In the end, you both win.

A lot of guys I've spoken to agree, and don't feel threatened by the idea of their girlfriend using a vibrator. "They're inanimate objects," one pointed out. "And sex is a lot more than an orgasm." Another friend commented that while he is "very happy with [his] penis," he wasn't entirely comfortable with the thought of his girlfriend having to rely on a vibrator that offered more than he could. "It's nice to know that you're capable of pleasuring your partner, and if she has to upsize with a vibrator then maybe that would make me feel like I wasn't."

One of the newer vibrators on the market, the Bimini Flash, reinforces the idea that size isn't everything. A smaller than average vibrator, it marks a shift in the way pleasure is marketed. You don't *need* a huge penis, whether real or artificial, to have a good time, and the Bimini Flash is both aware of – and encourages people to understand – this.

Ultimately, sex toys are a great addition to your sexual experience, in the same way that herbs and spices are an excellent accompaniment to any meal. You don't *need* them, but that's the point: they're fun, and they make things more delicious. And while this isn't a sweet coming-of-age where the naive protagonist realises the error of her ways and harnesses the power of the cock ring with Black Eyed Peas' I Gotta Feeling playing over the end credits, it comes pretty damn close.

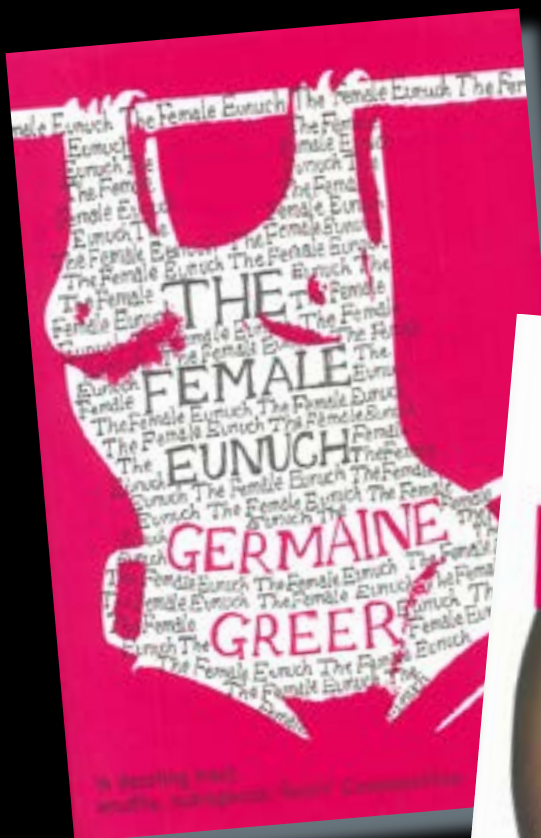


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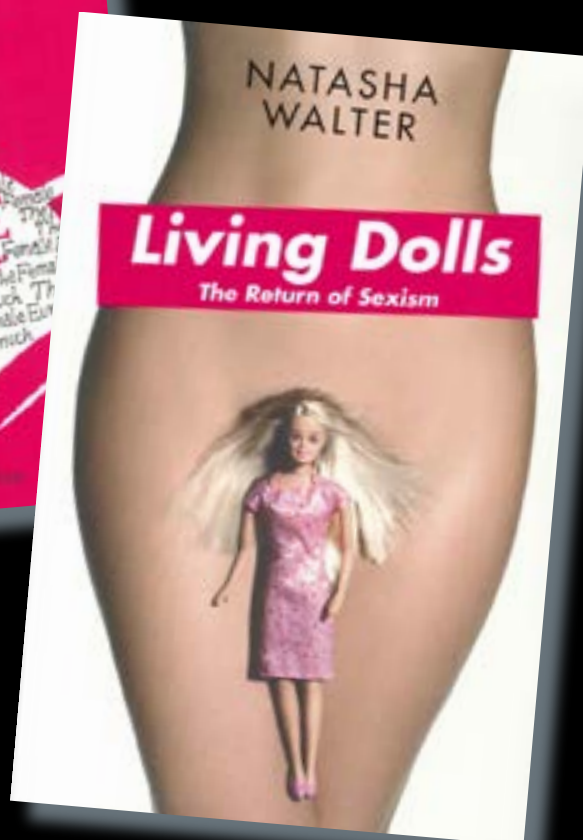
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