

CRITIC

MENSTRUATION ISSUE



LETTER OF THE WEEK WINS A \$30 VOUCHER FROM UNIVERSITY BOOKSHOP

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CORRECTION: OUSA Advisory Board member Ben Nettleton is a current lawyer, not a former barrister as we stated in "Ooh Look How Fancy OUSA Are, Now They Have An Advisory Board", published 17 May 2021.

LETTER OF THE WEEK:

Dear Critic,

PMS is a bitch, but she can be way more of a bitch to some than others. Some people never meet her. Some people don't mind her. But for myself and a smaller proportion of vagi-na-owners, she mutates, sharpens her cramp-swords, ups the nausea dosage, and spikes your brain chemistry with a little more depression and anxiety than usual.

I used to think my period was normal, but it got worse with each cycle, and at one point I was worried I might have a personality disorder. It was that bad. But I could track it so closely to my cycle that I just thought 'this must be normal, I probably just ate really shit and forgot to exercise'. Then, in your last Menstruation Issue, I completely resonated with an article on Premenstrual Dysphoric Disorder (PMDD), which I had never heard of. I booked an appointment at student health right away.

After rambling off the symptoms, my doctor said 'yes, you absolutely have this.' While treatment for PMDD at present is still not well agreed upon, at least knowing that what I experienced was abnormal is better than not knowing. The elevated symptoms suck, but it sucked even more thinking that this was normal. I'm sure I wasn't the only one.

Thanks, Critic, for helping me realize what was going on in my own body.

Kaeli

Kia ora Critic,

I was reading your article entitled "First Ever Arts Ball A Success" and noticed that someone said an Otago classics association doesn't exist. I would like to inform said student that the University of Otago Classical Society does exist (we're at the top of Google if you search "otago classical association") and that our memberships are open for semester two. Look us up on Facebook if you want to join.

Yours sincerely,
The Ghost of the Classics Society

Did you know that cheese is made from pressed milk? Common knowledge right? I think fewer of your readers will know how this cheese is pressed. Most people think the cows are milked, and then the milk is pressed in various ways to become feta, parmesan etc. Right? Wrong! In reality, different sorts of cows are pressed. For instance, feta cows are usually beaten on their hooves until they produce feta, while parmesan cows are usually made to watch Michael Moore documentaries until they are (de)pressed enough to be milked for parmesan cheese.

Yours sincerely,
Ashamed of not being vegan

Hey Critic

I can't believe I've been a student here for three years and I've slept on Poppas Pizza the whole time. What the fuck. They have a pizza called Funghi. Its fucking CRISP. Food this good should be illegal. Please send help. Or cats.

Love,
The most pretentious vegetarian on campus

Hey Critic!

I realized that after years of shaving that I could just use KY Jelly as shaving gel. No cuts, no bumps, no ingrown hairs. It's not just for sex stuff!!!! I don't know why they don't put this on the label. I wish I had known this earlier, it would have saved me a whole lot of stress over the years. Sharing this one for all the breathas who would be cute but they need a good shave xoxo

#betterliving #life hacks

From The Leith Nymph

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**TUESDAY
25 MAY**

**Cinella 250: Ata Mārie Ōtepoti feat.
Hyun-ah Cho, Keran Li, and Bethany
Wagh**
DUNEDIN PUBLIC ART GALLERY
12:30PM – 1:30PM / FREE ENTRY

**THURSDAY
27 MAY**

**Coastal & Distorted Present: Halogenix
(UK) w/ Worthy, Switch b2b DC,
Alamein b2b Bunson, and Thief b2b
PRS**
CATACOMBS
10PM
Tickets from ticketfair.com

**Solidarity Myanmar feat. Tiny Ruins, Marlin's Dreaming, NZ Poet Laureate David
Eggleton & The Wild Cards, He Waka Kotia, Dunedin Jazz Club, The Edmond
Brothers, DJ Gilly, Chin Artists, and Van Hlei Sung with the Dunedin Myanmar
Community**

FEATURE EVENT @ DUNEDIN TOWN HALL
7:30PM

Tickets from ticketmaster.co.nz or The Regent Theatre box office with proceeds going to Mutual Aid Myanmar

**SATURDAY
29 MAY**

Nadia Reid & Her Band
GLENROY AUDITORIUM
8PM
Tickets from ticketmaster.co.nz

**City Choir Dunedin - Applaud! Women
in Music feat. soloists Olivia Pike, Tessa
Romano, Benjamin Madden, and Sandra
Crawshaw on piano**
KNOX CHURCH
7:30PM / ALL AGES
Tickets from eventfinda.co.nz

**Songwriters In The Round feat. Matt
Joe Gow, Jo Little, and Melissa & The
Dr**
SCREAMING ROOSTER, 6 STAFFORD
STREET
7PM
Tickets from screamingrooster.co.nz

GUEST EDITORIAL: Menstruation is non-binary, period.

By Jay Bailey

EDITORIAL:

EDITOR
Erin Gourley

NEWS EDITOR
Fox Meyer

FEATURES EDITOR
Elliot Weir

CULTURE EDITOR
Annabelle Vaughan

SUB EDITOR
Oscar Francis

CHIEF REPORTER
Denzel Chung

NEWS REPORTER
Alex Leckie-Zaharic

STAFF WRITERS
Asia Martusia, Sean Gourley, Susana
Jones

CONTRIBUTORS
Sahsa Freeman, Alice Taylor, Hannah
Johns, Runze Liu, Jay Bailey

DESIGN:

DESIGNER
Molly Willis (mollywillisdesign.com)

ILLUSTRATION
Caitlin Knox (@caitlin.knox.creative)
Emily Bell (@worksbyem.)
Spencer Bott (@toonsbyspoons)

PHOTOGRAPHER/VIDEOGRAPHER
Aiman Amerul Muner (@aimanamerul)

CENTREFOLD
@spicypaintjob

FRONT COVER
Emily Bell

PUZZLE MASTER
Ciara White

PRODUCTION:

ONLINE
Stella Inkpen

DISTRIBUTION
Dave Borrie

ADVERTISING SALES:

Tim Couch
Jared Anglesey
Peter Ramsay
sales@planetmedia.co.nz
Phone: 03 479 5361

READ ONLINE:

critic.co.nz
Issuu.com/critic_te_aro

GET IN TOUCH:

critic@critic.co.nz
Facebook/CriticTeArohi
Tweet/CriticTeArohi
03 479 5335
P.O.Box 1436, Dunedin

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As a transgender person who was assigned 'female' at birth (AFAB), menstruation is a funky topic for me. My body's feminine properties constantly remind me that I exist in a meat shell which doesn't quite fit with my perception of myself. But my body is not as clearly binary as transphobic "basic biologists" like to believe.

I had my first period at fourteen. I remember telling my parents, to the horror of my fragile father, and joking that I should get a gift for "entering womanhood" (just you wait a few years love, you'll be raring to leave). I really thought I deserved a present to make up for the bullshit that is menstruation. Alas, I received no gifts except the knowledge provided by Libra Girl pads and anxiety about leaking through them.

Two years passed without another shark week. Apparently that isn't too abnormal, because puberty can take some time to kick into gear. My mum assured me that some of our family members didn't receive a regular subscription to Satan's Waterfall until later into their teen years.

I had what felt like another first period, because I can't retain my own train of thought let alone remember how to put in a tampon after two years. Then there was another huge gap. And another. At the age of seventeen, I could still count all my visits from Aunt Flo on one hand. It was pretty great for me, because who doesn't love to avoid shedding the lining of an internal organ every month? My doctor didn't feel the same way, and after some questionable blood tests, I was sent off to the endocrinologist.

Around this time, I took my head out of my ass and started to question my gender. Exploring my feelings about my body was complicated. I couldn't tell if my physical self-loathing was because I looked too feminine or not feminine enough. I didn't know if I would rather get rid of the roundness of my face or the patch of long,

curly hairs on my chin. Learning to love my bear legs after years of shaving and waxing could be masculine gender expression, or defiance of feminine beauty standards.

The hardest question of all was about menstruation. Do my periods feel like a personal betrayal because they don't align with who I am, because everyone feels like that, or just because they're so infrequent? Even while I was secretly hoping to be diagnosed with an intersex condition by the endocrinologist, I didn't know if I wanted to justify a nonbinary gender identity or my weird nonbinary body. I still don't know the answer to these questions, or even whether or not I'm intersex. I do know I sure as fuck ain't a woman. It was ironic that the endocrinologist prescribed the pill, made up of feminine hormones, just as I started considering taking masculinising hormones.

Maybe there's someone out there like me, with too much hair, not enough bleeding, and who is stared at a little too long because their gender isn't immediately obvious. Maybe I'm trying to open people to the possibility that sex isn't binary, that people can have a bit of this and a bit of that and it can be hard to categorise us. Nonbinary bodies are valid, whether a body fits into the sex binary but is piloted by a trans individual, or a body has had a mix'n'match of hormones and surgeries, or a body was just made a bit different like mine.

Your body is beautiful: Scars, hair, and funky genitalia included. As I write this, I am twiddling with the little patch of hair on my chinny-chin-chin and I feel grateful for my body. Yes, it has made me feel like an outsider over the years, but as someone who has come to embrace living outside the binary, I am glad my body does too.

I am masculine, I am a menstruator, and I am valid.



Most Bathrooms on Campus Now Have Sanitary Bins

Trans men are limited in their options, though

By Fox Meyer

News Editor // news@critic.co.nz

The Uni has improved its provision of sanitary bins, with bins now available in most bathrooms on campus. There has been an increase of 254 sanitary bins on campus (not including residential colleges) since 2018.

However, in men's bathrooms, sanitary bins are only present in the accessible toilets. This is another improvement on 2018, when the University did not supply them in men's toilets at all.

The University's goal is "to have bins in all female and non-binary toilets and in toilets for people with disabilities, including disability toilets in men's washrooms," and it is mostly met. Critic could not find a women's bathroom without a sanitary bin.

Property Services Division Director Dean Macaulay told Critic that "by about July 2018, we had almost doubled the number of sanitary bins" on campus,

although bins were not implemented in men's bathrooms. "Currently, our standard process is to have bins in all female and non-binary toilets and in toilets for people with disabilities, including disability toilets in men's washrooms (we do not currently provide sanitary units in other men's cubicles)," he said in an emailed statement.

"That creates a problem of double need," said one student who spoke to Critic. "Both disabled and trans students have to use the same cubicle." They pointed out that this is also a problem with the gender neutral bathrooms on campus, which often double as accessible bathrooms.

Currently, if a masculine presenting menstruator cannot find a gender neutral bathroom, they must find a disabled men's bathroom in the hopes of guaranteeing a sanitary bin. There is only one gender neutral bathroom in the Link.

There are sanitary bins in men's accessible bathrooms in Mellor Labs, Hunter Building ground floor, Health Science Library second floor, and all throughout Castle and Central.

"As part of the rainbow tick recommendations, we are exploring converting more washrooms to non-gender-specific facilities with particular emphasis on The Link and UniPol," said Dean. This would hopefully create more options for trans men.

The Uni spends \$4478 a month servicing these bins, including the related air freshener units and nappy bins. Most of the 803 sanitary disposal units are serviced monthly, plus 761 units in residential colleges. Areas that experience a higher flow are serviced fortnightly.



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Fizzliss RTDs Cause North Dunedin's Bowels to Fizzle

New drink on the block might be the shit, literally

By Hannah Johns
Radio One News Reporter

Fizzliss RTDs have apologised after their apple and cranberry flavoured drink caused multiple incidences of loose bowels among consumers.

The apology was posted to UoO Meaningful Confessions on Tuesday night after a previous post, warning about the symptoms of overconsumption of the drink, was removed from the page.

The initial post was entitled "Fizzliss Shit Show". "They might be a fucking yummy Ribena throwback but these flat drinks will make you shit yourself," the original poster stated. "By the end of the box I was not okay ... I counted 9 shits that night and 2 the next morning."

Other consumers of the drink complained that it had an effect on the later part of their digestion. A student said that they "only just made it to the toilet in time."

Another student told Radio One: "I woke up the next morning with a very upset stomach and didn't understand why, as that's not what happens when I have a hangover. Anyway, I had this feeling for a whole day, and I couldn't stop going to the bathroom."

Her friend added "all my mates were basically shitting themselves for at least an hour and all of them had been drinking the Fizzliss drinks."

Fizzliss's apology on the Meaningful Confession page stated that "if you're having over the recommended servings (which everyone in Dunedin does) then that is a heap of fruit juice in one sitting which is naturally going to go right through you." The Fizzliss recipe contained large amounts of apple juice concentrate which consumed in large quantities can cause intestinal discomfort and stools to become watery. Fizzliss also said that a

new version of the apple and cranberry drink will "be in stores shortly", along with a new pineapple and passionfruit flavour.

When approached for a comment by Radio One, the spokesperson for Fizzliss was apologetic. The recipe has since been changed and they hope the whole thing will "blow over". "If you decide to still go ahead [with the story] then please be nice as we have already had so much stick," a spokesperson for Fizzliss said. "[It's been] just harsh, as we are only university students and have put so much into this to have it all ruined by something easily fixable! We still want to go ahead with everything and still see so much potential!"

The four ingredient Fizzliss was meant to reduce the bloating that traditional carbonated drinks cause. Consumers should read Critic Te Arohi's booze review of Fizzliss to understand why it may be worth the shits to consume this beautiful drink.

Budget Buzz Brokers Broke Breathas

Labour strategically forgets promise to reinstate postgrad student allowance

By Elliot Weir
Features Editor // features@critic.co.nz

The government released their 2021 budget on Thursday, announcing the first meaningful benefit increases in decades, as well as increased spending on rail, Māori housing, Pharmac, and other areas. Amongst all the big numbers and dollar signs, there is some stuff for students to be excited about, but not much.

Vocational Education funding has increased by 13%, which New Zealand Union of Students' Associations (NZUSA) National President Andrew Lessells said could help revolutionise the sector.

The student loan and allowance will both increase by \$25 in April next year, but this will likely not even cover rent increases in some areas. Lessells said "students facing hardship have yet again been forgotten. Students deserve better than being treated as second class citizens forced to borrow to survive."

NZUSA also expresses regret that the government still has not restored the postgraduate allowance, saying that "postgrad and mature students are still expected to live on food parcels". Postgraduates continue to be seen scurrying in dark alleyways, fighting over discarded scraps of kebab and chips.

NZUSA and the Tertiary Education Union (TEU) expressed concern for the lack of funding to universities across the country. The Government announced \$470m in spending on tertiary education, relatively unchanged from past years, despite the recent surge in students. "Staff in the sector are overworked and burning out in droves. They need real wage increases and more support from Government which is completely missing," said TEU National President Tina Smith.

There were a few other highlights in the Budget announcement. Supported living payment for sole

parents and couples will rise by \$36 and \$42 a week respectively. Jobseeker support is increasing by \$48 for single people aged 25 and over and \$55 for couples. \$380m is being spent on about 1000 new homes for Māori, repairs to existing Māori-owned homes, and support services. Pharmac is receiving an extra \$200m to purchase medicines and \$486m is being spent on replacing District Health Boards with a new Health NZ body. \$98.1m of that will be used to establish the Māori Health Authority. \$300 million is being given to Green Investment Finance Ltd and \$306m is being spent on repairing Scott Base in Antarctica. \$1.3 billion has been allocated to rail upgrades across the country, including \$85 million for the Hillside rail workshop in Dunedin. Lots of money going around.

It could be worse. But it could be a lot better, too.

Musicians Push Back Against Noise Control Regime

Silent Discos: the future boomers want

By Denzel Chung

Chief Reporter // denzel@critic.co.nz

A "Save Live Music Forum" brainstormed ways for musicians and venue owners to do something about noise control regulations, which musicians claim create an atmosphere of "fear about what is allowed" in Dunedin.

Hosted at the Dog with Two Tails on Saturday 16 May, the forum was held in response to the recent shutdown of a folk gig, after noise control officers claimed they could "hear it from a carpark". Michael Morris, their events manager, clarified that "this particular night and this particular campaign is not directed at our neighbours. This is not a personal thing, it's a wider issue."

Around 50 musicians, venue owners, and live music enthusiasts attended, discussing in a very wholesome "World Café" format, where the participants break up into small groups to discuss the issues. "This meeting is not to come up with the answer, this meeting is to come up with lots of

answers," said Dave Bennett, one of the organisers.

The first question centred around respondents' past experiences with noise control, with many venue owners complaining about the fear and uncertainty they face around neighbours complaining about noise levels. The subjective nature of these complaints made them particularly difficult to deal with, as was the fact that a venue's liquor license could be threatened by a noise complaint.

Though there was near-universal agreement on what was wrong, there wasn't much agreement on potential solutions. People disagreed on everything from setting firm standards on decibels to what "music licenses" should mean to finding a way for complainers to communicate with venue owners without going straight to noise control.

Dunedin City Councillor Jim O'Malley was in attendance, and admitted to the crowd that

"it seems pretty clear that we need to design something better for the future." He was encouraging about change, though, saying that "a lot of people complain about council, but it's only when you complain to council that you get an answer ... Keep it up, I'm pretty sure you've got a receptive voice on the other end."

Ultimately, all agreed that this was a fight that needed to continue. Organiser Dave Bennett said in a follow up e-mail "let's stick together and keep organizing and discussing so that we can ensure the council is forced to listen to what the music community needs."

Under the banner #SaveLiveMusicDunedin, Dave is currently seeking more involvement from the Dunedin music community. Anyone wanting to get stuck in can reach out at: savedunedinlivemusic@gmail.com.



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TUES 25th MAY 9am Michael Cathro

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4.30pm Nick Tipa**

**THURS 27th MAY
4.30pm Te Roopū Māori Kapa Haka**

**FRI 28th MAY 8.30am Prins
9.30am Jules Jones 4.30 Alpha Delta**

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Mid-May Madness for Massey Students

You could say it's been a massive month

By Erin Gourley

Critic Editor // critic@critic.co.nz

A lot of shit is going down with Massey University's various students' associations. The General Manager of the Massey University Students' Association (MUSA) left his job (or was made redundant), students were mad at their students' associations, and now all four of their students' associations (MUSA, MAWSA, ASA, and M@D) are considering merging into one.

The drama began with an open letter sent on 10 May by Massey PhD student Leola Meynell to the MUSA Exec. In the letter she raised a number of concerns about the governance of the students' associations. "The students I represent do not currently wish to be named; however, they form networks across academic disciplines, through a passion for student voices and student representation." The central concerns Leola raised on behalf of these students were missed board meetings by MUSA,

a lack of consultation with students, and ending the employment of the General Manager of MUSA.

Then, on 12 May, the President of MUSA, Fatima Imran, responded to the open letter. In her response she denied that the students' association had removed their general manager. Instead she said that "Craig's departure was not made by me or the executives; it was rather a decision made by Craig and which we agreed to."

She also foreshadowed the proposal to merge the students' associations, saying that "in the long term, should a proposal be made to join a Federation with the other campuses, we would still look to maintain a senior leadership role in MUSA." She said that if the campuses do not merge, the management structure would not change and their Exec would hire another General Manager.

Finally, on 17 May, the students' associations announced that they were considering a merger. "For us, it is important our students are treated fairly by the University and we believe having one clear and concise voice is much more powerful than four siloed voices, as they currently stand," they stated in their press release. "This is the reason why we are considering a merge, as the benefits of this option strongly outway [sic] others we considered."

Currently, the four students' associations are MUSA (based in Palmerston North), Massey Wellington Students' Association (MAWSA), Albany Students Association (ASA, for the Auckland Massey campus), and the Massey Distance Students' Association (M@D). This seems like a mess to Critic Te Arohi, because we have enough trouble dealing with one students' association.

131,610 Standard Drinks Worth of Hand Sanitiser Bought by Uni in 2020

Next 131,610 rounds are on me, lads

By Denzel Chung

Chief Reporter // denzel@critic.co.nz

With additional reporting by Hannah Johns (Radio One News Reporter)

The Uni spent almost \$100,000 on hand sanitiser in 2020, according to figures obtained by Radio One. Despite Covid-19 restrictions having eased this year, they are on track to spend almost the same amount in 2021.

According to Property Services Manager Dean Macaulay, \$98,128 was spent on hand sanitiser last year — nearly five times the amount spent in 2019 (\$17,284). Macaulay says that as well as the pandemic affecting these figures, the Uni also increased in size in 2020, with areas such as the new Dentistry Building, the Eccles Building, the Music, Theatre and Performing Arts Centre and the "Tamaru Hub" (which Critic Te Arohi was unable to confirm is actually located in Tamaru) needing supplies of hand sanitiser.

As of April 2021, Macaulay says the Uni had spent \$26,289 on hand sanitiser, meaning that they are on track to spend \$78,867 on hand sanitiser this year. This is despite Covid-19 restrictions significantly loosening since 2020.

The Uni's hand sanitiser dispensers are made in Australia by Deb, a subsidiary of American multinational SC Johnson. A check on the website of NXP, which provides the Uni's office supplies (including hand sanitiser), shows Deb InstantFoam Hand Sanitiser on sale at \$61.13 for a 1L bottle. Coming in at approximately 82% alcohol, it's near the golden ratio of \$1 to 1 standard drink, if you could survive drinking it.

This makes for around 1,605L of foaming hand sanitiser purchased throughout 2020, or approximately 131,610 standard drinks worth. In simple terms, this equates to around five standards for every student at the Uni. That's quite a measly amount for an entire year of pandemic-related stress, although quite on-brand for a Uni that has been cracking down on drinking culture for years now.

So next time you're licking your lips at the thought of a nice, icy glass of delicious foamy hand sanitiser to end a tough week, think about the Uni's budget and don't try it. Drinking bleach doesn't kill the virus either.

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Students Upset at Proposed Freedom Camping Rules

Can't afford a \$250 fine, let alone a replacement car

By Sean Gourley

Staff Writer // sean@critic.co.nz

Students, known for being broke, have raised concerns that proposed changes to freedom camping regulations will limit their ability to see New Zealand.

The changes were proposed by Minister for Tourism Stuart Nash. He is from Napier, so must know a lot about places people want to visit. The changes propose more regulation and harsher penalties for freedom campers, and were consulted on by MBIE until 16 May and are not yet in effect.

The four key proposals include an ominous improvement to "regulatory tools" for government officials. They also would make it mandatory for freedom camping to be done in a certified self-contained vehicle, or on a campsite with facilities, and would increase the requirements of said vehicles.

Some of the changes include powers to confiscate freedom campers' cars. Dan Whitburn, a student at Otago said "imagine if you were on the West Coast

and your car was confiscated," he said. "What could you do?" He noted that while most cops and DOC workers were all good, there's always an "asshole" out there who could abuse the rules "because they want to".

"This isn't going to force me to go to hotels to reinvigorate the tourism industry, this is going to stop me from doing any tourism at all." As a student who sleeps in his car both recreationally and out of necessity, Dan thinks that the changes will do more harm than good. "[Nash is] going after high value international tourists and in the process has managed to deny kiwis the right to see our own country."

The changes come as part of Nash's drive to attract 'high value' tourists to New Zealand during a time in which internationalists must fork over thousands to even cross the border. Currently, regulation is largely left up to City and District Councils. Right now, the threat of a \$250 fine hangs over those who choose to freedom camp where they see fit.

Dan thinks this policy has already raised issues. "I heard a story about a dude in Queenstown, drove into town, ended up having a couple of drinks as you do, and was like 'nah I'm way too pissed to drive' slept in his car and woke up with a \$250 fine on his windscreen, for not drink driving." There are billboards all over the country that read "Tired? Pull over and take a break. It's that simple."

Similar regulations have already caused injustices in Auckland where Council bylaws failed to distinguish between freedom campers and the homeless. Even though Council staff tried to be "sensitive to the needs of homeless people", they faced backlash over not having a clear definition between the two.

Dan told Critic that "I don't really understand where the negative perception [of freedom campers] comes from, anyway. Most of us are pretty keen environmentalists, that's why we're out freedom camping. We want to be out in the environment. We don't want to hurt it."

.....

OUSA Criticises "Paternalism" in Code of Pastoral Care

The policy is only a teensy bit pretentious

By Alex Leckie-Zaharic

News Reporter // alex@critic.co.nz

OUSA has submitted in support of the proposed Education (Pastoral Care of Tertiary and International Students) Code of Practice 2021, but proposed several changes to the wording of the policy.

"OUSA considers the implementation of the Code as necessary, especially in addressing spaces that have historically been unregulated, such as Residential Colleges," the submission stated. The Code is a regulatory framework proposed by the government following an inquiry in response to the death of Canterbury student Mason Pendrous in 2019.

The main criticisms put forward by OUSA are the tone and paternalistic language of the Code, which "reduces the inherent autonomy of students ... it conveys an undercurrent of disempowerment of students and does not reflect a mana enhancing model of partnership between students and providers".

While OUSA supports the sentiment, they questioned the language such as using "learners" instead of "students", conjuring connotations of the type of drivers liable to rear end you in an empty carpark.

OUSA noted that the term "learner" is not "a term that mature or post-graduate students respond well to, as it has connotations with inexperience and immaturity" and that "it does not accurately reflect the reciprocal nature of teaching and learning and perpetrates a colonial contextualisation of education which New Zealand must move away from."

Another problem the Code introduces is justification for the University's recent willingness to discipline students for off-campus behaviour, something which the student population has routinely rejected. The OUSA submission specifically reiterates their earlier stance that the Code "must not empower tertiary providers to unnecessarily encroach on the private lives of students, especially off-campus."

Additionally, the Government's idea puts very little change into practice, giving universities and other tertiary institutions jurisdiction over exactly what they do. The massive document is extremely regulation-heavy, which means a healthy dose of bureaucracy and middle-management will be needed to even start implementation. OUSA also noted that it does not empower students' associations, requiring universities to consult. "Consultation alone allows institutions to do the bare minimum, and often not truly listen and adapt to our opinions."

OUSA is very cautious of an "overly prescriptive Code that will further empower providers to invade the privacy and independence of students beyond what are reasonable wellbeing and safety measures."

The sentiment is that the Government is trying to put too much power in the hands of tertiary institutions in the name of helping students.

Free Rat Traps For North D Pests

And also for rats

By Alex Leckie-Zaharic
News Reporter // alex@critic.co.nz

City Sanctuary, a Predator Free Dunedin project set up by the Dunedin City Council is offering free rat traps to Studentville residents in an attempt to eradicate the crafty little bastards from polluting pristine North D.

In the coming weeks, City Sanctuary will install at least eighty traps across North Dunedin, aiming to get one in ten households started with trapping. Tenants of registered flats will receive either an automated self-resetting trap or a conventional snap-trap for free.

According to City Sanctuary's Operations Supervisor Catherine Bradley, the network of traps is a first for

Dunedin. Catherine told Critic that this would be the first "suburb-wide residential rat trap network in North Dunedin, so this is completely new territory." She's also keen to set up a more long-term network in the area, noting that "students are a transient population so we're keen to find out how they feel about trapping and how we can create a long-term trapping network in an area where people move flats regularly."

Rats are definitely a problem for many students, benefiting from a combination of crappy flats and dropkicks who can't clean up after themselves. Catherine said "if you're worried about rats sneaking around your roof or want to do something for

nature, backyard trapping is a practical and easy way to contribute to conservation from your home."

In addition to getting the traps, students will also be encouraged to monitor predators over the coming months with the ability to log pest sightings on the City Sanctuary website. No, it can't be used to report the drunken dickheads stumbling onto your front yard at 2am.

Interested students in the North Dunedin area can sign up for a trap to be installed for free at citysanctuary.nz/north-dunedin.

Debate Magazine Left Without Designer for Five Weeks

Graphic design apparently not AUTSA's passion

By Erin Gourley
Critic Editor // critic@critic.co.nz

Debate Magazine, the student magazine at AUT, has only produced four issues this semester after the AUT Students' Association (AUTSA) failed to hire a new designer for the magazine. The situation left Editor Rebecca Zhong unable to make a magazine for five weeks.

In her first editorial after a hiatus, Debate Editor Rebecca Zhong explained why Debate has been on hiatus. "Our designer is hired at the discretion of AUTSA as they work jointly between Debate and the student association. Ramina [Rai], our one of a kind designer, has taken maternity leave and hiring their replacement was left to AUTSA," she said.

After plenty of communication in advance, "this

process was neglected and mishandled by AUTSA," Rebecca wrote. "To put it bluntly, when it came time to print, Debate had no designer thus no magazine."

"Being unable to publish is a disservice to AUT students and to your voices," said a post on Debate Magazine's Facebook page on 28 April. "We are frustrated and disappointed by this."

Rebecca also called attention to ongoing issues with Debate's editorial independence. "For transparency reasons I would like to inform our readers that Debate's ability to be a truly editorially independent magazine is compromised," she wrote.

"As part of our relationship with AUTSA, all copies

of Debate must first be approved by our general manager before it goes to print," she wrote. "While this is mainly seen as a formality, this procedure has the potential to stifle and restrict the unfettered fashion of a student publication."

However, after raising these concerns with AUTSA, Rebecca was "grateful" to note that AUTSA are working towards putting in place a neutral advisory committee who can help make impartial decisions about Debate's content.

Neither Rebecca Zhong nor AUTSA responded to Critic Te Arohi's request for comment on this situation. Maybe it's because they didn't have a designer to format their response.

\$15pp

Heading home for the holidays?

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Image: Selwyn Ballet, 2006

No Tutus in the Selwyn Ballet This Year

Selwyn freshers have to find another way to get into women's clothing

By Fox Meyer

News Editor // news@critic.co.nz

As you may have noticed, there was a distinct lack of tutus worn by the Selwyn Ballet performers at this year's capping show.

Luke McLelland, Warden of Selwyn, said that OUSA told Selwyn that they got feedback from last year's show indicating that people didn't really vibe with the Selwyn Ballet "in its current form." The choreographers "talked this through, and arrived at new costumes for this year's show."

This meant no tutus. "Personally, I'm fully supportive of change that responds to the calls of society," said Luke. "Numerous global movements are shouting

for change and we all have a responsibility — it's on each of us as individuals and community groups to take small steps, when and where it's called for."

He highlighted efforts from within the college to "reframe" their culture to keep up with social norms and "our own community." The changes to the Ballet is very much a part of this movement.

Sean, a Selwyn alumnus, said that "when I did it, we didn't feel like we were being transphobic. We were just guys in tutus, having fun. There wasn't any negative intent behind it." He added that the tutus were a bit more "theatrical than the leotards this

year, but the leotards were still great."

Sean also noted that the Ballet was the only group that was not a part of the "theatre group", so there is "a bit of pushback against them already."

Luke said that "the ballet has varied over the 90+ years it's been associated with the Capping Show, so who knows what the costumes and performance will look like in years to come."

OUSA, who run the Capping Show, did not respond in time for comment on this story.

OUSA Subwarden Committee Formed

Perfect place for power hungry third years to butt heads

By Fox Meyer

News Editor // news@critic.co.nz

Subwardens now have official representation on a committee and can approach OUSA more easily with their issues. Subwarden means RA. RA means Residential Assistant. Residential Assistant means friendly, not friend.

OUSA President Michaela Waite-Harvey said that subwardens are "a good liaison point between OUSA and the colleges" because they live there, and OUSA does not. She said that OUSA recognised "the important role Subwardens play in providing pastoral care, support and safety for their residents — often while themselves studying. This is no small task, and OUSA recognises responsibility in advocating for Subwardens to ensure that the

University provides adequate training, fair pay, and wellbeing support."

"This committee gives Subwardens an opportunity to come together, have a collective voice and also be represented by OUSA, particularly through the Residential Representative portfolio," she said.

Subwarden insight could help OUSA make better decisions about how it engages with colleges. The committee existed last year, informally, and managed to get shit done, so giving the group official recognition may increase their power.

Last year the committee, operating as an informal group, secured retention pay for Subwardens who

stayed behind in their college through lockdown. The committee will consist of one representative from each college, as well as one from Te Roopū Māori, UOPISA, UniFlats, and an international rep.

In last quarter's report, OUSA Residential Rep Jack Saunders was hopeful that the Subwarden Committee would make it easier for OUSA to have an effective Colleges Committee as well. "Once I form the Subwarden Committee this should be a far more seamless set up than it was last year!" he said, with a hopeful exclamation mark. "I will hopefully be using the new Subwarden Committee as a platform to facilitate the formation of this Committee."

Student Nurses Support Strike in June

More like students of holding the government-industrial complex to account amirite?

By Hannah Johns

Radio One News Reporter

Student nurses have called for the government to take the eight-hour strike planned for June seriously, or face losing graduates to Australia.

The New Zealand Nurses Organisation voted to strike on June 9 for eight hours after the government offered a 1.38% pay increase, a percentage just under the rate of inflation.

Coupled with the announcement of a public sector pay freeze, Lead Advocate and NZNO Industrial Advisor David Wait said that nurses have worked horrific and unsafe conditions for a long time, and are genuinely worried about the future of the profession.

Students said they are also worried about the future. One said "with the lack of staff that is occurring, a lot of student nurses I've talked to say that as soon as they qualify they'll be shooting over to Australia. The fear is that we'll have a lack of nurses in New Zealand — meaning the current nurses will still be overworked, and not paid for the time they spend working."

"The strike is necessary because of the extra pressures and stresses on nurses due to the pandemic," said one student from Ara in Christchurch. They said that while nurses' workload and responsibilities have increased, their pay does not reflect this new work.

Another student nurse, from Otago Polytechnic, said: "It's important for everyone to realise what is happening to nurses across New Zealand. We're being very underpaid and are currently being overworked due to the lack of staff that we have."

They said that "it's really upsetting to know that the three year degree we're paying for is not being given back to us. We're there to do our job, and people need to understand how much we actually do, instead of thinking that nurses are just there to wipe peoples' bums or whatever. We do the paperwork, we support the doctors, we support the teams. Without nurses the hospitals would not run."

\$15^{pp}

Don't forget to book your return trip too

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Huawei Phones Struggle to Connect to University Wifi

I guess that's what you get for having a Huawei

By Asia Martusia King
Staff Writer // asia@critic.co.nz

Huawei phones cannot reliably connect to University wifi, a student told Critic.

Toby noticed last Thursday that his Huawei phone, which is usually able to connect to the wifi, was unable to connect to the University wifi in the Robertson Library. He went to Central Library but had no luck connecting to the wifi there either. "I went home and it was all fine. I thought it was just that one day, but I came back and tried to connect to University wifi and it didn't work."

University of Otago's Shared Services Director David Tapp said that: "People can have difficulty connecting their Huawei phones but we have helped people with those phones to connect."

He encouraged students like Toby to contact IT Support.

Thinking it was his phone acting up, Toby went to IT Support and was told that Huawei phones just sometimes can't connect. IT Support do not know why this is.

"The worst part is that they don't seem to be knowing the reason why. They said this happens sometimes, that it just craps up on all Huawei phones."

Toby described this as "really annoying", particularly when trying to check his timetable or keep up with group chats for class. "You can only imagine the

pressure, especially when studying."

"I clicked connect so many times. It either just kept saying connecting, or all the wifi network options would just disappear."

Toby hasn't heard of any other Huawei cases because "everyone else has Apple." However, it has happened before, according to IT Support. This would particularly suck for students in halls who are on Uni wifi 24/7.

"On the bright side, it stops you from procrastinating," he said. He will continue to simp for Huawei regardless. "It's very nice. Very good picture quality."

HEADING OVERSEAS?

SAFETRAVEL REGISTRATION

Official registration for
New Zealanders living
and travelling overseas



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ODT Watch

Like students, we have learned to be healthily cynical when people in positions of responsibility try to give themselves more power. But, in this instance, we see no reason not to believe proctor Dave Scott, who told RNZ the fine for rubbish would only be used as a last resort.

If the ODT says we have no reason not to trust the proctor with an expansive and discretionary power, I guess we should trust him.

Despite their competitiveness, there has been no squawking over who will be highest in the pecking order at the upcoming nationals.

More bird puns, this time in an article about poultry, so at least the context is relevant. The number of bird puns in the ODT increases with every passing day. I fear the future.

The hedges have remained since then but, while they still looked healthy from a distance, they were largely all dead on the inside and would eventually decay and lose appeal, Kate Faulks, who now manages Altavady with her husband Adam, said.

We can all relate to these hedges on a spiritual level.

THEY were no spring chickens but they could certainly chase that egg.

The natural pun to make in an article about rugby.

Dog ate homework? No, seal blocked way

A catchy and simple headline that lets you know, at a glance, what the story is about.



Southern businesses want a piggy bank in the shape of the Beehive and \$8 in one and two dollar coins.



ADMINISTRATIVE VICE-PRESIDENT

Emily Coyle

Hello!

I'm Emily, OUSA's Vice President for 2021. Technically, my title is Administrative Vice-President (there's been a fair bit of discussion in the past about removing the 'Administrative', but last time it was put to an SGM, students voted for it to stay because someone spoke passionately about the importance of admin). I work within OUSA to support the President, coordinate the Exec and decide when we have BBQs (among many other things!!) Any questions/concerns/queries my email is adminvp@ousa.org.nz.

As we head into even colder weather and exams, I have three things to say:

1.If you haven't already, buy an electric blanket. Second year me really spent winter sleeping in a puffer jacket :(Electric blanket = life changing.

2.Take advantage of free breakfast on Wednesday @ Clubs and Socs, 8:30-9:30am. Life saver if you don't have time before grabbing a seat at Central during exam season.

3.Look after yourself: have a Sauna at Clubs and Socs, sit in the Peace Garden on Albany Street, buy a Mamas Donut from the truck on Friday, go to Unipol, talk to friends. Making time for yourself is so important, especially when it's grey/cold and it feels like all you do is study.

A final thing: a friendly reminder to vote in the upcoming OUSA referenda, online from the 1st – the 3rd of June! Basically, the referenda are how you can have your say through OUSA, and your vote on the questions really matter.

Have a good one!!

Emily, Administrative Vice President

WEEK 11 CROSSWORD ANSWERS

ACROSS:

Across: 2. Gisborne 5. Emma 6. Cost 7. Genius 9. Seal 11. Roto 12. Calamari 13. Law 14. Noise 16. Melting 17. Salsa 18. Cat 19. Platypus 22. Feral 24. Isle 25. Fraud 26. Flex 27. Teal 28. Tangaroa

DOWN:

Down: 1. Seashells 2. Garlic 3. Signal 4. Moist 8. Spring 10. Imitate 15. Extremely 16. Maple 20. Ponder 21. Siesta 23. River

WORDWHEEL ANSWER: Exhibit

SUDOKU

sudokuoftheday.com

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

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

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

CROSSWORD

1			2								3		4	
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ACROSS:

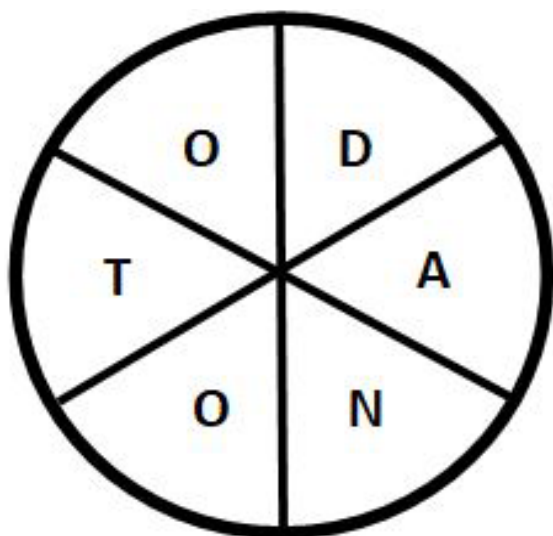
2. Race where you run, bike and swim (9)
5. Bird on the \$10 bill (4)
6. Response to an invitation (4)
8. Name of a sport and a vegetable (6)
9. Midday (4)
10. Who you pay rent to (8)
12. Imperial unit of measurement that rhymes with 21 down (4)
14. Wakes you up in the morning (5)
15. Scrumpy is an example of this (5)
16. Leonardo da ____ (5)
19. Sneak into someone's personal business (5)
20. Spice that turns food yellow (8)
22. Leave out (4)
23. Whānau (6)
24. Jealousy (4)
25. Not odd (4)
26. Person who saves swimmers (9)

DOWN:

1. XXV (6,4)
2. Wordwheel solution (7)
3. Impartial (7)
4. Hazard (4)
7. Believable (9)
11. Person who solves mysteries (9)
13. All-powerful (10)
17. Essential (7)
18. Pissed off (7)
21. Difficult (4)

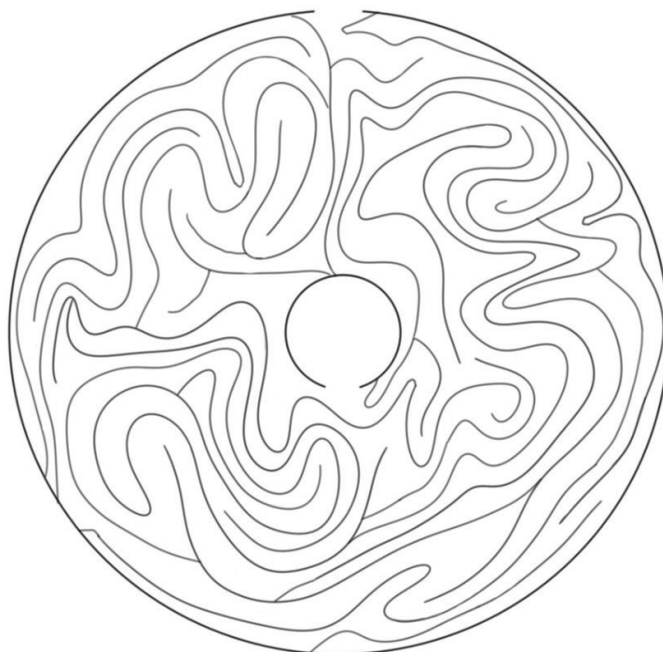


WORD WHEEL



Insert the missing letter to find the word that runs either clockwise or anti-clockwise around the wheel.

MAZE



SPOT THE DIFFERENCE

There are 10 differences between these images.





CW: Depression, anxiety, suicidal thoughts

Anxiety, depression, migraines, nausea and weight gain are just a few of the side effects which your body is susceptible to on the oral contraceptive pill. Colloquially known as the pill, the oral contraceptive is one of the most commonly prescribed forms of birth control. It can be used for a range of purposes, such as to help control acne, mood, and periods, as well as being a contraceptive. It is one of the most common forms of birth control in New Zealand and Australia. Despite being incredibly common and normalised within society, the pill carries a variety of harmful side effects, not many of which are talked about.

Beth first went on birth control in 2017 to combat her acne. Despite trying a series of different pills, she had a negative experience on all of them. “I was on Ginnet, and it cleared up my skin but I got massive migraines from it,” she says. Although her doctor knew this, they still prescribed it to her. After having migraines, she switched to a different pill. “It stopped me from getting my period for a bit, but then I got my period every single day,” she said. “I never went a day without wearing any sanitary products for four months. When I went to go see my doctor I was like ‘this isn’t working’ and they were like, well damn.”

Alongside having a continuous period, Beth also experienced a variety of mood swings and emotional upheavals. “I had really bad mood swings. I was bleeding everyday, and out of no-where I’d be like, ‘I wanna kill myself’ for like an hour, and then I’d be fine.” When Beth finally came off the pill, she realised how badly it had affected her in a variety of ways. “I had been on it for so long, it was the first time I hadn’t been on the pill in so many years. I just thought this is how it is then I realised that no — that was the pill and its awful side effects,” she said. “I’d rather have a heavy period than deal with these awful side effects.”

Like Beth, Kelly initially went on the pill at 16 for hormonal reasons. Quickly, she began experiencing similar side effects. “I first went on the pill when I was 16 for hormonal reasons, like to clear up my skin. The pill I was on [Ginnet] was really hormonal. There’s more hormones in it and it affects your mood, but they don’t tell you that,” says Kelly. “It builds up in your system, so it’s like with every cycle you get moodier and moodier in terms of PMS.”

Kelly says that being on the pill caused her to struggle during her first year of university, and suffer from social anxiety which she had never had before. Despite this, she thought that her feelings were a side effect of homesickness and adjusting to a new environment, rather than the medication she was being prescribed. “When I was about 18 and 19 it was pretty bad. The social anxiety was the worst part of it. My first year was particularly bad. I’d feel anxious with things like going to the dining room, it made me cry a lot more. [In a college] you feel homesick, but I think for me it went on for longer than was normal,” she said.

"I've always been an independent person but I felt like when I was on the pill I was relying on other people a lot more," she said. "I know when I look back. At the time I thought it was normal, but it's not. I realised when I stopped taking it that it was giving me a lot of anxiety."

Alongside feeling emotionally drained due to the pill, Kelly said she also began to get high blood pressure which she says was "the main reason I stopped taking it." Kelly says that when she was prescribed the pill, her doctors didn't warn her of the potential side effects. Although they made sure to monitor her blood pressure, there was no acknowledgement of the mental and emotional side of things. "They didn't go into a lot of details or side effects, they don't tell you anything like 'this will make you moodier,' I think you don't realise at the time a lot of the emotional side effects," she says

Kelly also found that coming off the pill was difficult. "It's fucking awful. Your body thinks you've been pregnant so you get sensitive boobs for like three months. The hormones were suddenly there then they were not. I was pretty up and down during that time."

Just like Kelly and Beth, Jamie went on the pill when she was 16 and has been on and off it intermittently. "The first time I used it was fine. I was taking it for my period, because I would get the most awful cramps to the point I couldn't go to school. But it didn't stop my period," she says. Like Beth, Jamie moved onto the pill to see if it would work to combat her painful periods. Initially Jamie asked her doctor about the depo shot, an injection-based form of birth control which suppresses ovulation. However, Jamie was advised to try the mini pill, as it's "the same hormones and chemicals" as the shot.

"When I was really depressed it was awful because I was an awful flatmate. Even though my flatmates were so good about it, it put a lot more stress on me, and it was such a bad cycle."

"The mini pill made me insanely depressed. I had struggled with mental health before, but this was to a whole new level," she says. Initially, Jamie put her struggles down to university stress, not realising it was the pill. "I thought 'it's my third year of uni, I must be tired and exhausted,'" she said. Things got so bad for Jamie, even something as simple as doing the dishes or cleaning her room became a daunting task. "When I was really depressed it was awful because I was an awful flatmate. Even though my flatmates were so good about it, it put a lot more stress on me, and it was such a bad cycle," she says.

When Jamie started coming off it, she says she felt "a million times better... It ended up not stopping my period so I went off it because there was no point. But I haven't been back to the doctor because I'm so tired of trying to find something that will work when I know it's fucked with my mental health so much," she says.

The pill is often seen as the first and only type of birth control available to women. However, it doesn't always work for everyone, and can sometimes not be worth the trouble. "There should be a lot more attention towards it. It can be really throwaway," says Beth. "[The doctors] were immediately like, 'just go on birth control,' instead of exploring other options," she says. "My appointments were always five minutes long, I was never told I could have a straight period for six months. The pill has so many side effects, and it's not okay."

Kelly agrees. "It's not taken that seriously, it's weird because when you're on it, you're like 'this must just be how I am,'" she says. "The pill is seen as the form of contraception for women, it's what you think of when you think of contraception. But there are better alternatives. While [the pill] is an option, it's not the only option," she says.

"I feel like it's seen as a cure-all even though it can mess with you so much. For some people it's helpful, but it's really risky for other people," says Jamie. She also thinks that there should be more normalisation and discussion around the side effects of the pill, including needing to take time off due to menstruating. "There should be more discussion of the other aspects of talking about your menstrual cycle. It should be normal, like taking time off school, you shouldn't have to take pills for this one week."

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THERE WILL BE BLOOD

THE GOOD, THE BAD, AND THE MESSY OF PERIOD SEX BY ERIN GOURLEY

Most humans swap a lot of bodily fluids to show that we're attracted to each other, but for some reason we don't put period blood in that category. There's a longstanding belief that periods are unclean or gross, with no evidence to back that up. And contrary to what a lot of people who've never had to deal with blood dripping out their cervix believe, periods are generally not an overwhelming torrent of blood that makes sex look like a scene from a horror movie.

Critic spoke to people who've had period sex about why it's really not a big deal. "It's free lube, baby," said Jennifer.

April said she never planned on having period sex, but "I started talking to this guy who said that he was learning how to play John Mayer songs. And my ass was already sold on this guy because anyone who knows me, knows I am weak for musicians."

"We started heading back to mine and I thought 'fuck I'm on my period'. But I was horny so logic was

out of the window," she said. "I stared at him dead in the eyes and said 'I'm on my period.' And he's like 'I don't care.'" They ended up having sex on the carpet because April was not keen to ruin her fancy sheets. "Fuck my life the sex was good," she said. "The guy didn't care that I was on my period, and then another person I had period sex with didn't care either. It was mostly me worried about the mess," she said.

Everyone who spoke to Critic Te Arohi said that the taboo around period sex seemed like a big deal at first, but their sexual partners didn't actually seem to care about the blood. "There is that massive stigma around periods being gross and even if I don't find them gross I'll worry that others will," said Christina.

"Period sex was an accident at first," said Mel. "I felt uncomfy about it, like I felt dirty and like my partner didn't want me. But then his fingers had blood on them and I was turned on so we just continued." Mel said she was surprised but "it was good sex and not as messy as I thought".

“IF YOU AVOID PERIODS YOU CAN ONLY HAVE SEX FOR LIKE HALF THE MONTH. AT THAT POINT I’M CRANKY, I WANNA GET IT OFF, SO LET’S GO AHEAD AND DO IT.”

Jennifer reckons the taboo around period sex is a “self-conscious thing”. “If Bella (her girlfriend) is on her period, I’m like cool whatever. And if I’m on my period, she’s like cool whatever. But personally you’re like oh my god I’m so sorry, I’m so gross right now, it’s fine if you don’t want to.”

Christina made a similar point about the stigma. “There’s definitely a general stigma that periods are gross so even if the guy is fine with it you often feel nervous that they’re gonna be grossed out,” she said. “It’s hard to tell how much is stigma and how much is just because it’s a gross bodily fluid. You can get cum everywhere and people aren’t gonna have the same reactions,” she said.

Mel reckoned that the stigma links back to porn and the idea that there’s a “right way” to have sex. “We don’t hear about period sex the way that no one focuses on the other not-so-photogenic parts of sex,” she said. “That doesn’t mean it’s not normal and healthy.”

“If your partner’s not cool with it, I get it, but also it’s blood. Wombs are beautiful things and you wouldn’t be alive without one, so maybe suck it up,” said Jennifer. “My thought is if a guy is not okay with it, they should really work on that. She has to deal with that for a week out of every cycle. The least you can do is not be gross and weird about it,” said Bella.

“I don’t remember ever thinking ‘woohoo let’s have some period sex’ but it just happens, that’s real life,” said Danya. “Sometimes my period goes for over a week and it can be spotty and light at times. The sex is not even messy when it’s like that.”

Some people don’t like period sex because menstruation often makes your vagina more sensitive. “I don’t have period sex because I find my vagina is more sensitive and it hurts,” said Florence. “I’m not against it but it was not great for me personally,” said Kennedy.

Other people find that the vaginal sensitivity is a pro rather than a con. The sensitivity “is a great thing in my experience,” said Jennifer. “For me personally, I guess

when I’m on my period my hormones are like you gotta have a baby, time to get really horny.”

Jennifer’s girlfriend, Bella, feels the opposite. “For me if I’m on my period I don’t get super horny just because I get really gassy and that kills any mood that might have been there.”

For Jennifer and Bella, period sex just becomes a necessity. “When your periods are not in sync, you get kind of fed up,” Jennifer said. “If you avoid periods you can only have sex for like half the month. At that point I’m cranky, I wanna get it off, so let’s go ahead and do it.”

Christina said she was worried the first time she had sex on her period. “I was very nervous about how much blood there would be so we put down a towel which was good because it got everywhere, on my legs, on his stomach, on his pubes,” she said. “Years later, now I don’t care at all, with my boyfriend.”

“You need a towel, but most of the time it’s not as messy as my first time and there isn’t much mess at all,” she said. Mel reckoned the best strategy was to do it in the shower. “That way there’s literally no clean up required.”

Jennifer said “it’s not gonna look like Carrie, it’s not as scary as you think. We’ve usually done it at the very beginning or the very end, never when we’ve been like peak gush.” Bella said “I can think of maybe one instance where we could see any blood.”

“You can definitely taste it is one thing. Have you ever had a liquid iron drink? It tastes like that. I had a liquid iron drink a while ago and I was like oh, this tastes like having sex on your period,” said Jennifer.

For all the bodily fluids exchanged during period sex, there’s still room for creativity. “In my current relationship, my boyfriend drew a heart on my leg in my period blood,” Christina said. Romance is not dead.

*All names changed so people could give us gory details.

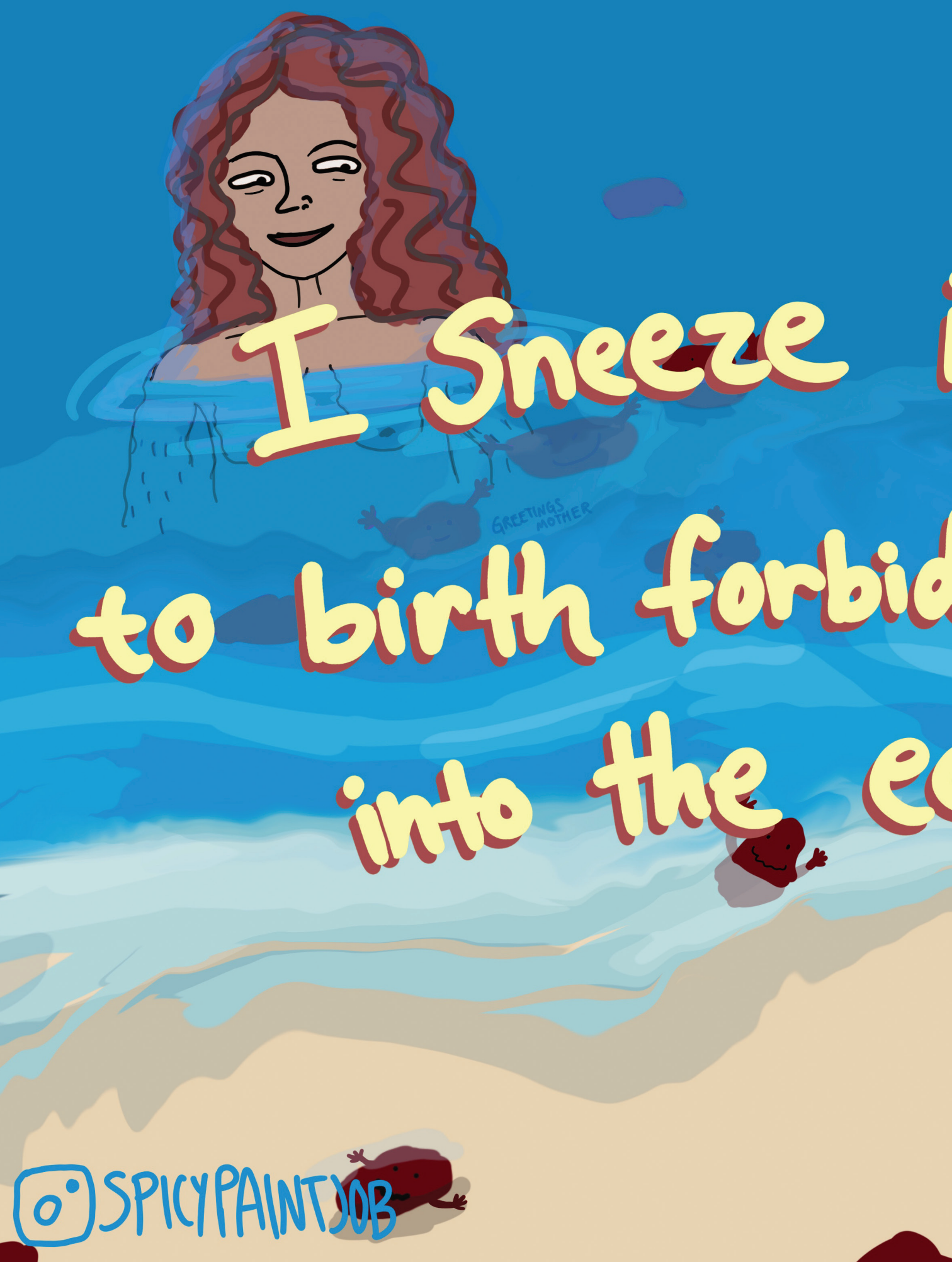
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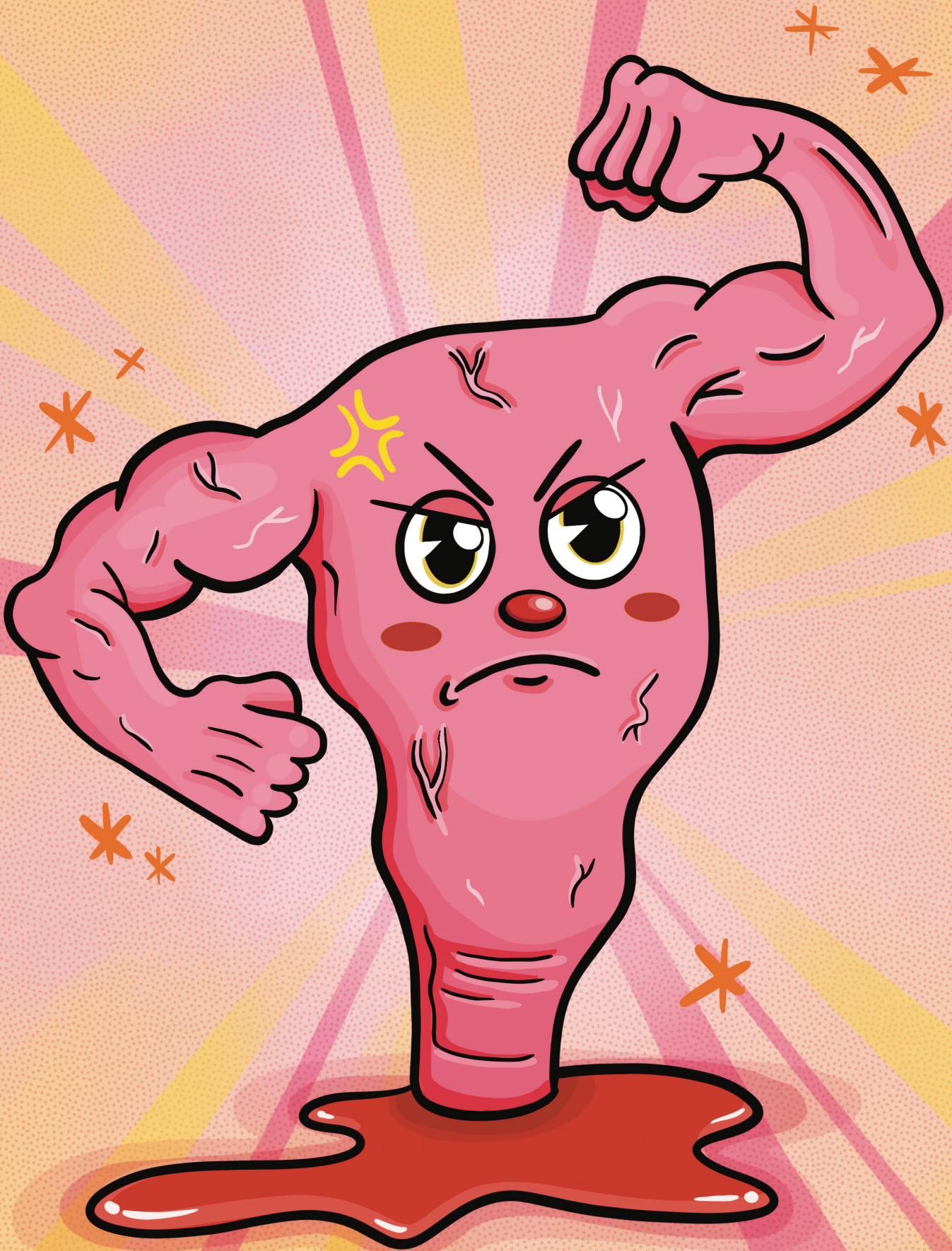
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OH GOD
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THE ALPHA UTERUS

IS PERIOD SYNCING REAL?

BY ASIA MARTUSIA KING

The Alpha Uterus. A uterus so formidable, brimming with such sheer hormonal force that it annexes the uteri around it, pulling them into orbit and causing them to sync up. Does such a legendary power really exist?

Period syncing is based on the idea that when a bunch of menstruating folk live together for long enough, their cycles coincide. One person — the Alpha Uterus — determines when this occurs. Anecdotal, period syncing is typically accepted as a real thing, but there's a lack of medical data supporting this. We have exactly one study from the 1970's that confirmed period syncing in dorms. Since then, with the advent of period tracking apps, massive studies have been undertaken that suggest that it's likely a myth. There's a disconnect between established and folk science, and we still have no real answer.

Luckily, we have Otago students as guinea pigs. Critic asked students through a very scientific Facebook poll whether or not they'd ever synced up in flats or halls. 169 (nice) people said that they had synced. Exactly one person said that they hadn't.

That's a big fat ratio. Maybe science is wrong.

Anna is a student whose flat has been meticulously tracking their periods since March. "We first put the calendar up because we thought it would be cute to see when each other had our periods, so we could get each other chocolate or something," says Anna, who's the most wholesome bitch in the world. "Now it's kinda like, let's see if it's gonna sync."

They haven't fully synced yet, but there's an increasing overlap. There is also a clearly defined Alpha Uterus at play. Interestingly, the Alpha Uterus' influence seems to go even beyond syncing. It has also reportedly induced cramps amongst the other flatmates.

"In the first month when we moved into the flat, we all had our periods at the same time," Anna says. "One of our flatmates gets pretty bad cramps. The rest of us don't — but then we all got really bad cramps, and they've been bad ever since. We were like, 'it was you!' Maybe it's some weird sympathy pain."

This could be witchcraft, or it could be legit. A 2017 study called "Women Living Together Have a Higher Frequency of Menstrual Migraine" reported exactly that. One woman in the study had a migraine, and it spread throughout the participants. Why shouldn't this include cramps as well? One comment on the Critic poll said that "mood swings and breakdowns definitely got in sync"; "group cry sesh", was the response.

It looks like period syncing could encapsulate much more than just bleeding. A similar thing called Couvade syndrome has been reported in men whose partners are pregnant. They can experience sympathy pregnancy symptoms, such as nausea and back pain. Empathy and hormones are suggested to underlie this. "Ew, bullshit," I thought. "You aren't pregnant, shut up." But maybe I'm being too quick to judge. Ruby, a student living with five women and one man, reports that her male flatmate also gets moody when the women are menstruating. This could also possibly be because he's living with five moody menstruating women though.

Anna mentioned another interesting phenomena. One of her beta friends used to “catch” periods off menstruating friends after sleepovers. “I still think she was wrong and it was a coincidence, and she just had a weird cycle, but she had it every two weeks and always when she had stayed over at a friend’s house she’d get her period the next day if they had it. She was adamant it was happening. Pretty intense.”

Molly’s periods were regular until her flatmate came off contraception. “I noticed after getting my IUD that my periods are very consistent. I also noticed that after about four months, when my friend changed her contraception, the timing of my period starting changing. Now at this point we’ve been synced up for the last two months. I don’t know who the Alpha was, but it might have been her since it overrode my IUD. My theory is that it’s hormones, the extra level of estrogen, that make you susceptible to the other person’s periods. Whoever has the Alpha Hormones is the Alpha Uterus. Different contraceptives have different levels of progesterone. I have no hormonal contraceptive right now and I’m the beta uterus.”

Supposedly, the closer you are to your menstruating pals, the closer you sync up. I decided to consult the council of lesbians for answers. 30% of lesbians were synced up with their girlfriends, while 70% weren’t. This isn’t including my dad, who also voted “yes” on my Instagram poll.

Local lezzie Joanne has been with her girlfriend for four years, and lived together for two. Despite lesbians being the ultimate gal pals, their periods only synced twice until a new flatmate moved in. The Alpha Uterus strikes again.

Joanne has no qualms about the Alpha Uterus usurping their sapphic bond. “The Alpha Uterus was very handy, as you knew when to prepare. She dragged us into her orbit. You can buy your pads and get your fucks out.”

“There are benefits of syncing. You can all go to the Red Tent and have fun. We could all commiserate with each other, and share our tears and period snacks. The cons are that you’re in too much pain to have fun in the Red Tent. Everyone’s kind of grumpy at the same time. You can’t do favours for each other because you’re also on your period. Then there’s nobody to do nice things for anybody.”

Ruby’s flat has a different Alpha Uterus every month, a domino effect during a wave of periods where the Alpha starts and betas follow. “Whoever is Alpha gets bragging rights for the month. Chocolate consumption goes through the roof, as does the making of pudding, and usage of heatie wheaties.” However, there is still a reigning Alpha who dominates the playing field. Ruby

believes there are certain qualities that make an Alpha Uterus. One flatmate in particular can be pinpointed, Ruby says, as she “has the strongest sexual aura out of everyone and she’s very influential. People want to be like her. They like to imitate. I’ve seen tomato sauce stains, I think people have been faking.”

I recall my floor in first year syncing up. We made a special trophy for the Alpha Uterus. If this is the case, why aren’t halls worldwide scrambling for tampons at the same time every month? There’d be a severe shortage. Maybe it’s because we were a small group of close friends. Maybe it’s because I have always had a feeble, beta uterus that cowers and whimpers in the Alpha Uterus’ wake.

Period syncing, whether real or not, has been established in menstruation canon. Anna muses why this might be. “When I was younger, it was almost a fact everyone talked about. It was stuck in my head,” she says. “When I actually Googled it, there was no science behind it. Maybe it’s just been a coincidence, or a historical thing that’s been around for a while.”

“If you’re living together in a hall, you’re bound to sync up with at least a few people,” Joanne says. “I don’t know if it necessarily means you bleed at the same time, or if your cycles coincide in a regular and reliable way.”

Ruby, despite her flat’s Alpha Uterus bragging rights, is a staunch anti-syncer. Like Joanne, she has been with her girlfriend for years and never synced up once. “People think that periods have a spiritual connection, that you’re best friends and sync up and are on the same wavelength, but I watched a BuzzFeed video when I was very young that said it didn’t exist. Women’s cycles vary and sometimes those match up. Sometimes we’d sync up perfectly, and sometimes they wouldn’t at all, and we just pretended that never happened. We’re a coven so we like to pretend we’re connected.”

“It’s probably one of those things where they haven’t studied women’s anatomy over the years as much as they have men’s,” Anna adds. “Maybe there is something there.”

We don’t know if period syncing is real, but it’s a bit sus that only 0.5% of students said that they hadn’t synced up. It also looks like lesbians don’t sync up with their girlfriends very often. Having a beta uterus may be a sign of homosexuality.

In Critic’s poll, 84 Alpha Uteri were tagged in the comments. Critic recommends placing all of them in a room for five months to determine the True Alpha Uterus. There can only be one.



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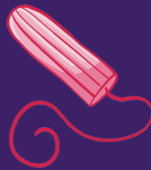
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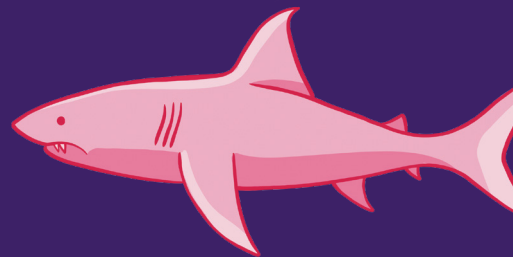
Mythbusting Menstruation Myths



By Susana Jones

Menstruation myths have been around for yonks. The term menstruation originates from the Greek words 'men' and 'menus', with men meaning 'month' and menus meaning 'moon' and 'power'. Menstruation has always been symbolically tied to power, both good and bad. It's not surprising then, that many a myth has been proposed related to menstruation.

Deadass, I feel like lots of old-timey myths came about to oppress menstruators, to keep us down and out, because non-menstruators stay afraid of our power. It's hot as fuck to see menstruators claim back this power. We can see it in such simple actions like using and colloquially redefining the word period, a word that we used to be afraid to speak aloud for fear of judgement.



Periods are controlled by the moon

Contrary to popular belief among chakra-aligning, crystal-charging, astrology-following, tarot-card-reading individuals, our Mother Moon probably does NOT control the inner flow. It's easy to see how we fall into the trap of believing this myth — Mother Moon controls the tides of our oceans, so why shouldn't they also control the tides of my uterus?

A reason why this myth might be widely believed is that a full lunar cycle is about 29 days, and the average menstrual cycle is about the same. So, if you're one of those lucky fuckers with a regular and punctual period, your bleed would most probably align with a certain phase of the moon every single time. Sounds magical!

You will attract sharks if you swim in the ocean on your period

A shark's sense of smell is powerful. They can detect blood up to a mile away if you believe the pop science fluid. So of course one might be led to believe that swimming where sharks could be present while on your period could increase their attraction to you.

But, actually, nope. If you're being smart and sanitary about it and plugging, or cupping it up, you should be fine. Even if you did decide to free-bleed in natural waters, the acceptability of which I will not comment on, apparently the amount of blood lost isn't enough to cause a swarm of sharks. The blood lost isn't all blood, but rather a hot cocktail of blood mixed with tissue and mucus. There have been no reported shark attacks on people who were menstruating at the time of attack, and in fact, far more non-menstruators have been victims of shark attacks than menstruators. Live your best mermaid life around the clock!

Then there are the mean stereotypes and harmful tropes

The following few myths are old-timey and simply untrue. They appear to be designed out of fear and spite, to steal power from the divine people who menstruate.

- Periods are dirty, gross, unhygienic, and impure. Nope.
- Only women get periods. False, the definition of vagina and uterus owners goes beyond the dichotomous, man vs. woman bounds of sex. There are plenty of menstruators who don't identify as female, and similarly, there are plenty of non-menstruators who do identify as female.
- Menstruators can control when and how much they bleed, like peepee. We wish.
- Premenstrual syndrome, or PMS, is purely psychological. Absolutely not. Many menstruators experience PMS symptoms leading up to a period, and dismissing these as fictional experiences is degrading and rude.

If you drink heaps of water during your period, it will finish faster

What a dream this would be. Imagine diluting your period out by just chugging a bunch of water. There is no concrete scientific material to support this, but getting a good amount of water in while you're on your period has been associated with reductions in cramp severity and frequency, so drink up.

Washing your hair during your period decreases your chances of getting pregnant

Truly the wackiest one of the bunch. I don't think there is any scientific backing for this myth, but it sure would be huge if true. If you're feeling lucky, and down to play with the possibility of pregnancy, please experiment around with this one and let us know what happens.

You period syncs up with your friends and flatmates

I personally believe this one to be true, but the scientific material surrounding the topic is varied and inconclusive. Period syncing, also known as menstrual synchrony, or the McClintock effect, is based on the idea that when one menstruator comes into contact with another, their pheromones (chemicals secreted outside the body to influence the behaviour of others) influence each other so that their cycles eventually line up.

Most of my menstruating friends anecdotally support period syncing, especially when menstruators are living together or spend hours with each other daily. However, scientists largely disagree with this.

Being in water stops your period

No, the uterine lining doesn't stop shedding when you're in water. But, water makes gravitational forces weaker than when you're on land, which means that period blood may slow down temporarily or not flow out of the vaginal opening while you're in the water.

Just think of it like your period blood is suspended inside your uterus, chilling out, similar to how one would float in water if you lay on your back on the surface, starfish style. As much as I despise physics, buoyancy, pressure, and suspension are truly fascinating.

I encourage y'all to open up these conversations with menstruators, have a giggle about the silly myths, and more real talk about the harmful ones and how they might contribute to negative perceptions and stereotypes surrounding menstruation. In any event, just check yourself on these myths and do the internal work to normalise and accept menstruation and periods in all their perceived and subjective ugly-ness and beauty. None of us would be here without periods, and that's on period.



WHAT DO MEN

BY FOX MEYER

Men don't talk much about periods. Some think women wear tampons all the time "just in case". Most think the pad sticks to the inside of your thighs. The idea of talking about periods seems to make men instantly flustered. We took to the streets and designed a little competition. Critic Te Arohi called up a man, asked him a question about periods, and then asked him to nominate the next man for us to ask – gaining or losing points depending on the accuracy of their answer.

The contestants consisted of: Jono, Jack, Ethan*, Sean, Hunter, Pots, Alex, Gabe, and Gabe's Dad. Their answers are as follows.

QUESTION: CAN YOU EXPLAIN TO ME WHAT A PERIOD IS AND HOW IT WORKS?

Points at stake: +1 for the three best answers, -1 for the three worst

Correct answer: Simply put, a period is the discharge of blood and tissue out of the vagina. Every month, the uterine lining thickens in preparation to grow a baby. If no egg is fertilized, the body sheds this tissue and introduces a new egg. This process is triggered by hormonal changes, which can affect mood and energy levels.

Jono: "Can I Google it? I don't really know. It is a monthly bodily cycle of ... uhhh ... expelling the egg from your uterus for, I dunno, a reset. You gotta get rid of the old egg so you can make room for a new egg so it comes out of the vagina every month in a big bloody mucus filled mess. Isn't it like the lining of the uterus strips itself out? Like a pack liner? That's pretty much the best I got. I know that it doesn't follow the moon, that's a misconception."

Critic says: For lack of a better analogy, yes, it is sort of like replacing a pack liner. Kudos for not thinking periods are like werewolves.

Jack: "It's the sloughing of endometrial cells due to hormonal changes."

Critic says: Short, correct, and confident. Point!

Ethan: "Oh god. Fuck. It's when the female releases one of the eggs ... and ... flushes out one of the eggs? Right? Shit, I should know this."

Critic says: The two women laughing in the background were all we needed to hear. -1.

Sean: "During the ovulation process, I can't remember which hormone, but it builds up the uterine lining, and then the hormones change, which sheds the uterine lining, and that's the period."

Critic says: Yeah, pretty much! Point.

Hunter: "Oh shit, you got me. Okay, you have a 28-day cycle. And in those days, there are variations in oestrogen and progesterone, and your body is preparing to become pregnant. And it balances those hormones. Ah shit, I don't know the correct nomenclature. You've kinda got me here. Essentially, cells come down

from the ovaries into the uterus lining. If they're not inseminated, then they die? Something about hormonal mood changes."

Critic says: Only one to know the hormones, nice.

Pots: "Oh it's like, breaking down of the ovary or the egg, after every month or so? Part of the egg comes out? The broken down egg, I think. I don't really know aye."

Critic says: It's definitely not the breaking down of the ovary. That would be bad. -1.

Alex: "Well, in layman's terms, every month the uterus sheds its lining because the egg doesn't get fertilized. It is then pushed out of the body."

Critic says: A man confident enough to say "in layman's terms" has got to know his stuff.

Gabe: "Uhhhhh, like a fullstop? Oh you mean a menstrual period, right, okay. Oh, oh my god, I should know this. Think back to year ten health. Oh god. It's something about the egg. That's what the egg is, yep. Let me think. It's if the egg hasn't been fertilized and that's sort of the waste? Clutching at straws here, mate, but you should call my dad and ask him."

Critic says: No, not like a full stop. -1.

Gabe's Dad: "It's the lining of the uterus sloughing because an egg hasn't been fertilized."

Critic says: Bingo! Point earned.

DO MEN KNOW MENSTRUATION?

QUESTION: HOW MUCH DOES A BOX OF SIX TAMPONS COST?

Points at stake: +1 for getting it right, +2 for best answer. -1 for wrong answer, -2 for worst answer.

Correct answer: They don't come in boxes of six. A man wrote this. A box of 16, though, comes in at about \$4 from Countdown.

Got it (guessed close to \$5): Jono, Jack, Pots, Gabe

Didn't get it (\$7 or above): Gabe's Dad, Sean, Ethan, Hunter, Alex

Who got it best:

Alex, for saying "far too much. \$4? I reckon they should be free." Hunter missed the mark with a guess of \$8-10, but gets a point for saying that "it's fucked up that condoms are subsidized as a sanitary item, but tampons aren't. I mean c'mon."

Who got it worst:

Sean for suggesting "maybe 15, 20 bucks" and Ethan for guessing \$8.99, but "up in the \$12 range if you go for the extra super ones." One box of extra super tampons, please.

QUESTION: HOW OFTEN SHOULD YOU CHANGE A TAMPON?

Points at stake: +1 for getting it right, +2 for best answer. -1 for wrong answer, -2 for worst answer.

Correct answer: Change your tampon every four hours, not to exceed eight hours.

Got it (three or more times a day): Jono, Jack, Ethan, Pots, Alex

Didn't get it (less than that): Hunter, Sean, Gabe, Gabe's Dad

Who got it best:

Ethan got it right, suggesting 3-4 times a day, or "until the river runs dry, I guess." Pots suggested "they just change it whenever they go to the bathroom I reckon" which he reckoned was at least three times.

Who got it worst:

If Hunter got periods, he'd be dead. He suggested changing a tampon once "every one to three days", though he did note that it should "not exceed seven days, because that's what you start to run the risk of infection." Technically true. You definitely, under no circumstances, should leave a tampon in for a week. "I heard a story of one lady who did and apparently she got a gnarly infection and it smelled real bad. Or something," he said.

Despite Gabe's "experiences dating women", he wasn't sure of the answer, but guessed about the right amount. He doesn't lose a point. Gabe's Dad suggested twice a day, but "it depends on the flow, which is heavy or light depending on the stage of the cycle", which is true, but not the number we're looking for. But only Hunter loses double points here, because again, he'd be dead.

QUESTION: WHAT HAPPENS IF YOU DON'T CHANGE THE TAMPON?

Points at stake: +1 for getting it right, +2 for best answer. -1 for wrong answer, -2 for worst answer.

Correct answer: Bacteria start to interact with discharge. Best case scenario, this can lead to an odour and a minor blockage. Worst case scenario is Toxic Shock Syndrome (TSS), a potentially fatal illness caused by a strep or staph infection. It causes fever, fatigue, and "skin that looks like it was scalded by boiling water."

Got it: Everyone suggested infection, so everyone gets a point.

Didn't get it: Ethan and Sean lose points, because we have to have losers.

Who got it best:

Everybody mentioned infection, so everybody gets a point. But Alex and Gabe's Dad get the bonus point for being the only ones to mention TSS. Said Alex: "I used to sit on the toilet and read all the Libra facts, and then when I was out of facts, I'd read the warnings!" Cute.

Who got it worst:

Ethan got the most flustered, and said "maybe it just gets ... I dunno! If you don't change it ... fuck. Um. I dunno. Infection or something? Maybe it falls out. No? No. Cross that one off." Sean said "I've got no idea what happens if you don't change a tampon."

FINAL SCORE AND BONUS QUESTION: BEFORE UNI, WERE YOU EVER TAUGHT ABOUT MENSTRUATION IN A CLASSROOM?

1st: Alex "Nope, never before uni. Not even mentioned, really."

2nd: Jack "Never at high school. I went to an all boys school, they literally never brought it up. But learned lots in health sci since then."

3rd: Jono "Nope, never formally taught about it."

4th: Pots "Was never taught, no. Nah. My school until year 11 was only boys."

5th: Gabe's Dad "Back in the UK in the '80s and '90s, I guess it was pretty taboo. Learned about it in biology, and I remember a great stand-up routine that questioned why we could advertise cigarettes on TV but not pads."

6th: Hunter "Yep I was taught. It was pretty poor, only one day of class in sex ed with Ms. Anderson, an 80 year old lady. I think it was mainly cartoons."

7th: Gabe "Yeah, in high school."

8th: Ethan "I went through a pretty Christian school. It was kinda taboo, in that setting. It was mentioned in sex ed, but it was pretty weird. We couldn't talk about sex or anything."

9th: Sean "Yeah, I was taught in high school. It wasn't something that everyone did though, I selected to do biology."

Mad Lib: HOW DOES MENSTRUATION WORK?

Ask a friend for words to fill in the blanks. No matter how much you fuck it up, you'll still receive a better menstrual education than anyone born before 1970.

Menstruation is the regular discharge of _____ and _____ from the inner lining of the uterus through the vagina. It is often a _____ experience, and side effects include acne, tender _____s, bloating, feelings of _____, irritability, and mood changes.

[liquid] [noun] [adjective] [body part] [emotion]

Periods are caused by a series of _____ changes in hormone production, and the structures of the _____ and _____ . The ovarian cycle controls the production and release of _____, and the cyclic release of _____ and _____ by the body.

[adjective] [body part] [body part] [noun] [liquid] [chemical]

Menstruation is a totally _____ experience and a sign that pregnancy has not occurred. Symptoms in advance of menstruation that interfere with _____ life are called premenstrual syndrome, and are normal. About 3–8% of people report experiencing extra _____ symptoms, which is abnormal, and can be a sign of something severe such as _____.

[adjective] [adjective] [adjective] [painful experience]

The most common treatment for menstrual cramps is taking _____. _____ can be used to reduce moderate to severe pain, but about one in five people do not respond to _____ and require alternative therapy, such as _____ or using a _____.

[drug] [same drug] [same drug] [another drug] [something you hold]

Menstrual fluid is the correct name for the discharge, although many people prefer to refer to it as menstrual _____. The average volume of menstrual fluid during a monthly menstrual period is _____ millilitres, though it can be higher or lower. Menstrual fluid is _____ a slightly darker colour than blood from the _____, and is only half blood by volume. The rest of the material is tissue sourced from the inside of the _____.

[liquid] [number] [adjective] [body part] [body part]

Sexual feelings and behaviours change during the menstrual cycle, with some people reporting that period sex is more _____. and that the orgasms are more _____. Before and during ovulation, high levels of _____ in the body result in a relatively increased interest in sexual activity.

[adjective] [emotion] [chemical]

Menstruation is often a taboo subject, but hopefully this informative guide will help spread the truth about this _____ phenomenon.

[adjective]

TAG YOURSELF: MENSTRUAL BRANDS

BY ANNABELLE VAUGHAN

LIBRA

- The popular one in the group
- Spends all their money at Glassons
- Only drinks vodka RTDs
- Wears Nike Air Force Ones everywhere

U BY KOTEX

- Will help you out with an assignment last minute
- Outfit repeater
- Is everybody's friend
- Only goes for drunk Maccas on the way home

STAYFREE

- Awake 24/7
- Has a mild drinking problem
- Here for a good time, not a long time
- Daddy issues

TENA

- The Mum friend
- Only drinks white wine
- Will hold your hair back while throwing up
- Mentally stable

WĀ COLLECTIVE MENSTRUAL CUP

- Hosts pot luck dinners
- Probably smokes a lot of weed
- BSc student
- Binge watched Seaspiracy on Netflix

OI ORGANIC PERIOD PRODUCTS

- Minimalist
- Only drinks oat milk lattes
- Reads while walking down the street
- Has a vinyl collection

MODIBODI PERIOD UNDIES

- Always feels misunderstood
- Thrifts
- Cleans their sheets weekly
- Blames everything on the planets

I Miss The Fun Facts on Libra Pads

By Asia Martusia King



If you've ever menstruated before the year 2021, you might remember sharting bloody chunks into the toilet while learning that oysters are ambisexual. Libra pads used to have fun facts on the inner packaging called Odd Spots. I recently decided to buy them for the first time in yonks, remembering how fun the trivia was, only to be met with immeasurable disappointment.

There was no trivia. Zilch. Not a sausage. Where did the fun facts go? When did they abandon us? I miss them every single day.

I have never felt empowered while on my period. I don't feel connected to the moon or Mother Nature. I'm crampy, bleeding, pimply, and sad. What does make me feel empowered is coming out of the bathroom and saying, "did you know that grapes explode in the microwave? It's true. I read it on a menstrual pad."

Knowledge is power. Knowledge wins me free chips and a beer tower at quiz night. If I menstruate seven days a month for 40 years, that's 3360 days, or almost ten years of straight bleeding. That's ten years of misery that could be directly translated into fun facts and trivia power. My brain would be huge. I wouldn't need a uni degree. I would be a better person, and everybody would love me.

I can honestly say that I learnt more from Libra pad fun facts than I ever did at Otago. My major in linguistics never taught me that the term karaoke means "empty orchestra" (Odd Spot #302). There's zero point studying pharmacy if you never learn that human birth control also works on gorillas (Odd Spot #86), or that the first contraceptive was crocodile dung used by ancient Egyptians in 2000 BC (Odd Spot #71).

Menstrual products are horrendously expensive. If I'm to spend \$15,000 on pads in my lifetime, I at least want my money's worth. What better investment for the future than education? Get rid of the shame and embarrassment associated with periods. Rewrite the narrative. Boost my wisdom and intelligence instead. In the words of Malala Yousafzai, "When someone takes away your pens, you realise quite how important education is."

The Odd Spots weren't just educational though. They brought a little bit of sunshine into my grim, fertile day. It's nice having something to do when cramping on the toilet. The problem here is that I feel a bit weird scrolling through Instagram and seeing my friends while doing a nasty poo. Sometimes, when I'm feeling nostalgic for the olden days, I'll put down my phone and read the back of a shampoo bottle

instead. This is nice enough, but sodium laureth sulphate with dimethicone gets old after a while. Fun facts on a menstrual pad were the distraction I craved. When you're gross and in pain, any distraction from your corporeal form is welcome, no matter how small.

Possessed with the spirit of a disgruntled boomer, I went and sent an email to Libra. Consumer Care Consultant Jacki didn't tell me why the facts ever stopped, but did give me a glimpse into the future. "We took them off temporarily," she responded. "They will be back soon, with new ones. Look out for them soon."

Where, Jacki? Where? Soon isn't enough. I'm bleeding right now and the world is ending. I cried over an episode of *Marriage or Mortgage* last night. Please give me my fun facts.

Odd Spot #212 says that teeth are the only part of the human body that can't repair themselves, but they are wrong. My heart will never repair itself after this betrayal. Never trust a Libra. You heard it here first.

UPDATE: Immediately after writing this piece, the author bought a new pack of Libra pads and found out that Odd Spots are back. Thanks, Libra.

Period Pain:

The best drugs for combatting that time of the month **By Runze Liu**

Period pains, medically referred to as dysmenorrhoea, are annoyingly painful and are an all too real struggle for people who menstruate. Here is a guide to combatting those cramps. But remember, always read the label, not all products work and if you're concerned, consult your health care professional.

Ibuprofen; the go-to drug

Ibuprofen should be your first point of call to combating the cramps. It's preferred over paracetamol because it's a non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drug (NSAID) and stops the hormone molecule prostaglandin, which is what causes these nasty cramps. What you'd likely see are 200mg tablets in the supermarket — do NOT take more than six of them in a day. It's safe, cheap, and easy to access. However, it can cause some tummy problems such as nausea. All up though, it's a 9/10 and should be the first point of call.

Or try a fancier ibuprofen mix, Nuromol

Nuromol is ibuprofen and paracetamol together. Just like a Macca's combo, it's the perfect way to take away the pain and give you comfort. It contains about 500mg of paracetamol and 200mg of ibuprofen per tablet. Don't take more than eight per day, or you could fry your liver with paracetamol poisoning. If you can't be bothered wasting money on more pills, you can simply take two paracetamol and two ibuprofen tablets together per dose. It eases off pain and inflammation. Like all drugs, use with care.

Then there's other NSAIDs

These are ibuprofen's cousins, they work in the same way. They're worth a go if Nuromol isn't cutting it. These include aspirin which can be found in supermarkets, Ponstan and Naprogesic which can be found in pharmacies, and Voltaren tablets and celecoxib, which you'll need to grab from a doctor. They all have similar side effects to ibuprofen, especially aspirin which is notorious for stomach ulcers and bleeding.

The Pill

In addition to preventing babies, oral contraceptive pills can also be effective when it comes to getting rid of period cramps. Taking it continuously, rather than with the traditional seven hormone free days, may also reduce heavy bleeding. They come in various brands and variants, however there is a small risk of blood clots. Make sure to take it the same time each day for the best outcome.

Codeine

For period pains, codeine is usually mixed with ibuprofen or paracetamol, and is only available from your doctor. Codeine is more hardcore at combatting pain, but can cause drowsiness, constipation, addiction, and shouldn't be used for more than three days in a row. However, it might not be the most appropriate for period pains. If you find yourself needing codeine, there may be something else that needs to be checked up on, so it's a good idea to go see your doc. It's best to only use it scarcely and as needed, but desperate times sometimes call for desperate measures.

Everyone's favourite drug, cannabis

Chances are you don't have access to Medsafe-approved Sativex, a prescription-only cannabinoid product containing both THC and CBD. Even then it's only used for multiple sclerosis and costs \$1,100–\$1,400 per month. For period pains, it's not scientifically proven to work, but if it helps, it helps — cannabis-based products are well known for their help in easing pain. Just know your limit, don't blaze and drive, and definitely don't purchase it from Tinder.

So there it is, your one stop guide to medicine for period pains. Just remember, if you're experiencing any hardcore pain or other severe symptoms, it's best to check up with your doctor.

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OCTAVIA COOK'S (sealup), H (human), A (anaconda), L (loosest wing), L (loosest body), O (owl), W (wood) 2021 Acrylic, silver. Courtesy of the artist and Anna Miles Gallery



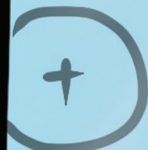
Octavia Cook
Alexandra Kennedy
Ed Ritchie
Justin Spiers

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Your next depressive
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Track



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notify significant
other

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LOCAL PRODUCE
By Annabelle Vaughan

Man Ray



Named after the famous surrealist photographer and the Spongebob villain, Man Ray is one of Dunedin's newest live bands. Man Ray sat down with Critic to talk about what it's like gigging around Dunedin, the process of creating music, and their goal to create safe spaces for everyone within the industry.

Man Ray consists of local musicians Lachlan, Seb, Rutene, and Jack. The group was initially started by Lachlan as a small song-writing project. After making music with a few different people, bassist Seb hopped on board and Man Ray began to come to fruition. "Man Ray has had about four different incarnations now, and this is its final form," said Seb. It was only a matter of time before the four guys started jamming out and booking gigs at the likes of Starters, or famous flats such as the New Yorker. "We've had a lot of gigs so far, so the opportunities are prevalent," says Jack.

"At the moment we're just a live band, we're working on becoming a recording band but it's a tumultuous process that we haven't been able to navigate yet," explains Seb. "There's a number of factors like being students, not having a lot of money or studio spaces available, and there's a level of perfectionism in the current Spotify algorithm climate," he says. Despite this, Man Ray is committed to continuing to play live and work on recording music. "We're patient and we're navigating this climate. Something will be out pretty soon," says Lachlan, "we rely on word of mouth more than social media which I think is to some benefit."

Man Ray describe their sound in a variety of ways. "When I get my friends to come along, I say it's alternative pop, punk or garage," says

Jack. "There's a bit of jazz, alternative rock, a bit of punk," says Seb. Man Ray's process, like their sound, involves multiple ideas coming together to create something dynamic and lively.

"The best way to write is to have one person have the core section of the song, that collaboration is more fun than starting from scratch," says Lachlan. Seb explains it usually begins with a core element of the songs, such as a chord progression or lyrics, then it builds from there.

Man Ray have their sights set on a variety of goals they want to achieve within the Dunedin music scene. "We're just babies in an incubator at the moment," says Seb.

"I wanna see people come to the shows and know it's a comfortable place to express themselves and jump around. It's what the environment is for. We're also trying to play with more female bands, that's part of our vision in creating a comfortable space because it's so male-dominated unfortunately," says Rutene. Alongside this, Man Ray is trying to break down the barriers and encourage more representation in the scene. "We want to lift all barriers for entry and gig space, representation is really important to us," says Seb.

In the near future, Man Ray hopes to release recorded music and continue to gain momentum through gigging. "We don't want to be a live band for the rest of our existence. The idea of having a well-constructed recorded version of our songs is ideal. We want a concrete body of music that is out there for people to listen to," says Seb.



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HOROSCOPES



Aquarius

Jan 20 – Feb 18

With exams approaching, you may need to work on your attention span.

This week's craving: a whole bag of twisties



Leo

July 23 – Aug 22

Take a nap. It must be exhausting having to think about yourself all the time.

This week's craving: butter chicken



Pisces

Feb 19 – Mar 20

Time to snuggle up, cry and shut yourself out from the world.

This week's craving: chocolate



Virgo

Aug 23 – Sep 22

Important decisions ahead, don't overthink it.

This week's craving: a pile of hashbrowns



Aries

Mar 21 – Apr 19

You aren't misunderstood, you just have anger issues.

This week's craving: attention



Libra

Sept 23 – Oct 22

Now is a good time for an ego and STD check.

This week's craving: dumplings from The Dumpling Lady



Taurus

Apr 20 – May 20

End of sem is near. Time to focus on being your best, balanced self.

This week's craving: a humble cup of tea



Scorpio

Oct 23 – Nov 21

Things are suspicious at the moment. Take a step back before making rash decisions.

This week's craving: charcuterie board



Gemini

May 21 – Jun 20

Sick of peoples shit? They're also probably sick of yours.

This week's craving: leftover pizza crusts



Sagittarius

Nov 22 – Dec 21

Your victim complex is showing. Pack it up.

This week's craving: vodka shots and a pity party



Cancer

Jun 21 – Jul 22

Don't be shy, let that certain someone know how you truly feel.

This week's craving: french fries

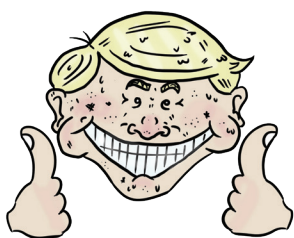


Capricorn

Dec 22 – Jan 19

It's okay to be nice to people. We're all human.

This week's craving: love and compassion



RATE

OR

BY SASHA FREEMAN

Menstrual cups. Very cool and environmentally friendly and they're way easier to insert than they look.

Period sex. Chuck a towel down and get amongst it fellas.

Getting your period just when you're about to head to the Albany St Pharmacy for a pregnancy test. A beautiful nightmare.

Jacinda making period products free in schools. Cheers Jazzy that's good cunt af!

Boyfriends that bring you chocolate when you're on your period. You will never get it but thank you for your efforts <3



HATE?

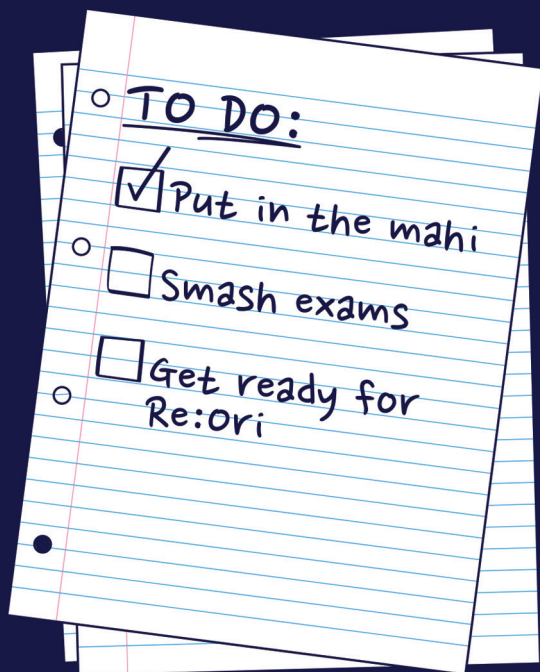
Men who refuse to buy period products. Like fuck off bro WHO CARES. When I say toxic you say masculinity x

Period poverty. Tons of girls can't go to school when they get their period because they can't afford sanitary products, which contributes to the gendered education gap. Really not a fan of that one.

Period cramps. I will bite anyone's head off who tells me it's not that bad. I'll fucking KILL you Kyle.

The fact that there aren't sanitary bins in every bathroom on campus. No one chooses to get their period! People who use male and accessible bathrooms also menstruate. It's no issue at all, just make life easier for everyone.

Getting your period on a Friday afternoon and just KNOWING you're not bringing anyone home from town this weekend :(



**Stay warm,
stay well &
good luck!**

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Wed 19th | 9pm - Late

CHAI

fri 21st | 9pm - Late

The Butlers and Muroki

fri 28th | 8pm - Late

STARTERS BAR
so hot right now

AMC & INJA - Dunedin

Sat 29th | 9pm - Late



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BOOZE REVIEW:

FIZZLISS



SHITTING YOURSELF NEVER
TASTED SO GOOD

BY CHUG NORRIS

Fizzliss caused a sensation after they were rumoured to cause drinkers to shit themselves after a box. This is apparently a perfect storm due to the high fibre content of the drink and the terrible diets of those that consume them.

The good news is that they are delicious, and that there is a new drinking game in town: drinking as many Fizzliss as possible before you shit yourself. It is 100% worth it. Despite the shitting, I had a fantastic night. The shitting yourself is not as bad as it sounds, because the majority of the Fizzliss is shat out of your system before morning, making for a minimal hangover. Additionally, the drink goes through you so quickly that it minimizes bloat in your stomach, and maximises alcohol absorption in the intestines. I'll take you through, drink by drink, so you get an impression of how it goes down.

Drink 1: It tastes fucking amazing, the sweetness of the apple is perfectly countered by the tanginess of the cranberry. I skull the last half of the can, to fully immerse my tastebuds.

Drink 2: There is no fizz, I still feel like I'm on my first drink. I did notice a slight bubbling in my stomach, but it was probably just a placebo effect.

Drink 3–4: I'm going fine. It is likely that this whole "shitting yourself" craze is some sort of mass hysteria. Unlike those other sheeple, I am enjoying the drink immensely and even beginning to get a bit buzzed. Life is good.

Drink 5: Fuck. There is a mounting pressure on my asshole. I go for a piss to relieve said pressure, but in the process I come dangerously close to opening up the battle on a second front. I take it easy on the sips but this drink still goes down very quickly.

Drink 6: I get into an argument with someone about why left-handed people are superior, it takes a while, this drink is honestly a bit of a blur.

Drink 7: En route to town, one Fizzliss in my pocket, the long distance walking is really shaking something loose. Hopefully the lines are not too long, not sure what my range is at this point. I'm at the point where I am constantly clenching against gravity. Legitimately considering just shitting in an alleyway. The only thing preventing me is a lack of toilet paper, and potentially some self-respect.

Drink 8: Going to a bar rather than a club is an excellent decision. The bouncer is suspicious about why I'm in such a rush, but I'm wearing a button up shirt so I get in. I beeline for the toilets. As soon as I am over the toilet I let loose. It's not pretty and I'm fairly drunk but I manage to keep everything in the bowl, I'm not a monster. I exit the bathroom, some poor fool is queuing. It's not my problem, I convince everyone to leave and we head to a nearby flat party after having a long yarn to some dudes on meth in the Octy.

Overall, I had a great night on Fizzliss, highly recommended. I will add that it's pretty steep — at \$1.75 per standard it may well be out of many student's price range. But if you're a white girl that can get fucked off four cans, go hard.. All I can say is that it tastes amazing, gets you fucked up, and has no fizz.

Tastes like: Serotonin, what the sun must taste like to plants, being reborn in a juicy haze

Froth level: Your first sip of Ribena after a life of watered down Raro

Pairs well with: Dark coloured trousers, bombing toilets

Taste rating: 9/10, the drink we've all been waiting for

FUCK!

I CAN'T COOK

BY ALICE TAYLOR
@ALICEOLIVIAEATS

M&M Cookies

I find that cookies are a solution to most of life's tough problems. Is your friend heartbroken? Bake them cookies. Are you stressed? Bake yourself cookies? Friend's birthday, but you're poor? Cookies. Need to say sorry? Cookies. To conclude this essay, cookies solve every issue one could possibly face.

I developed this recipe because I wasn't happy with any cookie recipe that I could find. I personally love these cookies with dark chocolate, but my flat mates love them with M&M's, so this one is for them.

INGREDIENTS MAKES 8 LARGE COOKIES

130g unsalted butter, softened and room temperature

¾ cup brown sugar

¼ cup white sugar

1 tsp vanilla paste or extract

1 free range organic egg

1 ½ cup all-purpose flour

½ tsp baking powder (if you like flatter cookies, only use ¼ tsp)

1/2 tsp salt

¾ cup M&M's or good milk, dark, or white chocolate, chopped coarsely

METHOD

1. Preheat oven to 180°C. Line 2 baking trays with baking paper.
2. Combine butter, brown sugar and white sugar with a wooden spoon until soft and creamy.
3. Add the egg and vanilla paste and beat well until fully combined.
4. Stir in flour, baking powder, and salt. Stir in chocolate until evenly distributed.
5. Roll out into 8 ping pong ball sized mounds and place onto the tray, 3cm apart. Push down slightly with the palm of your hand.
6. Bake for 12-16 minutes, until the cookies are a light golden brown but still soft and chewy.
7. Allow to cool for at least 10 minutes before serving.



The Critical Tribune

Flatmate Hasn't Cleaned Mooncup in Two Years

"Bro she just keeps leaving it on the pile of dishes like she expects us to wash it," said one disgruntled breatha. "Like, what does she think we are, a cleaning service?"

The bleeder's menstrual cup is a purple, latex design that she describes as "impossible to tell when it's dirty, other than the smell." Her flatmates describe it as "bloody disgusting, no pun intended."

It reportedly makes an appearance in the sink for a few days every month. "If we don't clean it, I think she just takes it back or gives it a rinse," said a flatmate.

Last year, the bleeder in question had purportedly bullied a younger flatmate into washing her diva cup whenever necessary, and now refuses to resume the cleaning duties herself. "Yeah, I'll find another bitch to do it eventually," she told Critic. "We all know who has the alpha uterus in this flat. In fact, I have the only uterus, so I sorta win by default."

Guy Buys Girlfriend Incorrect Tampons, Hailed By The Boys As Hero

Davo was recently the talk of the town after actually nipping up to Gardens New World to buy his girlfriend sanitary products. "What a good guy," said his mate Freddy. "So brave", said Jono, nodding in agreement.

Davo told the Tribune that on the way back from picking up some DoBros, he got "a snap from the missus" while in the queue for the self-checkout. He realised he couldn't just leave her on seen so quickly went to find her some tampons.

"I've never been down there before aye," Davo said. "There were so many bright colours. She said something about a star sign, something like Cancer or Virgo, but I couldn't find anything with a crab on it apart from Johnny's ex," he said, bursting into laughter while elbowing another breather.

After staring at the wall of menstrual products to no avail, he got a text from the boys asking where he was so he quickly grabbed the nearest box, saying "fuck, they all do the same thing, don't they?" and got out of the supermarket as fast as possible. Davo's girlfriend, Sammy, admitted that she wasn't expecting him to bring anything. While she had to go to the supermarket herself later that afternoon to get the right tampons, our breather got "points for effort".

By the time we left, the boys had surrounded our heroic lad and were chanting his name, all the while chugging down Billy Mavs and Codys faster than they can crash out of their BCom degrees.

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*Otago University students only

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MOANINGFUL CONFESSIONS

Double Dipping

Back in the innocent days of my youth (i.e. early 2020, before the world went to shit) I decided that I was going to spend my year overseas. However, I had one last conquest to tick off before I did so. Under the ruse of coming back to see my friends for one last hoorah, I arrived in Dunedin with a steely resolve: I was going to get laid.

So skip ahead a few hours and things were going well, I was fucked out of my mind at my goodbye party and setting my sights on my cute friend who I'd had a thing for ever since he grew out a mo and stopped washing his hair (every girl's wet dream). Sadly, disaster struck at the eleventh hour when I went to the bathroom to find a couple of red specks on my underwear.

Of all times, shark week had to come now?

I shoved in a tampon and thought nothing more of it. Sadly, my friend went home and my dreams of a trip to bonetown are dashed. That is, until I got a snapchat with the classic 'come over and listen to Kanye'. I was there faster than campus shop sells out of mince and cheese pies and before you know it, things are getting hot and heavy. To be honest, I don't remember much of that night. Did he have a big dick? Did he make me cum? In the morning, I said an awkward hi to his flatmates and disappeared, happy at having achieved my goal.

Fast forward to a day later. I'm in Singapore airport when I start to feel a strange sensation downstairs. I run to the bathroom, with about ten minutes until I have to catch my next flight. After pulling out the tampon I put in that morning, I discover what's happened.

I still have the tampon from two days ago stuck inside me.

It takes me what feels like years to fish around enough to get this buggger out. I feel like I'm in a haystack, reaching blindly around for the needle. Or that I've just dropped my ring into a vat of cake mix and am desperately trying to rescue it. You get the picture. Anyway, I finally successfully perform the excavation and make my flight.

To this day, I have no idea how the sex worked logistically. How did I not realize I had a tampon in while this guys dick was inside me? Surely it can't be that small? And how did I put another one in the next morning, blissfully unaware I was double-dipping? My vagina must be a freaking cave.

The best part is that after I came back to uni I'm still friends with this guy. I still don't know whether he knows that he fucked a girl while she had a tampon in.

Although I have a little PTSD, I surprisingly never got TSS. Go figure.

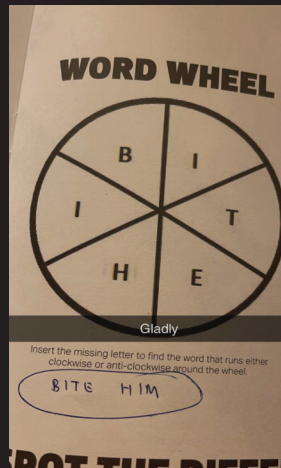
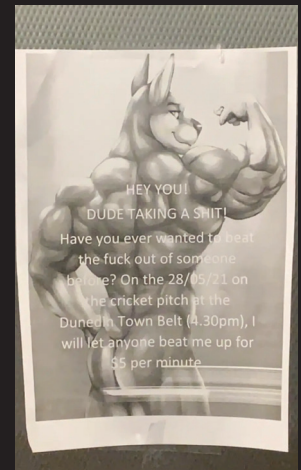
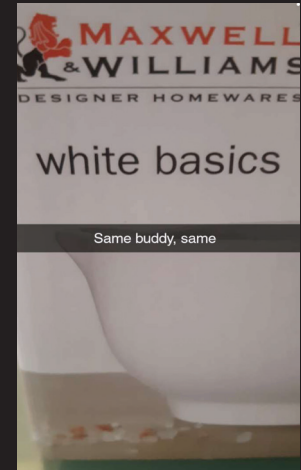
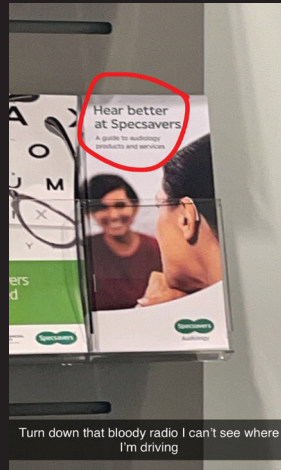
SNAP OF THE WEEK

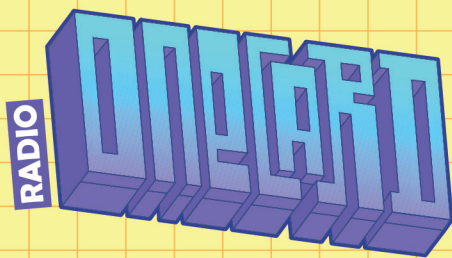


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SNAP OF THE WEEK

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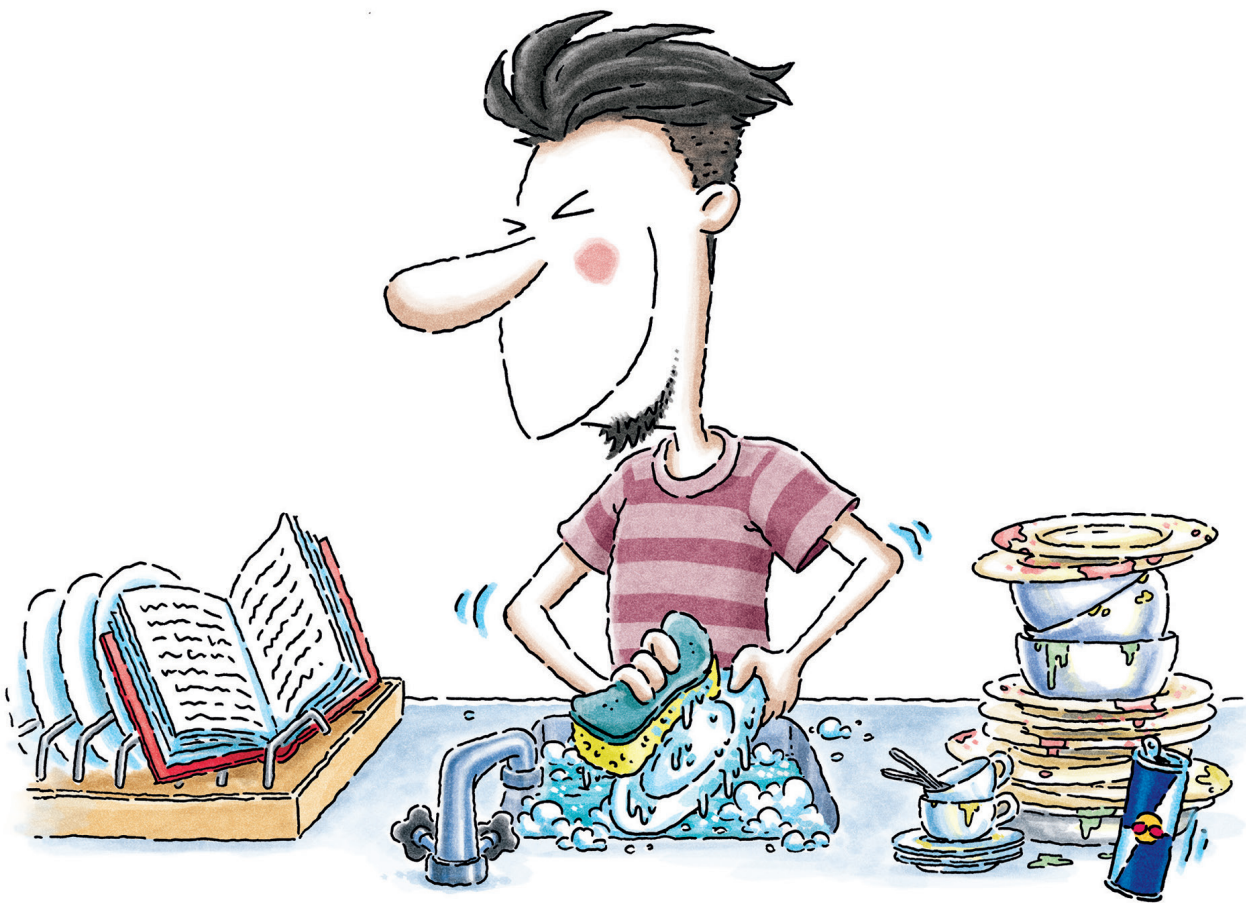
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COSMIC

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READ, RINSE AND REPEAT?



RED BULL GIVES YOU WIIINGS. 