



Auckland Women's Centre QUARTERLY

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Feminists are Funny



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Auckland's Q Theatre was packed out for a riotous evening of fun, feminism and fundraising for Auckland Women's Centre on 18 June. The fabulous Michele A'Court was incredibly generous, not only in lining up all of the comedy acts, but also in MCing the event and contributing her own inimitable brand of humour throughout the evening.

All of the comedians donated their time free to the event, with Ray travelling from Christchurch to perform.

The acts were:

- **Melanie Bracewell**
- **Irene Pink**
- **Ray Shipley**
- **Laura Daniel**
- **The Fan Brigade**
– **Livi Mitchell**
and **Amanda Kennedy**
- **Louise Beuvink**
- **Lana Walters**
- **Sera Devich**
- **Justine Smith.**

It was a once-in-a-lifetime experience seeing 10 feminist comedians perform at one gig.

And those who attended will in future always have a jingle running through their heads when they hear the words "Levin" or "RSA" (and possibly also "Lynn" or "Jim")...■

Photo: Back Row: Ray Shipley, Melanie Bracewell, Justine Smith, Lana Walters, Livi Mitchell, Michelle A'Court, Irene Pink; front Row: Katherine McAlpine (Stage Manager), Amanda Kennedy, Sera Devich, Louise Beuvink, Sophie Richmond and Leonie Morris (AWC); absent: Laura Daniel.

Government Cuts Women's Centre's Positive Parenting Single Mums' Project

The Ministry of Social Development (MSD) informed us in May that our contract with it for our SKIP Positive Parenting Project would not be renewed beyond 30 June. The contract had run for six years so we were shocked and devastated by this news. The project was supporting more than 600 single mum families in low income suburbs, almost half of whom were Māori and Pasifika.

MSD assured us that it did not have concerns about our project but wanted to spread the small amount of Positive Parenting funding around other community groups.

The closure of the Single Mums Parenting Project is a significant blow to AWC and to the community. The project worked to reduce child maltreatment across Auckland by enabling single mums to build support networks, gain parenting strategies, learn from each other, and access community support, including food from the community garden and recycled goods and clothes.

AWC Manager Leonie Morris said "Parenting is the hardest job in the world and single mums are doing it on their own with few resources. The child poverty rate for children in single parent households is 47%."

AWC is going to keep a small part of the project operating – Single Mums on Sundays. This is a support group held on the last Sunday of the month from 1pm – 3.30pm at AWC. Mums can share their concerns and successes and learn from, and support, each other. Children are welcome and the focus of this group is on single mums with children between 0 and 5 years old.

We have reluctantly made our Single Mums Coordinator,



Rochelle Carr, redundant and thank Rochelle for the generosity, wisdom and creativity she gave to the job. We wish her all the best for the future.

Now that AWC receives no funding from the Government we need your support more than ever. Please consider using the donation form and FreePost envelope enclosed to become a regular donor. ■

New Centre Counsellor, Crystal Margaret McLean



We warmly welcome Crystal to our team as a counsellor. Crystal identifies as lesbian and offers counselling specific to rainbow women as well as general counselling. Crystal has worked with women with a range of issues including; sexual identity, transgender women, relationships, substance use, addictions, trauma, anxiety, depression and stress.

Depending on the client, she can offer them help by using a variety of approaches for example; narrative, CBT, DBT and recovery model. Each client is unique therefore each one would have a personalised plan that would suit them.

Crystal holds a degree BPoSP (Bachelor of Social Practice) majoring in Counselling (Unitec). She is a registered member of New Zealand Association of Counsellors and continues to do professional development courses. To view her website, go to www.therapeuticlifecounselling.co.nz

Crystal offers daytime appointments within a sliding scale of \$40 - \$80, and some after hours and weekend appointments for \$80. For appointments with Crystal, please call us on 376 3227 x 0 or email: info@womenz.org.nz. ■

Gender Analysis Essential to Eliminating Domestic Violence



The Government has recently made a flurry of announcements, introduced legislation to Parliament and held a Family Violence Summit in Wellington on 7 June. Justice Minister Amy Adams has pledged to make combatting this country's shockingly high rates of intimate partner violence her top justice portfolio priority.

But what is missing from the Government's work is gender analysis. This is epitomised in the fact that the key law proposed to address the problem is called the Family and Whānau Violence Legislation Bill. Replacing the word "domestic" in the current Domestic Violence Act with "family" in the bill explicitly deletes gender from the discussion.

This is dangerous and means that Aotearoa will fail in its efforts to tackle domestic violence. Taking gender out of the equation results in policies that, for example, call for both parties to be arrested when domestic violence is perpetrated and the female victim tries to defend herself.

If the root cause of domestic violence - sexism and the view that women are inferior to men - is not tackled, how can domestic violence be eliminated? What is needed is work on many fronts to get rid of Aotearoa's hyper-masculine culture of venerating and rewarding men, and demeaning and ignoring women.

This patriarchal mentality runs through all of our institutions and pervades every aspect of life in this country, from revering male sporting successes while ignoring women's sporting achievements, to massively undervaluing and underpaying jobs regarded as "women's work."

We also cannot separate sexism from racism, heterosexism, ageism and ableism. The New Zealand Family Violence Clearinghouse suggests that we need;

- Men to challenge other men's violence, not engage in violence themselves, and address the root causes of violence;
- Programmes involving a "gender transformative" approach to challenge rigid gender roles and critically questions what influences these; and
- Positive messages to "invite" rather than "indict" men, and the use of culturally-relevant material.

In other countries, school, community and media-based interventions have been identified as the most effective methods of promoting gender equality. Examples are safe dating programmes, courses about abuse and gender stereotypes, and programmes working exclusively with male groups. ■



Women's Choice Election Forum

All genders welcome

There will be plenty of time for your patai and kōrero

Chair: Professor Judy McGregor
Head of the School of Social Sciences and Public Policy, AUT

Speakers

- **National Party** Erica Stanford
- **Labour Party** Jacinda Arden, MP
- **Māori Party** Cinnamon Whitlock
(Ngapuhi, Ngati-Kahu ki Whangaroa, Te Rarawa)
- **Green Party** Jan Logie, MP
- **NZ First** Tracey Martin, MP
- **Mana Party** Tracey-lee Repia
(Ngapuhi, Ngati Porou, Uenuku nga Iwi)

Monday 7 August, 7pm - 9pm

University of Auckland, Lecture Theatre Lib B28
underneath the main library, cnr Alfred & Princes Sts.



Organised by: the National Council of Women of New Zealand (Auckland Branch), Auckland Women's Centre, AUSA Women's Rights Officers, the Hand Mirror Blog and the Women's Studies Association NZ/Pae Akoranga Wāhine.

Theatre Review: If There's Not Dancing at the Revolution I'm Not Coming

Basement theatre, Saturday 17th June

Created and Performed by Julia Croft,
Directed by Virginia Frankovich.

Review by Mira Taitz

Julia Croft's *If there's not dancing at the revolution I'm not coming* feels familiar. The movies you've grown up with, the music videos you've seen, the tunes you've endured in the fluorescent hell of a St Luke's changing room.

Even if you've been living under a rock like me, (whispers: "what's that?" "Notting Hill") you'll get the message.

Basically you're watching how pop culture treats women's bodies. Stuff you breathe every day, but this time you've got some badass feminist 3D glasses on. Where were you Julia Croft when I was watching Titanic in high school?

Croft effortlessly shows us how ridiculous and tragic this all is. Reading a movie script, her pace and tone are enough to have us in stitches. She doesn't need to lecture us: the material itself is ridiculous.

In 55 minutes Croft unpacks a rainbow of tropes about women as she takes off each layer of clothing to reveal a costume underneath: the French maid, the sweet girl next door, the music video dancer, the ballerina, the seductress. Finally, she reveals her naked body, but this is no striptease.

The show undercuts the male gaze and reveals how patriarchal pop culture stereotypes smother women. Laugh and be repulsed at how capitalism uses women's bodies to sell fast food and fizzy drink. You may never look at a combo



with chips and Coke the same way. It's fast and entertaining, a clever kaleidoscope of props, costumes, dancing and multimedia.

It was good to see the trigger warning on the door for themes of violence against women. I howled with laughter, was disturbed, and then unexpectedly found myself weeping quietly when the lights came up. Croft was fundraising to take her other show, *Power Ballad*, to the Edinburgh Fringe. I hope she's back soon. When she is, go and see her.. ■

Auckland Women's Centre



Contact & Services

Contact us

09 376 3227 x 0
info@womensz.org.nz
www.awc.org.nz

Centre Hours

Monday to Friday
9:00 am - 4:00 pm

Library Hours

Monday to Friday
9:00 am - 4:00 pm

Services

- + Women's Support: free support, info, advice and referral
- + Community Education
- + Community Events
- + Counselling
- + LGBT support
- + Low Cost Massage
- + Self Defence Classes
- + Opportunities to talk and support feminism
- + Diversity Forums
- + Support Groups