



# THE AGENDA



# BEING QUEER IN 2020 IS...

"Googling 'was the satisfier pro made by a straight'" because my gay brain can't understand anyone other than a queer being able to make me orgasm in less than 2 minutes."

"Realising that sexuality is arbitrarily constrained by binary ideas of normality, then realising everything else is too."

"Being welcomed into a community, but feeling isolated when away from these people."

"Self-acceptance"

"Repoliticising being queer!!!"

"I feel lucky to be part of this community in a country and a time when it's MOSTLY safe and accepted. But I think there is always room for more and we should never stop trying to make the world a better place for queer people to not just exist but flourish."

"We owe it to everyone before us to learn of our history and rally up."

"Queer is a lovely word that helps me not have to label myself; it just means me being."

"A time to understand who I am and how that fits into how the world works."

"Honestly just tryna stay alive and be walking around eggshells, not being able to be me."

# NOTES FROM THE EDITORS

Kia ora,

Virgo rising, Gemini moon. Year of the wood tiger (a fortune teller once told me that's extremely unlucky). I'm a Chinese-New Zealander, born and raised in Auckland.

What are we trying to do with The Agenda? The big scary queer agenda, slowly infiltrating the hearts of all those pure and good. We received an overwhelming number of submissions, and many more we hope to include in our future editions. While we can't pretend to have captured all the corners of what it means to be part of the rainbow community, we hope there is something in here that reaches into your heart. Gives it a nudge, and says, "Hey! We got you. You aren't alone. And we love you."

Arohanui,  
Sherry

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Hey everyone,

My name is Lavi and I am one of the editors of The Agenda Zine for 2020! A bit of background about myself is that I was born in Israel and moved to Aotearoa when I was four years old.

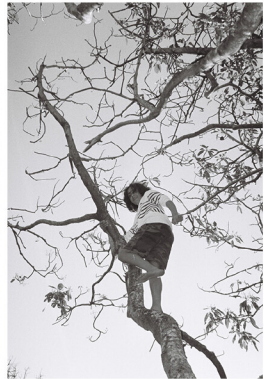
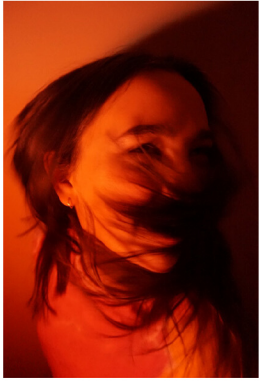
I really want this Zine to be a space for queer people to feel heard and to be represented. So often and in so many places, queer people need to fight for the space to be heard. I want this Zine to counter that culture. I want this to be a space where queer people feel they have a voice and have people to listen to what they have to say.

As you know, every person experiences queerness differently. This Zine is an opportunity to hear about how different people understand their queer identities. With each submission we get, I learn a bit more about queerness. I encourage you to also read with the intention of learning something new.

This Zine is filled with lols, cool pics, opinions and strong pieces of writing. I invite you to laugh, be entertained, learn, and then also to send us a submission about your experience! Enjoy!

Lots of love,  
Lavi

**Junior**  
Sophie Te Whaiti





# ROUNABOUT



The road began with an awkward first boyfriend; a three-month journey bordering Giving It a Go, but never quite entering the Territory of Love. Freshly eighteen and eager to feel something, the prospect was exciting. But alas, it ended before it ever really began. After a quick visit to Ouch That Kinda Hurt, I dropped the handbrake and kept rolling forward.

Romantic pursuits shifted to the back seat, while a series of overseas adventures took the wheel. Various forms of fleeting connections presented themselves at regular intervals.

The Lips of a Beautiful Brazilian Man provided an opportune pit stop, which I thoroughly enjoyed.

A bold, blonde American woman suggested a compelling alternative, offering a short stay at Do You Like Girls? Because We Could Just Make Out. Although intrigued, I politely declined.

A way-out-of-my-league-all-Aussie-bloke kindly refuelled my empty tank of Self Esteem with a Light Caress of the Thigh in the back of a taxi. I tried hard to feel something other than an insatiable desire to fill my drunken mouth with the creamy, thick garlic sauce from the local kebab shop – but it seemed my taste buds overpowered any sensations I could arouse in my nether regions.

All such visits were pleasant and fun – informative even – yet nothing really seemed to make me want to pull over and explore in further depth. I couldn't really care less if I missed out on the Chiseled Jawline on Mann Street, but nor did my engine rev with enthusiasm for the Soft Curves of Fannyside Road.

Happy as I was, cruising the highway of Who the Fuck Cares Right Now Anyway, I found myself halted with a flat tyre at the previously undiscovered location of Lovely Dutch Girl.

Although an unexpected stop, I figured it might be a good opportunity to take a look around. It seemed a curious place – one with significantly more allure than I had experienced before – but timing is everything and I had so much more to see. Before long, it was time to carry on. I put the map in the boot for safekeeping, letting it sit in the back for a while until I was ready to pull it out and inspect it more closely.

Over a year later, parked back in my suburban South Australian driveway, it seemed it was time to dust the page off and revisit the neglected path. Lovely Dutch Girl, having moved into the region of Excellent Friend, had begun browsing for land in Potential Crush District, before announcing she would be temporarily vacationing in my home city.

As she exited customs and clunked towards us with her giant backpack, I suddenly crashed full throttle into the embankment of Okay I Definitely Also Like Girls.

A drunken plunge into the River of Confession resulted in an exhilarating yet painful belly flop. Every inch of my skin stung with a burning fury I had never known before. I turned off the ignition and for the first time, stood absolutely still. This was a place I wanted to stay in for a while.

Then she had to go home. We agreed to meet again soon at It's Okay I'll See You in May, before the location was demolished to make way for a new establishment called COVID-19. Being stuck on opposite sides of the Vast Ocean, I had no choice but to take out a more long-term lease in Ouch That Kinda Really Hurt.

***"What are you? What do you like? Where do you belong? Choose something!"***

So, while I've sat involuntarily conked out at Too Much Time to Think for a prolonged period, a few well-meaning people have come along to push me to the Roundabout of Choice.

*Well? Where are you going next?*

It's always seemed funny to me, that people are so desperate to decide.

*If you haven't chosen a route, what are we to do with you? What are you? What do you like? Where do you belong? Choose something! Pick a label! You're confusing us!*

Instead, I've decided to drive up over the curb and sit idle right in the middle of the Refuge Island. Seeing the vehicle parked outside of a designated space has, for some, triggered a curious discomfort. But I don't yet know where I want to go next and I'm not in any rush.

For the time being, you'll find me sprawled out on the back seat observing the traffic circling around me. People are coming and going, looking for the perfect spot to rest their weary queer hearts. But it seems exhausting to me, to commit to any one road at this point in time. None of the exits seem to be the perfect fit.

Whichever exit we decide to take, us queer folk, at least we know we can all come back and meet for a drink on neutral ground. This valuable land, I have declared: It's Not Really Anyone Else's Fucking Business. I'll see you there.

# 2020 horoscopes



## Aries

As a high-energy queer you're going to be needed in 2020 to tolerate the straights on our behalf. 2020 is going to suck for you.



## Taurus

As a persistent and inflexible top, you need to learn to let go of control and chill the fuck out. 2020 is going to suck for you.



## Gemini

Hi Gemini. Everyone knows you're too-faced / hot-and-cold but at least you're good looking. 2020 is going to suck for you.



## Cancer

You're the picture of Elio at the end of Call Me By Your Name: a queer emotional wreck. 2020 is going to suck for you.



## Leo

Because you're the centre of attention, you're the queer that represents us to others. Put on a good face. 2020 is going to suck for you.



## Virgo

You're a fussy perfectionist. Stop spring-cleaning your grindr messages and live your life. 2020 is going to suck for you.



## Libra

Your diplomacy and even-temper mean Ru Paul's Drag Race is a good outlet show for you. Go watch it. 2020 is going to suck for you.



## Scorpio

Scorpios are hard work but at least you're queer. Gay means happy - remember to have fun. 2020 is going to suck for you.



## Sagittarius

Sagittarians are often described as "straight as an arrow". This joke writes itself. 2020 is going to suck for you.



## Capricorn

You're very serious. Please remember that you're gay so you should also let loose and have fun. 2020 is going to suck for you.



## Aquarius

You're a creative, Stevie-Nicks-Type. Essentially Aquarians were born to be queer. Congrats. 2020 is going to suck for you.



## Pisces

Queer Pisceans are the originators of the Past walk. Thank you for creating a Fundamental gay trait. 2020 is going to suck for you.

## Madam La'Queer says...

Venus this year is teaching us about love, acceptance and what your pube hair length tells you about your firstborn child. Getting to know your "between-me-down-there's" will have a huge impact on your aura and as such, your offspring.



# Disney Princesses for your gay heart

Zoë Larsen Cumming

Hear ye, hear ye. The year is 2002. A tiny, bisexual Zoë stares up at Ariel's cleavage on a grainy VCR. Somewhere in the background her Nana makes a banana milkshake. Bob the Builder toys scatter the floor. The stage is set for romance. Soon her crushes would mature to the likes of School of Rock's Katie (cellooo, you gotta bass), Doctor Who's Rose Tyler and the women on the cover of her parents' Ali G DVD (a horrendous thought, I know). But for now, this scantily clad, hideously malnourished fish cartoon was the apple of her impressionable eye. In honour of looking back to what were in hindsight my first crushes, I've compiled a list of which Disney princesses I would take out to some royal banquet and hastily elope with (painfully wait while no one made a move because we couldn't work out if the other was queer or like, just being really nice), and those who I would slowly back away from maintaining eye contact before legging it down some palace corridor.

## Would take to a banquet

Tiana works hard, has a healthy relationship with her mum, and can make a mean gumbo. In this parallel universe I'd be a Real House Wife of New Orleans while she impressed everyone at her restaurant. Then when she was home we'd listen to the music her crocodile (alligator??) plays and dance into the night on the side of the Bayou. She is, in my opinion, the most underrated Disney princess and also, dare I say it, the best. Also, Naveen is the only attractive Disney prince. Sue me.

Jasmine takes no shit, is rich af, owns a TIGER, is definitely an Aries, and absolutely slaughters a two piece. My affair with Jasmine would be passionate, fleeting, and end in heartbreak - just as it should. She could punch me in the face and I would say thank you. Aladdin didn't deserve her.

I feel like Belle would be perfect for me when we're 70 and just want to wear track pants, a 1996 Baz Luhrmann's Romeo and Juliet floral shirt and read books in absolute silence without ever touching each other. I can't wait for the day where I live with the love of my life, but sleep in my own bed in my own wing of an enormous palace. However, her long fingernails frightened me as a child. Hindsight's 2020, baby. (It's worth noting that this far through writing I've never felt lamer in my entire life, but in for a penny in for a pound.)

I love Ariel, but I do think I would get bored of her. She's more on this list out of obligation for my past self. She is very pretty and sings well. I just don't want someone to love me unconditionally. Also, she really is a fish, and I don't think I can look past something like that.

## Honourable mentions

Merida, because she's badass and I want to learn archery.

Rapunzel, for her classic bi bob.

Elsa, a queer icon for sure, but personally too angsty for me.

## Would avoid like the plague

Snow White always weirded me out. Even as a kid I hated her weird, fluffy bob. I hated it. Also her voice. Quit the crying bitch and take responsibility for your life. I get the Queen tried to kill you. Move on. The monarchy is crumbling. Eat the rich. Also, I feel like there was an intense polyamory arrangement happening with the dwarves, and I'm just not prepared to immerse myself into that situation.

I once peed outside in the rain to avoid the rats that plagued a house I was staying at. Due to the fact Cinderella's friends are exclusively mice, it's just not worth it. (The gay queer icon in this movie is Lucifer, the cat).

Sleeping Beauty: Lazy bish.

# F \* \* \*

# "CONVERSION" "THERAPY"

In 1986 Aotearoa legalised sex between men. In 2013 same-sex marriage was legalised. In 2020 the Government refused to ban conversion therapy. Will 2020 join these dates in the history books? A step backwards to be remembered?

- Jess Dellabarca

Conversion therapy attempts to change a person's sexuality, gender identity or expression. It doesn't work, but causes serious harm to our LGBTQIATakatāpui+ community. It perpetuates the idea that sexuality and gender identity are an individual's choice rather than an unchosen but essential characteristic of a person's dignity and humanity. The practice is inconsistent with mainstream scientific consensus, the New Zealand Bill of Rights Act, and internationally recognised human rights. Survivors have likened the practice to torture. It leads to an increase of LGBTQIATakatāpui+ experience with depression, anxiety, substance abuse, homelessness and suicide – rates of which are already shockingly high in our community.

In 2019, the Justice Select Committee received two petitions urging the Government to ban conversion therapy. Around 20,000 people signed to show their support towards an Aotearoa without conversion therapy. Disappointingly, the select committee came back saying they did not recommend a ban because more work was needed before it could

be banned, stating: 'thought must be given to how to define conversion therapy, who the ban would apply to, and how to ensure that rights relating to freedom of expression and religion were maintained'.

If New Zealand is to ban conversion therapy, these areas need to be addressed. In response to this, Rainbow Law has looked at overseas' legislation, medical definitions, and the impacts of conversion therapy to suggest an outline for the New Zealand government.

#### How to define conversion therapy:

Conversion therapy attempts to cure people from homosexuality. Means of attempting to achieve this cure range from being told homosexuality is predatory to loneliness, to "praying away the gay," and electrical shock therapy.

NEW THEORY CLAIMS  
HOMOSEXUALITY  
CAN BE CURED



For English musician and religious commentator, Vicky Beeching, it meant that at age 16 she took part in an exorcism in front of 4000 people to remove the devil of homosexuality inside of her. The ongoing implications of this meant that she was eventually hospitalised, and "buried the pain by taking on more and more work, until my body grew so stressed and exhausted that I developed an auto-immune condition". Domestically, conversion therapy can look like members of the community knocking on the door, using emotional manipulation and coercion when offering to give advice and help cure homosexuality. It is evident that experiences of conversion therapy are broad. Because of this, we think conversion therapy should be defined as:

- any practice or treatment by any person that seeks to change, reduce, suppress, hide, convert or eliminate a person's sexual orientation, gender identity and/or gender expression; and
- does not include any practice or treatment, which does not seek to change a person's sexual orientation, gender identity and, a gender expression, or which-
  - assists an individual undergoing a gender transition; or
  - provides acceptance, support and understanding of a person, or facilitation of a person's coping, social support and identity exploration and development, including sexual orientation-neutral interventions.

This definition is informed by legislation in the United States and Ireland. It purposefully doesn't limit the practice to accredited practitioners, as we know harm can be caused by different areas of the community.

#### Who the ban would apply to:

We think the ban should apply to vulnerable people in Aotearoa, however there is room for discussion regarding this definition. Why should a practice that is so obviously harmful be allowed? Should anyone, even a non-vulnerable adult, be able to consent to this level of harm?

Our decision to suggest limiting the ban to vulnerable people follows the path paved by countries such as Germany, Argentina and Fiji, as well as states in America including New Jersey and California where the ban is limited to minors or vulnerable adults. This is in line with the current political climate that values an individual's freedom and liberty. We hope that beginning with a ban on vulnerable people protects those at greatest risk, and is able to be expanded to include every person as political consensus shifts.

A vulnerable person should be defined as:

- Under the age of 18 years; or
- A person that falls under the definition of "vulnerable person" in s 2(1) of the Crimes Act 1961; or
- Considered by the Court to be particularly at risk when taking into account the person's age, maturity, health, disability, social or other conditions including any situation of dependence, any physical or psychological consequence of an offence on that person, the New Zealand Bill of Rights Act and any other factors the Court may determine is relevant.

*How to ensure that rights relating to freedom of expression and religion were maintained:*

Human rights law in New Zealand is not as clear cut as one might expect. Rights sometimes conflict, and when this happens, they need to be balanced. Therefore, those arguing that conversion therapy may infringe on rights relating to freedom and of expression fail to understand the complex interaction of rights in this context.

Section 13 of the New Zealand Bill of Rights Act protects freedom of thought, conscience and religion. This includes the right to adopt and to hold opinions without interference. This right is not absolute and can be qualified if necessary and proportionate to protect other rights (aka if it is a justified limitation). Section 19 of the New Zealand Bill of Rights Act allows freedom from discrimination and encompasses discrimination based on sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression. Section 9 of the New Zealand Bill of Rights Act states that everyone has the right not to be subjected to torture or to cruel, degrading, or disproportionately severe treatment or punishment. It is arguable as to whether a ban on conversion therapy infringes religious freedom at all. Conversion therapy is not a practice that lies at the core of religious expression - a minimal number of religious adherents perform it,

and its validity is rejected by many more. Activities generally considered to be at the core of religious expression are listed in section 15 of the New Zealand Bill of Rights Act and include activities such as worship, observance, practice, or teaching.

In the alternative, if conversion therapy is considered to fall under the umbrella of religious freedom, it is necessary to restrict religious freedom. Banning conversion therapy does not prevent people from holding religious beliefs, which is at the core of the section 13 right. It merely prevents a specific practice that is not tied to any core religious expression. On the other hand, allowing conversion therapy allows harm to be perpetuated against sexual and gender minorities, infringing on their freedom from discrimination.

The mental and physical health and life of those subjected to conversion therapy must be valued more highly than the right of people to perform a niche practice that is not at the core of religious beliefs. The state must curtail certain freedoms to prevent ascertainable harm to others. The harm to the right of freedom from discrimination, if conversion therapy were allowed, is much greater than the harm to religious freedom if conversion therapy were banned.

The further thought that the Government needs to ban conversion therapy is reasonably straight (haha) forward. The harm it causes is inexcusable, and a considerable number of New Zealanders support a ban. Protect our queer kiwis.

**"protect  
our queer  
kiwis"**







# THAILAND



the 14<sup>th</sup> century poem from the text "SAMUTTHAKHOT KHAM CHAN"

described (very graphically) lesbianism between palace concubines.



cruals.

Even a century later when whippings were supposed to deter concubines from engaging in gay acts (reverse-psychology much), the Thailand Palaces were rampant with homos

# AOTEAROA

→ takatāpui ←



CARMEN

takatāpui (queer Māori folk), were accepted long before Captain Cook showed up. Homoerotic Whakairo gay settler reverends and a rich ORAL history fill Aotearoa's QUEER BACKSTORY!!



TAKATĀPUI • QUEER MĀORI.





# UGANDA

Alternative sexualities + gender expressions were not abnormal.



Robin Hammond

Communities had varying degrees

of recognition: the Lango people had their 3rd gender, and everywhere else accepted **HOMOSEXUALITY!**



# MEXICO



Fabian Guerrero

Neither men nor women, two-spirit community members were the spiritual traversers between men + the intangible world. Different groups differed in behaviour towards homo-sexuality.



David Graham



Myan priests would perform ritualised same-sex acts, the Aztecs punished homosexuality by entrail extraction, and the Toltec were extremely tolerant of LGBT+ members.

# dear blue

## dear blue (1999)

A white van patiently sits perched on the kerb, doors open, a foreign anomaly at the entrance of my home. Inside is the grey silhouette of a gaunt creature, tugging me towards them with wisps of smoke wrapping around my throat. I am breathless next to this alien. Who is this Blue? Its eyes look desolate and barren, glaring at me with indifference.

We both sit facing the skyline, the sun elapsing behind the roof of my house, a scenic conclusion to my silent encounter with an alien I would never see again.

## dear BLUE (2001)

Something is wrong with me. Every morning I put on a porcelain mask, rubbing dirt into its cracks to hide the mug beneath. Pointed words of animosity beat my face to the gods. They colour my lids with shades of purple and hues of blue. I am not playing my role correctly. Blue. Maybe if you were around to help me, I would have the right face. I'm sure if you were here you would be able to protect me.

## dear Blue (2004)

Can a daisy ravished by the teeth of a rose still be called a daisy? Breathless by its deep, dense aroma; an intoxication to be pierced by its thorns. Each prick seducing the young flower into a blissful fantasy; a delusion of safety and security. Who desires a rose but someone who has never known its scent? Frail and broken, I fold my bruised petals into the holes left by the roses' embrace, silently hiding my shame. My fear. My longing. Where are you Blue?

## dear blue // 2006

I am being shipped away. Like an impulse buy from some cheap clothing store, her eyes look at me bloodshot with remorse. Sirens dash around her, dropping sweet juices of regret into her mouth. The taste reminding her of a past too distant to be reality. I no longer have a place in her world. Perhaps there was never a place for me to begin with. While I was learning to conceal the colours on my face in the vast emptiness within, perhaps you saw something you didn't want to see. This is what I will tell myself. At least then I can understand why you freely throw me to the side like trash reeking with the slick gloss of shame.

## dear blue / 2008

My feet are swollen, and breath clasped. Beads of sweat swim down the slopes of my cheeks and mingle with the salty crevices carved out by my tears. I have returned to the house where I first met the alien. It was you wasn't it? There is a lingering fragrance of fresh daisies in the air. With it are illusions of a simpler time, dreams lit by the final rays of dusk. I sit on the fresh tar seal watching the sun elapsing behind the roof of my old house just as we did the first time we met. I close my eyes and dream of a world of where I am wanted. A world where I am loved. The sun is in rest. My wish is running closer. A pair of golden orbs cascading towards me, two angels beckoning me with a promise of happiness. Their welcome is deafened by the screech of a tortured soul. The faint stench of diesel kissing my lips. The wails of life whipping my ears. I failed.

## dear Blue - 2013

It wasn't my fault. It wasn't because of me.

They taught me that. Their smile was one I had never seen before; Their embrace was one that filled me entirely with warmth and colour. They dragged me from the trenches of my own self-pity and taught me how to depend on myself. Their love is as foreign to me as your silhouette from that distant day. You know... I used to think it was you who would save me Blue. But when I sat outside my old house on that day, my thoughts of you became impaled with the stark reality you would never come. The only one deluded was me.

## Dear Blue (2017)

Some foreigner has messaged me saying he is your son. The thought of unravelling a chest buried deep within me shakes me to my core but I agree to meet. Anxious and guilty I unwillingly look into the eyes of this earnest man and reluctantly give him my number knowing you would receive it. I don't know why I did it. I'm not ready to talk to you. But I think I feel comfort knowing the decision lays with me.

## dear blue: 2020

LGBTQ+ people choose who our family are. Where blood has choked me faster than water; I have found peace in a collection of individuals who love me and welcome me as I am. I deserve to live, for no one else but my authentic self. I won't pick up your calls Blue. From time to time I listen to you ridicule my silence. A percussion of gestures and retorts gifted to me by an obnoxious beep. Bringing you into my life is my decision and I will do it when I am ready. If I am ever ready. For now, I will start with learning to love myself. Beautiful and broken.

- tania abraham



Sophie Te Whaiti

Sometimes we think we desire things we don't feel,  
Sometimes all I want to do is hug.  
Sometimes a little space is all I need,  
Sometimes I'm grounded with my thoughts and feelings.  
Sometimes my thoughts and feelings are forgotten.  
Sometimes things go unplanned,  
But asexuality I understand

- Assaf Rothman Berman



# DIME-A-DOZEN

“ Despite ongoing growth of queer understanding in Aotearoa, there is a huge lack of knowledge regarding one of the most historically significant queer societies: The Dorian Society. ”

Formed in 1962, Wellington, The Dorian Society set out to “promote a social life amongst its members”. Their aim was to provide a safe social haven for homosexual men in a “cosmopolitan coffee-house and club” atmosphere, that was inspired by the Queer Dutch organisations (aptly named) Culture en Ontspanningscentrum (CoC). An “exclusively queer venue”, the society was to supplement other make-shift Queer hotspots such as Wellington’s Royal Oak Hotel. What is remarkable about the Society is not their political activism, rather their communal mission. The Society endeavoured to create queer space that was more about community and identity building than just a vigorous party life (although the latter did regularly occur).

As a senior member, Jack Goodwin explained in a letter to the Listener newspaper: “The Society would help homosexuals, particularly the young ones adjust themselves to society”. It was decidedly non-political. Queer author, Chris Brickell, explains that the club’s original purpose was to create “good homosexual citizens” (whatever that means). If creating ‘citizenship’ for young men meant tea and coffee chats, listening to music, chess-playing, and poetry reading, then the Dorian Society excelled at its role. Friday nights were also popular as the Society broke out the wine and cheese boards for its weekly film viewing – although the clickity-clack of knitting needles did cause some complaints. It’s members also didn’t shy from partying. The Society was well known for its famously-fabulous balls and shows.

Queen’s Birthday Weekend in 1965 was promised to be the “gayest weekend in the history of New Zealand.” This included acts such as ‘the girls of the Purple Onion’ and their ‘French Show’ (an Australian drag queen performance groups featuring WOC!). Such acts quickly became the most popular attraction of the Dorian Society with some of the senior members even conceding that the new ‘disco-style dancing’ was likely to have a broad appeal to young members.

Whilst not afraid of publicity, the Society severely dealt with any unwanted intrusions by the media. In one instance an ‘undercover’ reporter was caught trying to take discrete pictures. The poor hetero was chased by a couple of vengeful drag queens with a couple of wine bottles for attempting to violate their privacy.

Such a club for queer people was mostly unheard of at the time. Legal and Social discrimination in Aotearoa New Zealand forced queer peoples to express themselves on the margin’s of Society. The 1893 Criminal Code illegalised acts of “buggery” (non-traditional sexual connections) between persons with the threat of hard labour or imprisonment. This offence was upheld in the current 1961 Crimes Act (before being repealed in 1986 by the Homosexual Reform Act). Criminalisation of homosexuality was primarily enforced

against gay, working-class, men. While Queerness, including transgendered identity, was socially marginalised and chastised by heteronormative Christian dogma, colonisation also disrupted and suppressed Māori concepts of takatāpui. Queerness was mostly exiled to elite private networks for wealthy Pakeha, or to underground bars and clubs. Unfortunately, the “good homosexual citizen” was a rich, white man.

The Dorian Society was able to undermine Queer marginalisation by placing Queerness into the public mainstream. It helped form a Queer identity that was more than just secret backroom romances or extravagant cabaret. It achieved this by helping to develop a robust social network among queer peoples. As Chris Brickell writes: “The Dorian had an important role to play in men’s lives. It provided one entrée into the homosexual world for those without extensive private friendship networks and, in turn, encouraged men to develop a sense of identity around their sexuality”.

The keyword, however, is unfortunately ‘men.’ The Society targeted gay men and largely excluded lesbian women. Furthermore, although praised as being inclusive of people from all backgrounds, the Society was largely dominated by Pakeha men. Although this does not mean the Society was not welcoming of women and POCs, it does mean it was predominantly a white, European space. While the Dorian Society was productive for queer progress, especially by the standards of the time, it still had significant gaps regarding intersectionality. This space is still significant and played a role in how queerness later developed in Aotearoa.

## “GAYEST WEEKEND IN THE HISTORY OF NEW ZEALAND”

In 1963, several members who were disgruntled at the lack of direct action formed the Society’s own legal subcommittee. The committed provided members with free legal advice and collected books and other resources to help with political action. Inspired by the legalisation of homosexuality in England, the committee formed a splinter group called the Wolfenden Association (named after the famous Wolfenden Report which recommended legalisation of homosexual acts and prostitution in the UK). This group later formed the New Zealand Homosexual Law Reform Society in 1967. Alongside groups such as the Gay Task Force, the Lesbian Coalition, and Heterosexuals Unafraid of Gays (HUG), the Homosexual Law Reform Society championed legislation of homosexual acts in New Zealand. Their efforts were eventually successful with the passing of the Homosexual Law Reform Bill in 1968.

This success would not have been possible without queer community organisations like the Dorian Society. The Society’s formation coincided with a conflicting zeitgeist in New Zealand society. On the one side, there was heteronormative conservatism-preaching doctrines of Christian morality and traditional patriarchy. On the other, there was the radical cry of the Civil Rights Movement, 2nd Wave feminism, and the dawning of Queer liberation. The Society provided a space for queers to socialise and also organise. This was really productive in helping the formation of strong political action groups.

It is important to remember the significant events in modern queer history: The Wolfenden Report, The Stonewall Riots, Lawrence v Texas and New Zealand’s own twin milestones - The Homosexual Law Reform Bill in 1986, and the Marriage (Definition of Marriage) Amendment Bill 2013. However, it is also crucial to remember the groups and communities that meant so much in the daily lives of queer people. Without the development of a collective queer identity and organised community, queerness could have been just another individualised concept. The Dorian Society helped form what we understand today to be the queer community. Let’s keep the community support and advocacy growing for non-binary, transgender, takatāpui, POC, WOC and so many others who have not previously had a space to feel empowered.



IMAGE COURTESY OF THE TE PAPA ARCHIVES - “DRAG PERFORMERS AT DORIAN SOCIETY’S 1967 BALL” BY JOHNNY CROSKERY



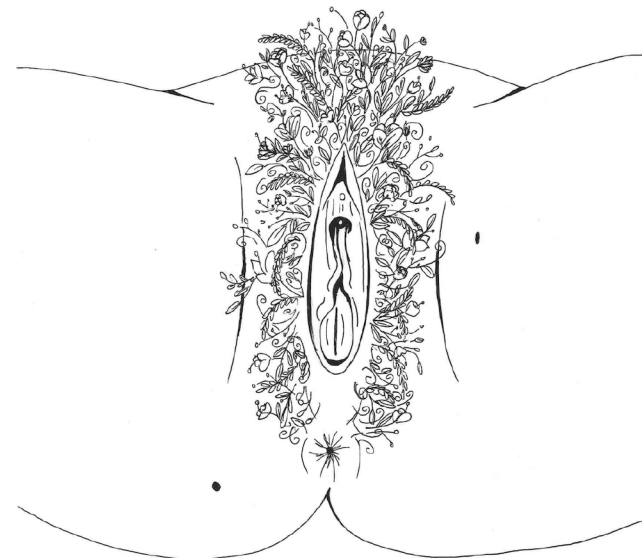
Cat Atkinson

### For H.

*She tastes like summer concrete when it rains.*  
Like a poem in full bloom.  
Lush and soft and sweet.  
There's a thickness to your tongue when you speak.  
And when you close your eyes  
And lift your palms in offering-  
(*This is what they meant by bedside prayer.*)  
She receives you.  
And the chorus call of your voice is a hymn,  
A holy experience, a revelation.  
For she is a vision.  
And when you look at her she looks like  
The breeze in your hair in a hot November,  
When the ocean licks your toes  
And swallows you whole.  
You are devoured.  
Every inch of you has a mind of its own.  
You are becoming in a thousand different directions.  
So you open your mouth wider,  
Drink this liquid gold honey like water,  
Hold this sacred flesh before it falls apart-

And when it is over you will feel blessed.  
Like the baptised you will rise,  
Born clean and new from the wet.  
Beautiful.  
And whole again.

- Naomi Seah



# the rural bisexual

*too close for comfort just 'aint close enough*

My name is Laura. I was born, twenty years ago, in Taumaranui. It's a tiny rural service town in the King Country that sits on an alluvial plain surrounded by rolling forestlands. It's also the hometown of Carmen Rupe, a pioneering LGBTQ rights activist and the most famous drag queen in New Zealand history. Though I was born in Taumaranui, it's not my hometown. It was our service town, and had the nearest hospital, as well as doctor's office, and supermarket to my family's farm. My actual hometown is, hilariously, almost impossibly, smaller.



I grew up the youngest of three daughters to sheep and beef farmers in the village of Ohura. It was founded as a coal mining settlement and lies in the middle of a drained forest swamp, which leaves it prone to destructive silt floods. My total school roll was roughly 50 students from years 1-8, and the last major employer – the lowest security prison in the country – closed in 2005. Not exactly a hub of queer culture. Growing up, I had little idea that gay people even existed. Every adult I knew was one half of a traditional, monogamous, heterosexual marriage, with an Angus stud and three or four children between them. No alternative was ever presented to me. I had heard 'gay' and 'homo' thrown around enough on the playground to know it was something wrong and embarrassing to be, but their actual definitions were still foreign to me.

Maybe that's why it took me so long to realize I wasn't straight. Though I'd had inklings during high school – thank you Aimee from the rowing team and your giant biceps – it took moving to Wellington and being miles away from my traditional family and my cloistering religious boarding school to discover the truth about myself.

Hearing girls around me talk about their relationships or past flings with other girls woke me up. This was normal for everyone else? It wasn't something that was just tolerated, but accepted and celebrated? They weren't challenged, or quizzed on their sexuality, or expected to 'pick a side.'

I was thrilled, which only made me realize how long I had been worrying about this. It was like seeing the world after a lifetime of colour-blindness. My family didn't share my enthusiasm.

***"i thought that  
was just a  
phase"***

The first time I told my middle sister that I was questioning my sexuality, she laughed in surprise and patted me on the shoulder. "Maybe wait until you've actually had a boyfriend before you swear them off," she said. She accepted it eventually, but has told me she probably won't like any girls I would ever bring home, because she "finds lesbians annoying."

I've had to come out to my mum twice. The first time, I told her late at night, when she and I were the last ones up. I was scared, and I cried against her shoulder, and she hugged me and told me all the things I wanted to hear. A month later, while we were washing dishes after dinner, she made a comment about a gay man that I took issue with. She glanced at me in surprise and turned back to the sink. I gritted my teeth and reminded her of the talk we'd had only a few weeks ago. "Oh," she said simply, passing me an oven dish to dry. "I thought that was just a phase."

Coming out to my dad was surprisingly easy. He had probably already had the initial shock softened by mum telling him about our first conversation. Although, I think if anyone in my family could have known before I did, it was probably my dad. Though we're both loath to admit it, I'm his favourite, and he picks up on a lot more than he lets on. I don't remember the details, but it had something to do with him making a joke about a homophobic attack that upset me. I asked what he would say if the victim had been me. He looked humbled and mumbled that he didn't actually feel that way about gay people. We understood each other without having to say the uncomfortable thing out loud. That's the Kiwi way.

I'm still not out to my eldest sister, or any of my extended family. Honestly, it's because it feels like it would be more trouble than it's worth. Rural New Zealanders are so completely convinced of their own tolerance that any suggestion that they could do better is seen as a grievous personal slight. They're less offended by use of the F slur than they are by being told that they shouldn't use the F slur. They live by the doctrine that diversity is accepted, but never celebrated, and

that unless the prejudice you're suffering is overt, it doesn't count.

The insistence that who you are doesn't matter is a double-edged sword. While it's comforting knowing that, at least in my world, no one has their nose to the ground hoping to sniff me out and commit a hate crime against me, it doesn't make me feel any more welcome. How am I supposed to feel accepted when the people I love have made it clear that my authentic self doesn't matter to them? How can I enthusiastically come out to any of them when they've made it clear it's none of their business?

Sometimes I feel like staying in the closet, not out of safety, but purely out of comfort. My bisexuality is a part of who I am, but it's a less outwardly obvious part than if I were a lesbian or a gay man. I may marry a woman someday, or I may not. My greatest fear is that, after making so much noise about being bi, I'll wake up one morning and realize that it was really just a phase, and being forced to walk back every coming-out and face the music of my own delusion.

But then I think about Carmen. Almost every day I walk under the pedestrian lights set up in her honour on Cuba Street. I think about her, and how much courage it must have taken to leave her family and the only home she'd known behind to give LGBTQ+ New Zealanders a voice. If Carmen was brave enough to be herself in a time when homosexuality was illegal, when queer people had none of the civil rights or protections that we enjoy now, and when her mere existence made her a target for harassment and violence, I can at least try and be brave, too.

My name is Laura and I am bisexual.

Written by: Laura Friel  
Photography by: Sophie Te Whaiti





Written by:  
John C.

As a young Polynesian boy, I recall a fond memory. I play around the room, attached to my neck, an ie lavalava, or sarong as others would know it as. A piece of clothing that children my age would tend to use as a cape to mimic a superhero, however, not me.

I look at this long cloak, nearly double my length in height, I walk in slow motion with a slow song playing in my head, as I mellowly hum it with the ie lavalava dragging behind me.

What am I doing? I'm at a wedding. I'm the centre of attention but, I'm not the groom. I'm not the best man. I'm not one of the groomsmen. I am the bride.

Isn't it strange? A young boy, who knows nothing about the difference between femininity and masculinity, walking around the room, whilst having an ie lavalava attached to his neck, imitating a wedding dress train being tugged around the room.

Mother enters the room and I sprint off. Limbs flailing everywhere, panicking.. Did she catch what I was doing? I pretend to be a superhero with a cape running around the room trying to save the imaginary people, which in turn was my image of being a young cis-gendered straight pacific island boy.

"What were you doing?" Her questions are spears causing sweat to drip like blood.

"Nothing". A sharp response. The only response a young, confused brown boy could come up with.

Signs ignored; emotions fill my head. I don't know what to think. I'm scared. In a time where 'hidings' were a thing, before legislation against smacking children was enacted, I thought one was imminent, but nothing. It was simply ignored with the shrug of shoulders.

This was my childhood. I grew up in a household where I wasn't informed about gay people nor did I know what 'gay' was. I didn't know there was a community of LGBTQ+. I didn't know that what I was doing was 'feminine'. Acts that were seen as feminine were forbidden. I was told to stop being "stupid", and yet, I had no clue as to what I was doing wrong. This is hard to endure as a child. Hard to be told that what I was doing was wrong, but without knowledge as to what I was doing wrong in the first place.

My first encounter with the terminology of "gay" was in school, primary to be exact. I went about my business but on occasion would be called gay in a derogatory way. I didn't know what it was, but I associated it with the "stupid" feminine acts that I had committed at home. I was called gay for simply hanging out with my female friends. Gay for having nearly hairless legs, although I had never shaved. Gay for speaking, because my voice was slightly "girly".

It's crazy to grasp but, from a young age, I always knew I was gay, without even knowing the word nor its meaning. It's something that a lot of people don't understand. Many people don't understand the meaning of gay, someone being gay. They don't understand the effects of bullies, or anyone, using gay as a derogatory term from a young age to even now. It's not a trait that someone just picks up. It's not a 'personality' that someone can use as they please. It's not a lifestyle that one can just choose to live.

For myself, I wouldn't choose this life. I wouldn't choose to be bullied over the person that I am. I wouldn't choose to have my parents not love me simply because of the people and gender that I love. I wouldn't choose to live the life of an LGBTQ+ person along with all the struggles I must endure. I've always wanted children, I would not choose the life where it's a great struggle to have children, as well as an expensive one. I want to get married and have a big wedding, but I wouldn't choose this life that opposes people like me getting married.

However, people choose to be hateful, judgmental, and discriminative.

The world is so against us, LGBTQ+ people but, despite everything I've gone through, as a child, and still going through, as an adult, I would never want it any other way. It has made me into the character that I am today. It has humbled me and taught me many great lessons. It has opened my mind and my heart to so many different perspectives in life. We have so much more to teach and we have to do it one step at a time.





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 THE UNIVERSITY OF AUCKLAND
 

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 SEMESTER ONE 2020  
 Campus: City
 

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## MĀORI 111

## Queer Māori in New Zealand

## Part A

You must answer this Part

**Instructions**

Please note that you will be **expected** to have **decided** what categories and boxes you identify and fit in with as society has required this from you since the day you were **born**. Please ensure you submit your essay by the **due date and time**. Penalties apply for not fitting within the boxes.

**Question 1**

*"Some people argue that it's easy to identify and fit in as a queer New Zealander in today's contemporary society."*

Critically analyse and discuss this statement.

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I ~~My story introduction~~

~~This essay will explore the brutal reality of a 25 year old Māori indigenous woman who has struggled to come to grips with her identity. This essay will discuss issues a young gay Māori woman has been through.~~

II ~~Wait - can I speak about growing up in poverty or my experience of being a gay Māori? My childhood~~

~~I hated being Māori growing up. My parents were drug addicts, my extended family were also substance abusers and domestic violence was prevalent in every home I went to. There were parties that lasted to the early morning in my house and I saw every type of eccentric person you can imagine, albeit high as a kite on drugs. The police were prevalent in our neighbourhood and community, and none of us kids down my street knew what a "Māori academic" was or actually quite frankly had any positive "Māori role models". I coped with my upbringing by immersing myself in education and by steering clear of anything remotely related to being Māori. How could you really expect anything less though given my experiences of growing up in a family that is the epitome of colonisation? How can others like me have thought anything else, when the system we were raised in was founded to destroy every part of our being? Colonisation tore my family to shreds. My childhood was challenging, but anyone can overcome things if they put their mind to it!~~

III ~~My extended family damaged me. My coming out was so embracing. I moved out of home at 16. At 17 I lived with family members who ripped my sexuality out of me. I was made to feel ashamed and told that I was gay because my parents didn't care about me. I was told that they did not love me, because if they did then I wouldn't be like this. I was forced at 17 years old to tell everyone in my family that I was gay. There were hiccups along the way, but my family was so embracing!~~

IV ~~Conclusion~~

~~Fuck it, I'm sick of not speaking the truth. For 6 years I've struggled through university trying to fit into boxes because that's what society has made me feel I had to do. At the same time I've had to deal with so many family issues. I felt alone, I felt like I wasn't Māori enough, I felt like I wasn't gay enough, I felt like I didn't belong anywhere. All these hypothetical "boxes" of belonging felt like a club I was never good enough for. But you know what I've learnt? You don't have to tick any fucking boxes. You can be and identify as anything you want. The role of colonisation in my life has tried to pre-determine these many aspects of myself without my consent. That shit stops with me. I'm taking back my tino rangatiratanga.~~

~~My children and their children's children won't have to endure the mamee I have been through. They can be free to express their own tino rangatiratanga in whichever way they see fit. This isn't even half of my story. But, my lesson to you my dear indigenous youngin is to embrace the skin you're in. Don't live in the fear I did for 25 years of feeling like you have to conform to boxes to feel accepted and have a sense of belonging. The very blood that runs through your veins connects you to your whenua which will always keep you grounded. Regardless of how you identify, your whakapapa will be your greatest strength to help you see another day. Don't ever forget it.~~





Who won the Total Oil Econ Run...twice?

bionda

Medical Scans - saril Post Research

white tiles back of fu  
 hair not touching  
 single stud  
 hand covers to hide support  
 hair not touching  
 single stud  
 hand covers to hide support  
 hair not touching  
 single stud  
 hand covers to hide support

**SUBMISSIONS FROM:**  
*(in order of appearance)*

- Sophie Te Whaiti
- Poppy Fitzpatrick
- Anon
- Zoë Larsen Cumming
- Jess Dellabarca
- Arela Jiang
- Tama Abraham
- Assaf Rothman Berman
- Sophie Te Whaiti
- Bayley Kalach
- Cat Atkinson
- Naomii Seah
- Laura Friel
- Sherry Zhang
- Annabel Bowles
- John C.
- Sophie Te Whaiti
- The Girl from Fairfield
- Sophie Te Whaiti



**A special thanks to:**

Sherry Zhang (@bysberry) and Lavi Abitbol (@justlavi\_0)  
for editing and compilation.

Nika Januszkiewicz (@lunahmusica) compilation and all  
graphic design.

Sophie Te Whaiti (@sophietewhaiti) cover artwork,  
photography and graphic design.

# THE AGENDA