

## [Transcript] Mamamia Out Loud / Hugh Jackman's Divorce Is Really All About Us

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Mamma Mia Out Loud!

Hello and welcome to Mamma Mia Out Loud.

It's what women are actually talking about on Monday, the 18th of September.

I'm Holly Wainwright.

I'm Mia Friedman.

And I'm Claire Stevens.

And on the show today, why your group chats were full of sobbing emojis about Hugh Jackman and Deborah Lee Furness on the weekend.

Plus, Russell Brand used to be seen as a lovable Brit bad boy.

Now, he's an accused rapist with a tsunami of allegations against him and yet he remains uncancellable.

Why?

And the Australian multi-millionaire the entire world is talking about, why does one man think we need to see 50% unemployment to put workers back in their place?

But first, Mia.

In case you missed it, and I suspect that you did.

Because I did.

Apparently, yesterday was internal condom day.

Internal condom day.

When I first read that, I thought it said international condom day.

And I was like, yeah, yeah.

Yeah, nice.

Pretty standard.

But no, no.

Planned Parenthood, which is an organization in America, put out a post yesterday announcing that it was an internal condom day.

They had some helpful diagrams, which obviously we can't replicate because this is a podcast.

But I learned that internal condoms are worn inside the vagina or inside, I feel it's early.

The anus.

The anus.

The anus.

Yeah.

And I'm not squirming.

I don't know.

I don't like that word, anus.

I don't like it.

It can help prevent pregnancy and STIs.

And I think that what these used to be called were female condoms.

They did.

And so instead of going on a penis, they go inside the place that the penis is going.

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It doesn't make sense to me gravity wise slash science wise slash lubrication wise.  
I don't know how something sticks in there while something's going in and out.  
Well that's very interesting and I couldn't tell you, but a quote from Planned Parenthood about internal condoms explain it a little bit.  
They say, since all the other condoms out there are worn on a penis, many internal condom fans who knew they were internal condom fans, they love that there's a condom they can control.  
Internal condoms let you take charge of your sexual activity.  
Outladders, do you use internal condoms?  
Have you had some experience with them?  
Holly and I have got marinas, so we've been out in your pregnant class.  
So we've been out of the contraception loop for some time.  
What's going on out there?  
On Saturday morning, Australians woke to news that shocked us all.  
There were shrieks.  
People were rioting in the streets.  
Sobs could be heard in all the corners of our great country because Hugh Jackman and Deborah Lee Finness announced that after 27 years, they were ending their marriage.  
I don't remember a story of news or any other kind that so filled my group chats.  
It was unanimous that people were upset.  
They released a joint statement that they said would be the sole comment they would make.  
And they said...  
That they would make.  
Not the sole comment that the world would make.  
Because we have a lot of thoughts.  
They said, we have been blessed to share almost three decades together as husband and wife in a wonderful, loving marriage.  
Our journey now is shifting and we have decided to separate to pursue our individual growth.  
Our family has been and always will be our highest priority.  
We undertake this next chapter with gratitude, love and kindness.  
We greatly appreciate your understanding in respecting our privacy as our family navigates the transition in all of our lives.  
Now they met on the set of the Australian television series Corelli.  
Corelli?  
Corelli?  
I mean, I didn't watch it.  
The police precede rule and she was the star.  
She was the big star.  
She was the star.  
She was 40 and Jackman was 27.  
And they share two children and have spent almost three decades heavily involved in charity work, including starting their own charity adopt change in 2008 that works towards every child and young person having access to a safe, stable family upbringing.

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So they're very passionate about adoption and they adopted their two kids. On the outside, they really did appear to be best friends and each other's biggest fans.

They seem to see through the bullshit of Hollywood and fame to what was actually important. Mia, why do you think the end of this marriage has broken us all?

You know, I know sometimes out louders get upset when we talk about celebrity stories and say, oh, why are you gossiping and why are you adding whatever?

What this show is about and what we're about to do now is not necessarily go, why do you think they broke up?

Like, well, you never know.

You never know why a couple broke up.

When we talk about these stories on the show, it's to examine the reaction to it because when there's a really big reaction to a story like this, it says something about us.

And in this case, I've been thinking for the last couple of days about what it says about us and why we were so sad.

I mean, lots of marriages break up.

Have you ever met them, Mia?

I have met Debra Lee.

I've never met Hugh Grant.

I've never met Jackman.

Have you ever met Hugh Grant?

I've never met him, either.

I would like to meet them both.

I think both of you seem lovely.

I will say Debra Lee is divine.

You will not hear a person say a bad word about either of them.

You will not.

You will never.

What I think is interesting and the reason that I think that people, particularly women,

I mean, men are not that upset.

They don't care.

Probably don't even know.

The women are upset because what this went against is the trope of a man dating someone who is much younger than he is.

And particularly as he gets older, perhaps he might be married to his childhood sweetheart or someone his age, but then, you know, marriages break up and his second wife or his partner will be much, much younger.

And they always bucked that trend.

Debra Lee is now 67, Hugh Jackman is 54.

So I think that in the same way that my heart drops a little bit every time, like I roll my eyes, Brad Pitt's dating, whatever, he was like the anti-Leonardo, wasn't he?

Like, Leonardo is not far from Hugh Jackman's age but will not date a woman older than 25.

So that taps into all the securities that we have about that our worth as women just diminishes as we get older and we're just chucked away.

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And Hugh and Debra always made us feel differently in the same way that we're so grateful that Keanu Reeves is dating a woman who has grey hair.

So I think there's that.

I think that's why we're so upset.

But also, Hugh Jackman wasn't Hugh Jackman when they started dating and got married, right?

So he became one of the world's biggest heartthrobs over the course of their marriage and always has just gushed about how lucky he is.

Now, you can't talk about them without discussing the speculation that has always surrounded Hugh Jackman's sexuality, which feels not only inappropriate and insulting but also so outdated now, doesn't it?

But when people are sitting around now going like, well, obviously, we all thought he was gay.

Like, it just boggles my tiny mind.

But the only reason I bring that up is because they have had to bring it up every five minutes throughout their entire relationship.

Beverly Finesse has been on the record and saying that she has been in toilet stalls, at Hollywood events, and having to come out and stop gossip between people in the stall and be like, he's not gay, he's married to me.

Is Hugh gay?

He's been married to me?

Oh, he's been gay for so many years.

I was gay too, so you know when I did shame?

I was gay.

Is it?

I was shocked when I got married.

How annoying is that?

It's just wrong.

It's like someone saying to Elton John, he's straight.

I'm sure he'd be pissed.

You just can't imagine how annoying that would be.

And also insulting because there's the idea that he couldn't be sexually attracted to you.

Yes, because she's older than him.

And I think you're right, Mia, that we have a lot of affection for the couple because they buck a few very tired tropes.

But I want to push back a little bit on the sobbing.

I was surprised, shocked and saddened.

I believe I messaged you, Mia, shocked and saddened.

I also think that 27 years is amazing and raising kids to a point where they are now the cusp of adulthood, all the rest of it.

I think they're youngest has just turned 18.

It's become very cool to snark and roll your eyes at celebrity statements that are like, we still best friends and we meet when the best friends are never.

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And I know I get that that is like icky to a point.

But personally, I am all for modeling civilized separation because the damage that uncivilized separations do, particularly in families, is enormous.

And so many out louders will be like going, yes, that was my life and and it isn't always possible.

But every time we see it and it seems to work, I think it's good to go like, great.

But I read a column this morning in the Australian that sort of said, oh, if we're not allowed to say that it's sad, they've broken up.

So if we're not allowed to say, oh, the marriage has failed, does that mean that we've just given up on the idea that marriage is forever?

And now it's just from now until we just can't anymore.

Now, personally, I think that's fine, but you're a more traditional girl.

Claire Stevens, are you sad about this?

She's a newlywed.

I know, I'm like, no, everybody stays together forever, Holly.

I am.

And I think the romantic in me looks at them.

And I I loved the fact that their relationship started before Hugh Jackman became Hugh Jackman.

It made me think that it was possible to maintain all your values and all your integrity, even when you became that person.

Because there are so few examples of that in Hollywood.

There are so few.

Listen to the fact that you are putting like that level of value and integrity on whether or not he and his wife are still married.

Like, that's weird.

And let's not say weird, but it's very specific.

It's not them as individuals.

It's them as like a symbol.

Like the only other couple I can think of, well, like Matt Damon and his wife, they've seen each other through the rise of Matt Damon and had it not crumble.

Because I guess I I wonder how when you are Hugh Jackman and your ego must be or it must be at risk of being so hugely inflated and everywhere you go, people are obsessed with you and in love with you and telling you how great you are.

The idea of then returning to a family and having to act like the husband and father that you are in that unit, clearly that's incredibly difficult because so many marriages in Hollywood don't work.

This is kind of a bit of a good news story for all of us that they were still together. And I don't know, I'm really disappointed.

You know, what would be disappointing to your point, Mia, before is if Hugh Jackman is papped next week, Emily Radikowski, that would break my heart.

We would all be sobbing into our tea, but maybe Debra Lee will end up with Pete Davidson. I think that's such a great call.

But I personally, there's still couple goals if they can separate.

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You're right. You're right.

The way they are amazing.

It's been a long time since Russell Brand was a cheeky bad boy, Brit comedian who Hollywood fell in love with right about the same time as Katy Perry. These days, you're more likely to find Russell Brand delivering sermons or monologues. You could call them generously, but they do seem like sermons to me. Just last week, he was having a rant about Bill Gates spraying something on fruit or something, or you'll find Russell Brand frolicking in a teepee in the English countryside at the paid retreats he runs with his wife, Laura, where they charge hundreds of people, lots of money to come and do like breath workshops, ice baths, meditation, all that kind of stuff.

Or you'll find him playing to a 2000 strong live crowd talking about COVID lockdowns as part of his current bipolarization tour.

But this weekend, Russell Brand's picture is on every news site under the headline Accused Rapist, a joint investigation by the UK's Times newspaper and a Channel 4 documentary series has told the story of three women who all separately claim they were assaulted by Brand, mostly at the height of his Hollywood fame in the early sort of 20 teams.

So in the period, sort of directly following Katy Perry.

So they had a brief marriage, they got divorced.

A lot of these allegations are from around just after that time.

And they're distressing.

One woman says the assault occurred when she was 16 years old and in a relationship with Brand, during which she says he referred to her as the child.

Another says that he raped her without a condom at his Hollywood home after she who had had consensual hookups with him previously refused a threesome.

And another says he assaulted her in a hotel in Manchester, England, during a relationship she characterizes as controlling and abusive.

These allegations are sparked a firestorm of stories about what Brand himself has called his promiscuous era.

And they range from the fact that producers on his English TV show, this is way back in the day before the Katy Perry years, were instructed to go out into the audience and pick up women for him and give them his number and bring them backstage and he would choose from them all.

He also had deeply inappropriate behavior towards female journalists, guests on his talk shows and celebrities.

It seems like there are enough problematic Russell Brand stories to fill several books.

The problem is he's written some of those books himself.

He has written biographies where he talks about his sex addiction, which he sort of puts in the same basket as his famous drug addiction, which he has allegedly overcome. And now in his current incarnation as a counterculture guru, he has a platform and a following that allows him to dismiss the victim's stories as exactly the sort of conspiracy that he points out all the time.

Here's what he said to his followers just before the stories dropped this weekend.

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The relationships I had were absolutely always consensual. I was always transparent about that then, almost too transparent. And I'm being transparent about it now as well. And to see that transparency metastasized into something criminal that I absolutely deny makes me question, is there another agenda at play? Particularly when we've seen coordinated media attacks before, like with Joe Rogan, when he dared to take a medicine that the mainstream media didn't approve of. And we saw a spate of headlines from media outlets across the world using the same language. I'm aware that you guys have been saying in the comments for a while, watch out, Russell. They're coming for you. You're getting too close to the truth. Russell Brown did not kill himself. I know that a year ago, there was a spate of articles. Russell Brown's a conspiracy theorist. Russell Brown's right wing. I'm aware of news media making phone calls, sending letters to people I know for ages and ages. It's been clear to me, or at least it feels to me like there's a serious and concerted agenda to control these kind of spaces and these kind of voices. And I mean, my voice along with your voice. So he's absolutely denied it. And his people believe him. Hours after these allegations surfaced on the weekend, he played to a sold out crowd in Wembley, London, where he received a standing ovation. Mia, what kind of consequences and accountability, perhaps, can we expect from a man who's built himself an empire outside of the mainstream? So he doesn't really need the establishment who's trying to cancel him. A couple of things that I found really interesting and disturbing, of course, about this and the investigative news report is not available to watch in Australia yet, but I've watched parts of it. Firstly, reading a lot of accounts now from female comedians and people who've worked with him, even going all the way back to Danny Minogue gave an interview in 2006 about being interviewed by him on his radio show or his whatever show. And Danny is very careful with what she says publicly, right? The Minogue women are very, very smart and rarely say anything controversial in interviews. But she was very direct and saying, worst experience of my life, the things that he said were disgusting. He doesn't take no for an answer. She was very, very negative towards him. But what a lot of comedians have said, this has been an open secret. Women have been warning each other in the comedy industry and in the entertainment industry about Russell Brand for decades now. So he's been hiding in plain sight. And the other line of questioning that I've heard, which I think is refers to what you said, Holly, is that he knew that this was going to come out at some stage, and so he has preemptively been building himself



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this post-truth world where you're right, he can't be sacked.  
You can't be sacked from YouTube.  
I mean, you can go to court, you can be charged, you can go to jail,  
but he doesn't need Hollywood.  
He doesn't need media organisations to give him a job.  
He's got YouTube and he sells all those kinds of things on YouTube.  
I mean, obviously, he knew these specific stories were coming,  
but he must have known this moment was going to come over the past few years.  
Ironically, he's immunised himself against all of this happening  
because now he can just say, not true.  
Conspiracy.  
Conspiracy, conspiracy.  
There are a lot of conversations going on online about the people who,  
when Me Too happened, either quietly step back from their careers  
and just have been in the background, there's quite a few comedians  
that people are naming who did that and clearly did that for a reason.  
It's interesting that Post Me Too is really when Russell Brand  
went full conspiracy nearest.  
Something I want to say about this report is  
there are all sorts of accusations about high profile people all the time.  
Different types of reports,  
ones that somebody posts on Instagram, ones that get reported in the news.  
This was a one year investigation.  
They spoke to hundreds of people.  
They did not publish this lightly.  
This is in the realm of the Harvey Weinstein investigation.  
They did so much.  
E-mails, there's like a huge amount of evidence.  
It's not just some people said, hey, this happened to me.  
And on that, I want to touch on this idea of a media conspiracy  
and what he's talking about, because straight away,  
Elon, you've got to worry when Elon Musk and Andrew Tate come out and back, you don't you?  
Elon Musk said, these tracks that I want competitors.  
And he talks about this media conspiracy  
who's threatened by him and wants to silence him.  
We're the media. Yeah, we're part of the media.  
He's not competing with anyone.  
No one's threatened by Russell Brand.  
Russell Brand's not taking anything away from the media.  
The media doesn't coordinate.  
There's not some secret meeting or secret handshake where everyone from,  
you know, Andrew Bolt to the project, to the BBC, to the Guardian.  
We don't all get together and have meetings  
and decide what we're all going to do.



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I just have to say, whenever you hear someone say it's a conspiracy and they want to silence me, it's like, why?  
No one wants to silence you.  
And the other thing is, I love the argument against conspiracies that's like, have you ever been in a workplace like people aren't that fucking smart?  
People aren't that smart.  
People aren't that committed.  
Media organisations are not like meeting at a summit.  
And Russell Brand says in his defence, he talks about these conspiracies and he uses the example of when Joe Rogan used Ivan Mectin and he's like, and the media conspired against him.  
I'm like, no, that was just medical misinformation that people were calling out.  
And no one came out and accused Joe Rogan of rape.  
No, it's completely different.  
The other story that I've seen is Liz Hayes, the 2012 interview.  
And I remembered it vividly when I went and had a look.  
He was on 60 Minutes with Liz Hayes.  
They were sort of on a set and he went to hug her at the end, kissed her on the lips.  
You can see how uncomfortable she is.  
Like Luis Rubiales. Exactly.  
Liz, that's your fault because you took your eye off the road because things was getting a bit fruitier there.  
All right, Liz, goodbye.  
Thank you. Well, it's been really a long time.  
Kept kind of hugging her and saying, you like it, you like it and trying to undo her bra. Oh, my God.  
And you can see on her face and she's talked about it since and said, I had to assess in that moment, am I in danger?  
Do I go along with it?  
And there are those sorts of moments that remind you that he was not keeping a lot of this a secret.  
One thing about the documentary that is really disturbing, I've seen quite a lot of it online, is a lot of the accusations from women are then echoed by things Brand has said himself.  
So one of the accusations from one of the women is that he forced her to perform oral sex on him and then made a comment when she pushed away, made a comment about, I just wanted to see your mascara run.  
He says that in a stand up piece.  
In the documentary, there is one person who puts their face and name to what they're alleging against Russell Brand.  
And obviously the women are not doing that because Russell Brand has been litigious forever and has scared people and they're traumatised.  
There's nothing to gain for these women is everything to lose.

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They're very brave.

Exactly. And so the Scottish comedian, who people might know, he did a great stand up special about sexual abuse.

We talked about it on the show because it was really quite shocking the way he talked about rape and what we used to call date rape.

He's quite extraordinary in a good way, like shocking in a good way.

Yeah. Yeah.

Like it was a good guy.

The story started really shockingly, but then he turns it around.

He's the guy who he didn't want the men to come to his show knowing that's what he was going to talk to them about, because he's like, then they wouldn't come.

Oh, OK.

And so basically his stand up show is about how men are complicit.

And just if nine out of ten men are the good guys, but they do nothing, they might as well not be there.

That's his line.

And so he says in this documentary that it was an open secret.

Everybody knew about Russell Brand that there were group chats between female comedians, where they talked about staying away from him.

And there are journalists who have seen messages from at least one of those groups.

So here's what Scottish comedian Daniel Sloss says in the Russell Brand documentary.

There's almost no consequences to me.

What do people who have suffered and been subject to his alleged behaviors?

How must they feel?

Like I could not say something.

But I did find it interesting that he says, I feel terrified coming out and saying this and I have almost nothing to lose.

The thing is that's interesting about this is that ten years ago, you couldn't have said this stuff about Russell Brand, because it's not a secret.

This stuff, as you've both said, he's hiding in plain sight.

But at the peak of his popularity, it was kind of part of his brand.

Because although he's never kept what he would term womanizing or promiscuity, whatever, he's never kept it secret.

He's always talked about it lots.

You know, if you listen to his podcast and he listened to his stand up.

But he's always kind of got away with it because he's like an intellectual erudite kind of dude.

He doesn't come across like, and I'm going to say something slightly offensive, but he's not like a sort of footballer who's downing shots in, you know, the club at the end of your street.

He's not that guy, right?

And I think that he's had this very effective kind of mask for that reason.

And also, he was so popular and powerful for a while.

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Now, he's not in that mainstream anymore.

And as you've already said, Mia, it's probably very strategic, that retreat.

So nobody has to suck up to him in the way that they did at that time.

You know, these allegations can surface and women can say what they really think.

And the other reason is because of me, too.

I've said it before, but we like to roll our eyes and say, oh, me too.

Who's getting me tuned now?

But stories like the institutionalised side of this, the fact that the producers on his shows were implicated and weaponised really to go and get him the women that he wanted. A lot of the women in the story say, oh, that's just what you do for the talent. Like he's a bad boy, you know, he's a bad boy.

These days, that doesn't fly.

And that's because of me, too.

And that's because of brave women who've come out and told their stories and had so many rocks thrown at the head for it.

But finally, the climate is in a place where people can say, no, he's not a funny, quirky, hot, bad boy.

Yeah, he is a predator.

We have to state, actually, that there are no criminal charges against brand at this point, which is why it's interesting to consider what the accountability, if any, might be, because at this point,

British police Scotland Yard say they are not pressing any criminal charges.

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Last week, a guy called Tim Garner, who is a multi-faceted property developer and financial adviser, was speaking at a conference.

It was a conference that was sponsored by the Australian Financial Review.

And he was speaking to a lot of employers, business people.

And here's a little bit of what he had to say in his talk.

People decided they didn't really want to work so much anymore through COVID, and that has had a massive issue on productivity.

You know, tradies have definitely pulled back on productivity.

You know, they have been paid a lot to do not too much in the last few years.

And we need to see that change.

We need to see unemployment rise.

Unemployment has to jump 40, 50 percent, in my view.

We need to see pain in the economy.

We need to remind people that they work for the employer, not the other way around.

I mean, there is a there's been a systematic change

where employees feel the employer is extremely lucky to have them.

So his comments didn't cause much fuss in the room at the time, but they were actually buried in a report about the whole summit

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in the back of the Financial Review, and they were picked up on social media. And that's when things went pretty bad for Tim Garner. We're not going to chortle about a pile on on anyone, whether you agree with them or not, because the experience of having the world jump on you and attack you. And that's what's happened is not something that you wish on anyone. It's been a are you OK day in the past week? And so we're not going to say that anyone ever deserves being at the bottom of a pile on his comments certainly have caught global attention. And after coming under fire from politicians and unions, he said on Thursday that he deeply regrets his comments and he acknowledges that they were deeply insensitive to employees, tradies and families living across Australia, who are affected by these cost of living pressures and job losses. Claire, you discovered that this is the same person who told millennials that if they want to buy property, they needed to stop buying avocado toast. What did you think about the comments that he made and the reaction to them? Yes, in 2017, it was Bernard Salt, who originally said the avocado toast thing. And then it was Tim Garner, who sort of repeated it and then got absolutely slammed. The response to this has been huge. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez posted on who's an American senator. She's a very big voice, like progressive voice in American politics, and she commented on it. But what's it been the gist of the blowback? I mean, obviously that it wasn't a very nice thing to say, but on what basis? I mean, how dare somebody who is so wealthy, he's worth close to nine hundred million dollars, which is the next iteration of that, a billion. Yeah, I don't. It's gross. He's worth close to a billion dollars. And the privilege of somebody standing up. He can eat all the avocado toast he wants. Of him standing there and saying the problem is that other people don't work hard enough. What AOC pointed out was that the gap between people like him and the worker has become greater and greater and greater. And it's at sort of the biggest point it's been in modern history. So the irony of him getting up and slamming tradies when you could argue they're the people doing the grunt work and he's in real estate. And for me, I went full French Revolution. I was absolutely furious because I think you were in favour of a pylon. Did you want to storm the barricades? Yeah, I did. I did. And what he fails to recognise is that this kind of movement

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of people having a different approach to work,  
which is I'm not going to slave away in a job that might eventually pay me  
six figures to serve the profits of a person who's a millionaire or a billionaire.  
People are instead going to do what they need to do to get by and nothing more.  
That approach has come from the economic reality that we find ourselves in.  
That's a response.  
That's not workers who randomly decided that they weren't going to try as hard.  
That's workers who go, hold on.  
If I'm a worker at the bottom of the food chain,  
I'm being exploited in order to secure the obscene wealth of people like Tim Garner.  
And I actually think it's revolutionary that people are taking a different approach  
to work, that people are demanding more of their employer.  
And of course, people like Tim Garner hate it because the people at the bottom  
have been lining his pockets.  
I would argue that it's not even really true that people are taking a different approach to work.  
I mean, I know and we've talked about this all the time that, you know,  
TikTok is overflowing with Lazy Girl Monday or Fake Friday or what is it?  
Bare minimum Monday and all those things.  
But your average person who's working a shift job in a service industry  
or a trade industry or a nurse or a doctor or they're not doing that, right?  
They are working really, really hard in jobs that wages have not gone up very much at all  
for a really long time.  
And what's interesting about this is I think that Tim Garner being the focus  
of this pile on is possibly he's not the only person who thinks this or says this.  
Gina Reinhart on the record is saying exactly this years ago, very much like,  
you know, Australians don't want to work.  
You have to go overseas if you want people who want to work, all these things.  
And I think that he was talking to a room of people who he thought,  
well, they agree with me because there are a lot of people who probably do agree with him,  
but they're all in his boat, right?  
They're all in the same strata as him.  
And what Tim Garner and those people have not grasped is that the ground  
that's shifting under his feet is shifting quite profoundly in a way that isn't  
really to do with minimum effort Mondays.  
It's to do with the fact that if you look in the US, you know, the big quit,  
which we've talked about a lot, it wasn't about office workers going,  
I want to work from home.  
It was about people who have to work two or three jobs just to pay their rent.  
Realizing that, hold on, without me, they can't do this.  
Without me turning up to work every day, they can't make all their money.  
And like the right of strike and the after strike.  
There is a swing towards collective activism of workers that we haven't seen in decades.  
Like unionism has been a dirty word in capitalist countries for a long time.  
And now they're saying that in the US at the moment,

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union support is at an all-time high.

So Tim Garner and his mates are not reading the room that people are kind of moving out of an age of sort of unfettered aspiration where it was like, if I work really hard,

I can buy a Birkin bag like Kim Kardashian.

And they're going, but hold on, I've been working really hard.

And where are my Birkin bags?

She still seems to have a lot of them.

I'm doing 12-hour days of where are mine.

And I think that COVID, as he identifies, it exposed to a lot of people, and this is not true of every workplace by any stretch,

that it was not companies but governments who looked after them.

The companies laid them off.

They went, off you go.

Look at what's just happened.

We can't afford you.

Right.

Governments stepped in and paid the way.

Now that, I know that the economic arguments that had to happen to a point, right?

How can companies pay money that they can't afford?

But what we're seeing in stories like the quanta story is they could afford it.

And they could have treated their workers a lot better.

So if you've got a whole lot of people who are suddenly going,

hold on, I was giving you everything and I got nothing.

So now I'm going to reconsider what my worth is.

No wonder it pisses Tim Garner off,

but I think it's probably here to stay for a while.

Do you think it's a correction?

I mean, I know it's hard to unscramble the egg of COVID

and cost of living pressures,

but I think you're right about this cultural movement

that we've talked about on the pod before about it being uncool to want to work hard.

And the cool thing is to not, and a lot of employers have said

that they just feel like they've lost control.

They can't get people back to work.

They say that the balance of power has really shifted.

How much do you think that is COVID?

Because I was reading in a column about this on the weekend

that it didn't take collective action to recalibrate the workplace

and the rights of workers to, for example, work from home,

which people now assume is their right.

It just took a pandemic, which is, you know, no one needed to go on strike.

We did have to stay in our houses for two years.

But what do you think about that?

Do you think it's COVID that it's just recalibrated us?

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My thoughts about COVID have always been that in a lot of cases, employees did a lot for their employers during that period.

Employees adapted.

I mean, you also had no choice.

So you go, okay, I'm going to work from home.

Do I have an office?

No, I don't.

Do I have toddlers running around?

Yeah, I do.

I'm going to have to find a way to do that.

People moved.

People worked out that in order to have a space to work from, they actually needed to not live in the city.

People kind of changed their life and their lifestyles in order to keep working.

And I think it's been interesting to see now that people can return to the office, the businesses, he say, okay, come back five days.

And people say, hold on, I made concessions.

I had to change a lot about my life and I can't just go back to that.

The one thing I think about Tim Garner as an individual, because I know Holly, you say it's not about him.

He's just said the quiet part out loud that a lot of people are through.

When I say a lot of people, I mean a lot of business owners are thinking because while unemployment is really low, it's true that employees have more power than they do when employment is high.

And he said he wants to see it rise by 50%.

And that has driven everyone crazy because the tone deafness of a statement like that, that's like, oh, well, it means I get to pay people less.

But every one of those unemployment statistics is someone who's got a family to feed and rent to pay.

And that's like doctor's appointments that they're not going to go to.

And that's, you know, food they're not going to eat.

The outcomes.

You just can't get away with saying that.

The devastation that unemployment causes.

He has previously spoken about how loans from his grandfather and former boss helped him get his start as a business owner.

And I think that's where we're really seeing a bit of a gap.

And it almost made me more scared that he said this behind closed doors in a room for an AFR event because he would have felt so safe saying that in that room.

But Claire, without defending his comments, there would be things that you would say behind closed doors with your peers about your industry.

And you could say this for anybody.

There are things that we all say.

But it's the level of power he has as a business owner, as an employer.



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He can't force unemployment.

He doesn't have, you know, in terms of what he can do.

He can't do much, actually.

I do think we're seeing this massive gap in people who get it and people who don't get it.

That things like house ownership, home ownership, that used to be possible.

If you just worked hard.

If you just work hard.

Had less toast.

And again, it's the context of him having said a few years ago that it's the fact that we're buying smashed avocado and coffees that's stopping us from owning homes.

And then you look at somebody like that and see that he has come from a completely different background where he has enough of a safety net where unemployment is something that would never,

ever have had to cross his mind.

And he would not have any idea about what the realities of that look like for the average Australian.

But I do think we've got to acknowledge how the world has changed.

How the cost of living crisis is affecting people that prices have gone up and salaries have not gone up in a way that matches it.

And so people are struggling and it is not on the employees to just work harder because working harder actually isn't going to tackle some of the blatant economic realities of our time.

Before we go to a recommendation, we recently did a subs episode that has gone off in the downloads.

Hasn't gone quite as viral as Tim Garner, thank God.

But it's where I reveal my most unexpected ADHD symptom and it was a conversation about shopping and shopping addiction, why I love shopping centres and the connection for a lot of people who have ADHD and dopamine and shopping.

We'll put a link in the show notes if you want to check that out.

I have a recommendation and listeners, sometimes I acknowledge the recommendations we give you.

We're telling you to do something and people can be quite tired.

It's always watch a show, read a book.

Well, maybe you have time for that.

Don't give me a job.

Don't give, I'm not giving you a job.

So instead I'm giving you something that will take three seconds and maybe give you a laugh.

Ladies or gentlemen who may be listening, go to a man in your life and ask the question.

How often do you think about the Roman Empire?

And I know that sounds strange, but let me explain it.

It's become a trend on TikTok where women, they might ask their brothers, their fathers, their partners.

How often do you think about the Roman Empire?

Definitely weekly.

We're here with Jaroletto and this is a really important question and I need an honest answer from you.

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Absolutely.

How often do you think of the Roman Empire?

I actually think of the Roman Empire quite a bit.

They'll say, oh yeah, I thought about it yesterday.

I was kind of thinking about engineering.

I was thinking about gutters.

I was thinking about kind of how systems worked and how they really built the world.

Never in my life have I thought about the Roman Empire, not even when I was in Rome.

Rome, I think about it.

I don't even understand what the Roman Empire is.

But the thing that people are trying to say is that it is a testament to the mental load that women hold, that men do not.

That men, their minds can walk past a building and they'll go, oh yeah,

I wonder how did that construction work?

And oh yeah, if you go back to the Roman Empire, this is how they did it.

And they say women don't have that luxury because we're always holding the mental load.

However, I have found in my relationship, it's the opposite.

As soon as I saw this TikTok trend, I went, oh, I think about the Roman Empire all the time.

Really?

Think about it.

You know how I was whinging about my rug not arriving?

About the postal system.

I think about ancient times.

I think it was actually the Persian Empire.

I think it was Xerxes who invented the postal system.

This is, you know, this thing.

No, I really think about that.

This whole trend is just people showing off about, like, I was good at school.

I don't remember who invented what.

Oh yeah.

No.

Oh, it's a humble break.

It's a massive humble break.

It's not.

It's like, how did we get to where we are now?

That's what the question is.

On Saturday night, I was at a party and I asked two men, right, just to see.

One of them said, oh, last night, because I scrolled past, I saw gladiator or whatever.

And I said, when was the time before that?

It goes, but, you know, that was just a weird thing.

I just saw gladiator.

And he goes, I said, when was the time for that?

He goes, probably about two weeks before.

It's like, it's really often.

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Yeah.

And someone else said about a week ago.

I was so shocked.

The other trend is what's the female equivalent?

To thinking about the Roman Empire.

Oh.

Here's one response to it on TikTok.

When am I going to wash my hair?

I just washed it yesterday.

So yesterday and today, I know that I'm fine.

Do I need to wash it tomorrow or can I get through with some dry shampoo?

But I'll definitely just wash it the day after that.

Another one I saw was women think about their ex-best friend every few days.

It just pops into your head.

And I'm like, yes, we do.

That's our equivalent of the Roman Empire.

This is very gender stereotypy, isn't it?

Women think about hair.

And men think about Romans.

Actually, though, mine is, I think all the time about why Tom and Nicole broke up.

And how much I'd like to have seen Madonna's wedding dress.

Those are the things I have to think about.

Actually, there's one viral TikTok going around that says,

OK, the female equivalent, and there's two.

One is Princess Diana.

Absolutely.

The second is getting kidnapped.

Yeah, I think about that all the time.

Yeah.

I think about that all the time.

Something horrible happening to you.

Something horrible happening.

And what you do.

Do you think about Diana a lot?

Yeah.

I reckon at least once a week, I think about her.

Yeah.

So our loudest is, go to somebody in your life.

Say, how often do you think about the Roman Empire?

And then work out what is actually occupying

a strange amount of brain space.

Thank you for listening to Australia's number one news and pop culture show.

This episode was produced by Emily Enkazilastia,

assistant producer is Tali Blackman,

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with audio production by Leah Porges.

We'll see you tomorrow.

Bye.

Bye.

Shout out to any Mamma Mia subscribers listening.

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