

## [Transcript] Mamamia Out Loud / Is #GirlDinner Just The Way Women Eat?

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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 Wednesday, the 12th of July.

I'm Holly Wainwright.

I'm Mia Friedman.

And I'm Claire Steedon.

And on the show today, should you get paid less if you want to work from home?

That seems like an incendiary suggestion, but it is a real one that we will be discussing.

Plus, is viral hashtag girl dinner just a dressed up toddler meal?

And the day in the life of a baby.

The TikTok videos new mothers are making from their baby's perspectives.

But first...

In case you missed it, all I've been thinking about for weeks is the orca uprising.

You may have heard news stories about orcas attacking yachts.

I've forgotten what an orca is.

Is it a killer whale?

Okay.

But they changed the name because they thought killer whale was stigmatising.

Free Willy.

Free Willy.

Blackfish.

Tillicum.

I have my conjecture that they thought that killer whale was stigmatising.

Yes.

So that's why we call them orcas.

Yeah.

Since 2020, a small pod of orcas in the straight of Gibraltar have been ramming vessels, pressing their bodies and heads into the hulls and biting, even snapping off the rudders.

Over three years, more than 500 interactions have been recorded and three boats sunk and dozens of others damaged.

They're just like, get out of our house.

No, they are.

Then last month for the first time, this behaviour was recorded in another place when an orca rammed a boat near Shetland.

Now, this whole orca story has gone completely viral online with memes and tweets about orcas taking back the ocean and eating the rich by destroying their boat.

I've seen them being like directed towards like Jeff Bees or Sushiot and stuff like that.

They're like, go for him.

Apparently, all of this can be traced back to one orca, a matriarch named White Gladys.

White Gladys?

Some people are calling her a communist orca.

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We don't know why they're doing this, but we do know orcas communicate with each other and experience social learning and culture.

Orcas in particular areas develop certain behaviours like those wildlife documentaries you've seen where they do the wave to get the seal off the ice.

I wanted to talk about orcas and I was like, I've watched Frozen Planet 2 with my children and orcas are evil and I no longer have any sympathy for them and I'm not rooting for them while they're mowing down the millionaire yachts because they are very clever and they get together to like do things like swim under icebergs to create a wake that will then shake the iceberg and shake the baby seals off so they can snap them all up.

They're very clever.

So you're a team boat.

Sometimes they communicate and do these behaviours that are adaptive.

What's Gladys got to do with it?

Sometimes they do things just fun.

And so I think Gladys is just trolling.

But there are theories this boat ramming behaviour is motivated by revenge because orcas can live up to 100 and are really good memories.

So they may remember a time the ocean wasn't so dominated by humans.

And now they can hear all the noises and all the weird things we're doing in the ocean and they're like, get out.

Also someone of the other orcas has told them about those camps they get kept in where they're taught to jump through hoops and stuff and they're like, see what?

Exactly.

So the vibe is that orcas are very smart and if they wanted to hurt humans there are easier ways for them to do so because there has never been a instance of an orca attacking a human in the wild.

It just doesn't happen.

They're quite gentle holly.

But they've killed a lot of people in captivity, right?

A few.

A few.

Like there have been those instances and the argument is they only do that when they are under horrible conditions.

But they can probably sense how their environment has changed over the last several decades.

And as Grimes tweeted, we deserve to have our boats rammed, frankly.

This week a whole lot of Australians won the right to work from home five days a week forever.

Under a deal agreed with unions, the Australian Public Service will not be able to impose limits on the number of days its 176,000 employees can work from home.

In the past couple of years there's been a lot of debate about working from home.

Is it good?

Is it bad?

But what about is it fair?

Former Victorian Premier Geoff Kennett has spoken out today that we are seeing a divide in our community between those who are able to work from home and those who can't.

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There is social dangers taking place and divides that are occurring in our community. Part of it has been generated by COVID.

In other words, we learnt from and through COVID we could work from home. But more recently it is the massive increase in the cost of living that is making many people who can stay at home and do their work as opposed to those like our nurses and teachers and emergency services who have to go to work.

And I suspect the cost of living is now a very major factor when I speak to young people in particular about a decision to work from home, which is quite understandable. It's no one's fault, it's just a natural reaction which is in itself creating a divide between those people who have to go to work to deliver their service and those who can now stay at home and do so much cheaply and obviously save money. I think this is an interesting point because when this has come up before it's very much been employers want people to get back to the office and the CBD areas in cities are dwindling and a lot of small businesses are suffering because nobody is coming into work in offices, everybody's working from home. But this idea that it's cheaper to work from home, there's no transport costs, you've got less spending on a work wardrobe, you can eat stuff out of the fridge so you don't have to buy an expensive sandwich.

This is a new argument in the whole working from home versus going into the office debate. Holy look, the idea of people trading their flexibility for a lower salary so saying, I do want to work from home, therefore I will accept less money so I don't have an advantage over the people who have no choice. It's an interesting one, you work from home a couple of days a week, are you happy to earn less to pay for that freedom?

I'm asking for a friend.

Jeff Kennett isn't wrong about the divide, right?

Like he's not wrong about that, but there have always been and there will always be a lot of divides in workforces and there's divides between people who work shift works and people who work nine to five and there are all kinds of divides.

I think that this is a little bit of a convenient argument, this idea that it's so entitled to work from home, these people should get paid less because he didn't explicitly say that in the grab that we played you but that is kind of the point that's being drawn out here is that maybe people who have to come into the office should get paid more than people who can stay at home.

It's a very shaky argument that because working from home is not necessarily cheaper. You have to pay for your heating, your power.

I mean, I know that I've spent a lot of money on sorting out all my internet, both in my old house and my new house, making sure you've got everything set up. If you want to get nitty gritty about it, you could go, well, who's supplementing my power bills and who's paying for my internet connection? And obviously I'm not doing that.

I feel like there is a group of people who are very resistant to the fact

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that shit has changed and that a lot of people are saying,  
give me good reasons why I should come to work.

All of the people that you just listed and who Jeff Kennett just listed,  
nurses, teachers, retail workers, anyone in the hospitality industry who can't,  
putting that aside, people who can do their jobs from home are saying,  
why should I come to work?

And this argument isn't going anywhere and this is the latest sort of frontier of it.  
If this happened, if it actually happened that people who were going to work from home  
had to take a pay cut or a lower salary to do so,  
it would disproportionately affect women without question.

Because given the options of flexibility or not, women will often choose flexibility  
for the reasons that are quite obvious.

They often bear the load of caring.

It allows them to be more available, to do pickup, drop off, all that stuff.

It makes life a lot easier in many ways for families.

And unfortunately, that's nearly always women who take that option.

So they're going to now be adversely affected and get paid less,  
as well as all the other disadvantages that we already put on a female workforce because of that.

What Jeff, what his argument is also not acknowledging is that companies  
that allow employees to work from home have lower overheads.

So they need less office space, less power, less cleaning.

And they make more profit.

Well, that's what I thought, right?

Unless you're working completely from home five days a week and you never come into the office,  
rent costs are fixed.

So you can't just have desks, I suppose you could hot desk,  
but rent costs, internet costs, lighting power, those kinds of things,  
having a computer at someone's desk, those things are all fixed.

So an employer doesn't actually save money.

But over, I think at the moment and also in the next few years,  
there will be a lot of businesses where they don't actually have a desk for every employee.

Yeah, right.

And so then they can afford to have a smaller office and pay less rent.

Exactly.

So less rent, less power, all of that stuff.

And as Holly said, there's all sorts of things you do in order to have an office at home.

The only measure of the value of an employee should be how much work they're doing or the quality  
of that work.

It should not be whether or not they commute, whether or not they work from home.

And the other thing is, if he's concerned about people going into work not being valued,  
then let's talk about how nurses and teachers should be paid more,  
but not lower the wages of mostly women who would be coming in.

Because what Jeff Kennett is talking about is the conflict between this whole remote working thing  
and cost of living pressures.

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That's what's happening.

It's all coming to a head because people are saying,  
wait a second, I can't actually afford to live within 10 kilometers of my office.

I can't afford to do that.

And that's one of the divides that, you know, I mean, I know it's a stereotype,  
but the stereotype has a reason.

This is why managers are much more likely to want people to come to the office.

Managers are much more likely to live close to the office and have a car spot.

They're more likely to have a short commute and a car spot.

They're also more likely to spend a lot of their day in things like meetings,  
which are better and easier if you are in the same room.

But the people who are doing the do are not spending that time in meetings.

They can do a lot.

And this is obviously very dependent on the kind of job you do,

but their ability to do their job is not affected in the same way.

If they're not in meetings all day and it doesn't require a whole lot of open communication,  
it's a different ball game.

But I've been saying that if you, I think in the next few years,

and I think it's true now as well,

if you are recruiting and you are only looking at talent

within 10 kilometres of your physical office,

you're not going to get the best talent.

And I think that is a loss for the workforce.

Well, there's also a big labour shortage at the moment.

So the balance of power very much rests with employees.

I mean, Seek, the big job site has said that one of the top search terms

is work from home or flexibility

and that a very high percentage of people who are looking for new jobs

are saying that it would be a deal breaker for them

if they had to be full-time in an office.

I understand all that.

It's interesting because also this week it was announced that Canva,

who is the extraordinary global success story.

Canva is a tech company.

They make an app that you can do design on.

We use it a lot here at Mamma Mia.

It was started by a young woman called Melanie Perkins  
from Perth.

It's now one of the biggest companies in the world.

It's worth billions and billions of dollars.

And they've just been named the best employer in the world.

And I was watching an interview on Sunrise this morning

with their chief vibe officer, Rich, you got to love.

Can we have a chief vibe officer?

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I would like that to be me.  
I wouldn't be it, but I like one.  
Certainly wouldn't be you, Claes Stevens.  
Probably it wouldn't be me either.  
Given my views on certain things, I would be killing vibes.  
But he was talking about at Canva, they have a degree of flexibility,  
but in the office they have an in-house chocolate chip cookie chef.  
You can bring dogs.  
They have free yoga classes.  
They have a gym.  
They provide farm grown, organic, hot breakfasts and lunches for free.  
Like there's all of these things.  
And this has long been the case with tech companies in the US, right?  
Because it's like, you know, there'll be a dry cleaner  
and there'll be all these things on site.  
And the idea is that it seems very attractive,  
but you know, as people have pointed out,  
it's also to keep people there.  
Like people don't do that for free.  
It's so that you get the best people in a competitive market  
and also so that they are encouraged.  
And as employers, we are constantly told in the last couple of years,  
you've got to make it worth people's while to come into the office.  
But that also comes at a cost.  
Like if every small business is having to say,  
here's all this extra free stuff.  
Like the cost of living doesn't just impact on employees.  
It also impacts on employers.  
And this idea that all employers are these, you know,  
Jeff Bezos type characters on yachts, they're not.  
A lot of small businesses are lady startups  
that might employ one or two or six people.  
A hundred percent agree, but I don't think it has to be that extreme.  
I think that actually most employees don't give a shit  
about fresh chocolate chip cookies.  
They care about being respected and trusted to do their work.  
And they're saying, if you're going to make me,  
make me, and I know it's a very sounds like a very petulant turn,  
if you're going to make me come in, commute, like rearrange  
my childcare arrangements, like have this effect on my family  
that to be honest, over the last few years,  
a lot of employees have readjusted their whole lives to this,  
to this idea that no, they don't have to rush out the door at seven  
and get the kid in before school care and da, da, da, da.

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But if you're going to ask me to do that,  
you have to give me a reason to do it,  
and it doesn't have to be chocolate chip cookies.  
It just has to be when I'm there,  
what is important about me being here?  
What couldn't I be doing in my living room?  
And I think that that's actually what people care about  
is they're questioning the purpose more than just like,  
well, this is the way it used to be.  
Why can't it be like that again?  
It's like, well, the reason it can't be like that again  
is because my life, my mental health,  
I don't mean me personally.  
No, no, no, I understand.  
My life, my mental health, all of those things  
are better in this new world.  
So why would I go back to the way you want it  
just because you want it?  
I get it.  
So just because you want it, you know,  
we're very familiar with this certain type of middle manager  
or senior manager who needs to see the people at their desks  
to, you know, feel important  
and to feel that everybody's working.  
That is certainly not where I'm coming from  
and I think we've moved way past that.  
However, it's very hard to measure some of this stuff.  
Like you talk about output or outcome clear  
and it should only be measured on that.  
There are some things that are hard to measure.  
So for example, in the last few weeks,  
I spent the whole day yesterday dealing with issues  
that were nobody's fault but that came about  
because nobody was in the same place over a period of time.  
People had been doing a whole lot of work in Slack  
which is like instant messaging or email  
and it just has led to miscommunication and misunderstandings  
and all of these things.  
And so I spend as a business owner and as a manager,  
often entire days, weeks,  
undoing and rectifying problems that have been caused  
by people all being remote.  
So you understand it's not black and white either.  
It's not workers against employers.



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Like there is nothing as a leadership team  
that we spend more time talking about.  
Like what is the balance?  
Everyone's trying to work it out, right?  
Because you don't want people to be miserable  
and you want to attract the best people and retain them.  
But also there are some things that just work better  
when people are there.  
I agree with all of that a million percent.  
I'm not black and white about this either.  
I think it's very hard to manage teams from remotely.  
I think it's very hard to build culture remotely.  
I think it's very hard to teach people anything remotely.  
I agree with all of that.  
But I think the tension is we're not going back  
to the old way a hundred percent.  
And so instead of it being the thing that you're saying  
of like I spend all my time on picking these problems,  
we need better systems for making it work.  
That's a good point.  
You know what I mean?  
It's like it's not just it would all be better  
if we were sitting in the office.  
Because to be really honest in our work environment  
we all communicate on Slack all the time  
when we did all sit in the same office.  
That's true too.  
So it's like you change that culture,  
you work out how that works better.  
I think that's what employees want.  
And the last point I'll make on this is about women.  
I think that unofficially women have swapped flexibility  
for pay rises and for rates of pay for a very long time.  
I know a lot of women in my world who are like,  
you know I could get paid more somewhere else,  
but my boss lets me leave it three on Thursdays  
and Tuesdays or you know lets me work from home  
on Mondays and Thursdays or whatever.  
Like women have been making those kind of deals  
about their career for a very long time.  
And I think there are different phases in your career  
where your priorities might be money, money, money,  
and then your priority might be flexibility, flexibility.  
And so I think that that's always been a reality,



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but it's a bit worrying to think that it could be legislated into a reality that's like, well, if you're not going to come in, we're just going to pay you less, which will just affect women more.

A pile of cheese and some crackers, three types of smoked meats and a pickle, strawberries, prosciutto and a dip, or a big slice of cake.

What do you eat for dinner when it's just you and you can eat whatever you want?

That thing, whatever it is, and especially if it requires zero cooking is now called hashtag girl dinner.

A girl just came on here and said how like in medieval times peasants had to eat nothing but bread and cheese and how awful that was and she was like, that's my ideal meal.

This is my dinner.

I call this girl dinner.

And it is such a big trend that this week the New York Times did a serious article about it.

Girl dinner is both chaotic and filling as one TikTok commenter put it requiring none of the forethought cooking or plating demanded by an actual meal.

As another commenter observed, it's no preparation, just vibes.

I witnessed a very enthusiastic discussion about girl dinner in the office the other night when my mostly young, mostly singlish co-workers were going home and discussing what they were going to have for their girl dinner and what the parameters of it were.

Laura Brodnick was very specific that a girl dinner must bring joy because one of our co-workers said I've been busy moving house last night, I just had a bowl of grapes.

Laura Brodnick said, no, that is not girl dinner. Do not muddy girl dinner with that.

It must bring joy.

And then Elfie Scott wrote a throw-down article about it on Mamma Mia yesterday called you could eat girl dinner or you could grow up.

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Elfie argued and said all too often these kinds of obsessions can just act as masks for disordered eating. And as a trend, girl dinner feels similar to when creators started making what I eat in a day content. She goes on to say, but my honest gut feeling about girl dinner is that we should probably just grow up a bit. Grouping the concept of a small snacky dinner as a girl thing feels belittling and it feels like a diminutive bird-like meal where we pick up morsels. It feels like we are once again defining femininity by smallness. Now, okay, Elfie, I get that. But who said girl dinner has to be small? First of all, your pile of pickles can be as big as you want. And also, and this is a serious question, I do rankle a bit at the infantilization of like hashtag girl on this. But why aren't women just allowed to eat the food they want to eat without it being some kind of red flag? If I love a big pile of pickles and some smoked salmon and dip for Friday night tea, which I do, if I don't have to cook for anyone else, that is what I'm having. It's not disordered eating. It's just my lazy, delicious, happy place. What do you call it? I call it a bitsy tea. That sounds adult. It's a British way. This is bits and it's my tea because where I grew up, your dinner is called tea. Claire, you think hashtag girl dinner is bullshit? Why are we policing what women eat and why are we so serious about something so silly? I have to admit, I hadn't thought about this critically until I read Elfie's article because sometimes, like you, Holly,

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I love a dinner that's just crackers  
and hummus and strawberries and whatever  
else happens to be around.  
But I am not eating like seven crackers  
and just a little spoonful of hummus.  
I'm eating the whole packet of crackers  
and the whole tub of hummus and  
I'm probably still hungry for dinner later.  
I think the argument  
that most girl dinners are just  
smaller than normal dinners, as Elfie  
says, is valid.  
And I do hate the idea  
that all women eat like birds  
and just pick at things.  
And I think I read  
Elfie's article and was fist pumping  
because I've been around women who are  
constantly dismissing their own  
and other women's hunger and I  
find it incredibly frustrating.  
So, I will be somewhere  
and it's often  
women who are a little bit older than me  
but they will say,  
oh, Clay, you don't want a full meal, do you?  
Do you want to share? No.  
I'm hungry. I'll be having a full meal.  
They've never been out for dinner with us meal free  
but we have a very strict no sharing rule.  
That's a possible baby boomer  
holdover from diet culture because  
I've been around baby boomers who  
everyone will be serving themselves  
from like a buffet and they'll take a  
side plate like a bread and butter plate.  
And you're like, what do you know?  
And I read those bullshit diets and magazines  
that were like, just make your plate smaller  
and you'll eat less. But I also notice it  
around men that it's assumed  
that because you're a girl  
and maybe because you are  
physically smaller than them in some cases

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or shorter that you don't want a full meal or you'll be happy with something small because you're a lady. And I'm not a lady. I want meals. It's one of those things where if you've experienced disordered eating you see almost everything through that lens. Yeah, that's true. Which I don't think is a bad thing because a majority of women have experienced disordered eating to some extent. That's very true because it's about restriction. Me and I often lightly throw down about like I hate to use these words, Gwyneth Paltrow but like sometimes I'll be like, look there are lots of reasons why people are obsessed with greens. I can just have green juices and healthy blah blah blah and you're always like no, it's only about that. Oh yeah, of course. Because even if we don't consciously realise what this content is doing, I think it's good to point it out to say, okay, can we acknowledge that this girl dinner in almost every case is just a smaller version of actual dinner. But why? I don't think it's healthy to pathologise everything to do with women and food. Like women are just allowed to enjoy food. It's very loaded everything with women because our culture has pathologised. I think it's worth interrogating when you have a trend that's taken off like this. I think it's worth interrogating why and clearly it's speaking a truth. But it's a truth that women don't want to cook every night. Well, I do not want to cook every night. This is my other argument. I'm jumping in at this stage to say two points. First of all, I also have this in my house. We call it picnic plates. Yes.

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And this has been how I've fed my children for 25 years. Neither my husband and I can cook. We just have other priorities. It's not my thing. So we have long done this except for us, it's never been called a girl dinner. It's how we fed our children, which is a picnic plate, which is a few blueberries, some hummus, a couple of carrot sticks, a piece of toast, you know, a little pile of tuna, a handful of cereal off you go. And what the girl dinner is about to me is not eating disorders as much as mental load. That's exactly what I thought. Because it alleviates women of having to cook a meal. So whether we're making it for ourselves or for other people, I love what Laura Broadnick said about it has to bring joy. For most women who aren't just feeding themselves and don't live alone, cooking is not joy. Cooking is mental load. It is labour that you do for your partner and your children. And it happens every day. Literally. Oh, dinner again. Haven't we already done that? And then you're meant to feel guilty that it doesn't bring you joy? And it's like it doesn't bring me joy. It just doesn't. I'm never going to enjoy it. So to me, a girl dinner is, you know, the kids might be away or whatever if you have those responsibilities. Girl dinner has a very different connotation to if you live alone, I think. I'm really into lowering the standard of what constitutes dinner. I'm really, really into that. And just eating what you feel like even if it's random and I totally agree

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me out. The more I looked at this, I was like,  
yes, there's something that  
viscerally annoys me about the idea that women  
eat like birds because I've never eaten like a bird.  
But I think it's  
more about overwhelm and feeling like our lives  
are chaotic and we do not  
have the energy for a meaningful meal.  
And the pressure that can be taken  
off by not actually having to cook  
any of these is lovely. Can I make a confession  
because this is a safe space?  
I don't provide meals for my children.  
Because I've known you a long time, I know this about you,  
but I do not understand how that works.  
I have to provide meals  
for my children every day,  
like breakfast, lunch and dinner.  
So if you didn't, what would happen?  
They would just eat crisps  
like chips, you know, from the cupboard.  
They'd just eat snacks all day.  
Luca did learn to cook very young  
and he's quite a good cook. They had to.  
So my children have learned  
to forage for food out of necessity.  
It's like a game of survivor, but through their whole lives.  
Don't you sit down and have dinner together in the evenings?  
No, I have to say,  
without me realising it,  
our family dinners  
have been completely deconstructed.  
The only exception to that was during lockdown.  
The first lockdown, we all came together  
and Luca would cook  
and we would all eat dinner together and that was lovely.  
It's not that I don't provide...  
Like, they'll be food. They've got access to Uber Eats.  
They'll sometimes be food in the house.  
They're able to order Uber Eats if they want to.  
They'll be leftovers in the fridge  
or like I will have gone to the chicken shop  
or whatever.  
And it's like choose your own adventure.

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The kids don't want to sit down with us  
and everyone's kind of on their different schedules.  
It's so funny.  
So I resisted family dinner for years.  
I used to talk about it all the time on this glorious mess.  
Andrew Dada, my co-host, was very disapproving.  
We used to do kids tea,  
like just feeding something quick and from the telly, whatever.  
And then Brent and I would have dinner when they went to bed  
when they were little.  
Every single parenting, bloody expert  
in the universe  
and family expert in the universe  
loves to tell you how important family dinner is.  
For a lot of families, it's really stressful.  
Especially once the kids, if everyone's working  
and you're rushing in the door and then you've got to cook.  
So we didn't do it for years.  
But then the guilt began to get to me.  
And also now that they're older and we can't get away  
with that like feed them at five o'clock  
kind of thing,  
we do family dinner like three nights a week.  
We'll sit down and have dinner together  
three nights a week.  
They were right, those people.  
Because it is one of the few times  
in our family, they never want to do it.  
They'll be like this,  
are we up to eat at the table today?  
Like that always.  
And I'll be like, yes, it's Tuesday.  
I think that's much better than what we do.  
Family dinners with a highlight of my adolescence.  
But it's the only time when we might actually talk, right?  
Like they resist it.  
But then when we're there, there are no devices.  
We will actually talk.  
And then they can't wait to get up again  
and then all that.  
But it has been true.  
But the other thing is I very much agree  
that the mental load of cooking for women,  
it's like we have two speeds.



## [Transcript] Mamamia Out Loud / Is #GirlDinner Just The Way Women Eat?

It's women love to buy cookbooks  
and look at beautiful books and beautiful pictures of things.  
But we don't want to cook those things  
because those are really difficult to do.  
What we want to actually eat is a pile of snacks  
out of the fridge.  
But if you have to provide a meal for your family every night,  
which most people do,  
it's just a job.  
If you want to make mum Mia out loud  
part of your routine five days a week,  
we release segments on Tuesdays and Thursdays  
just for mum Mia subscribers.  
To get full access,  
follow the link in the show notes  
and a big thank you to all our current subscribers.  
My TikTok algorithm  
has obviously been taken over  
by baby content.  
And it would appear I'm not the only one.  
Because this week there's an article  
in the Washington Post with the headline  
it's a day in the life of a baby  
on TikTok.  
And yes, I know exactly what they're talking about.  
There's currently a trend  
of filming a day in the life of your baby  
and narrating it.  
And people use a voice effect  
to change the sound of the voice  
so it weirdly does seem like  
it's the baby sharing what their day is like.  
And it's a specific voice. Let's listen to one  
because it just makes me laugh.  
Hey TikTok aunties, welcome to my  
basic bitch morning routine.  
My dad's been gone the last five days  
so I figured I would make my mum's life  
even more difficult by tipping my brother's breakfast  
upside down and getting it all over the floors  
even though my mum just scrubbed the house  
from top to bottom to make my dad happy.  
Then I picked up fists full of soggy cereal  
and yeeted it across a living room.

## [Transcript] Mamamia Out Loud / Is #GirlDinner Just The Way Women Eat?

My mum had a pissed mouth like she usually does by doing my hair while I ate my mediocre ass breakfast.

Claire, this is a very sassy one which appeals to me because it kind of like personifies a baby a little bit like that boss baby movie where the baby's like this kind of funny, dry, snarky person.

They're not all like that, are they?

No, some are cutesy and then some are crass and I love the crass ones.

And some like influencer.

Yes, so Australian influencer Martha Califatitas and Michael Brinelli do some great ones with their little boy Lucius who's a few months old and he has great hair and it's always about styling him and what they're going to put him in.

My dad tries to dress me. It's the most tragic thing you've ever seen on earth. I do like that.

Is that the new Bambi Mini? Is that the latest from Bambi Mini? I like that.

I don't mind it, but I, you know, I want to bring out the blue eyes. The Washington Post article argued that while the TikToks are obviously an attempt to make light of the heavy demands of motherhood, memorialise childhoods that seem to pass all too quickly and connect with other caregivers, the issue of privacy still remains. The reporter speaks to experts who say children can't consent to participating in the creation of the content. I have a lot of thoughts about this, but firstly

Mayor, would you like me to create some day in the life videos of my niece Luna?

Well, you've already put her in a TikTok which was very funny. It showed Claire walking into Jesse's house grabbing the baby and yelling that I have clinical depression, so give me the fucking day. You can need the baby now!

## [Transcript] Mamamia Out Loud / Is #GirlDinner Just The Way Women Eat?

I mean, two minds about this. I think it's so fascinating. Part of me thinks, oh no, this is a lot of pressure, because now to be considered a good mother you've got to turn everything into content and I am someone who loves turning everything into content, but not everybody is a content creator, right? And that's just another piece of mental load. My second thought is that it can give women who are on maternity leave and looking after babies something to do with their brains, because it can be quite atrophying the whole looking after a baby and really lonely as well, so it can give you something creative to do. And the third thing is that if women can earn a bit of money is that not a good thing? What I think is hilarious is the idea that in like 20 years time everybody's home movies are going to have this phase. Like, you know how people that used to be in the olden days that if you took a new partner home or something you'd be like, oh god mum's going to get the baby pictures out and now obviously we have a lot of social media content of all our children and then in another few years it'll be like, oh remember when mum was in that phase, that bloody boss baby voiceover and here's me, we're like I think I must be in a post holiday like, oh why are we being so serious about all the silly things thing, because I'm like fine, like it's fine, but also I couldn't even watch any of these to the end. And Mia's always said this and she's right, when you're out of a phase obviously these babies are objectively cute. Nice, right? I don't want to look at babies. No, I'll watch Loona's, but no in essence.

## [Transcript] Mamamia Out Loud / Is #GirlDinner Just The Way Women Eat?

You don't think it's funny?  
I am so far beyond that now  
that I am like, oh baby  
humour, whatever. It doesn't interest  
me, it doesn't attract me. Like, puppy dogs  
yes. Coco did that with our dog  
which I thought was really funny with that voice.  
I thought that was hilarious, but I agree with you  
I wouldn't watch, I might watch someone  
else's dog, but I wouldn't watch someone else's baby  
I don't know why. Apparently this Washington  
Post article said obviously some of the  
people watching are mums who are in the same  
phase, but a lot of it is younger  
women and they're asking  
for updates and they're following the baby  
and I think the reason I  
Parasocial relationship with other  
people's babies. Yes, and I think  
I'm really into this and  
I genuinely find them enjoyable  
and I don't find them problematic  
at all. Are they irritating? No,  
I find it really  
interesting because  
if I wasn't a twin  
and my twin didn't have a baby right now  
how am I going to find out  
what a day in the life with a newborn looks like?  
This is setting you up  
for some very, very  
dangerous expectations. I think you've just  
identified the problem. If you watch  
enough, if you watch enough you get  
to see like what a routine looks like  
how often you change the nappy, what a toddler does.  
You don't because it's all packaged  
into a tight little 90 second  
funny, witty,  
cute, like it might show  
literally two seconds, because I've watched a few of these, two seconds  
of a baby crying and go and then I just  
cried because I couldn't decide what I wanted to do.  
That can go on for hours.

## [Transcript] Mamamia Out Loud / Is #GirlDinner Just The Way Women Eat?

But I think this is like a window  
into certain truths  
that you do not see otherwise.  
I reckon the kind of idea of  
parenting has become so individualized  
and it used to be a community and now  
it is so just often  
a woman and her  
partner looking after a kid and you  
don't get to know what that looks like  
until you have a kid of your own. Which is what blogging  
did for us. We did a lot of soul  
searching about whether we've replaced the town  
square with parenting blogs  
and parenting sites and what we used to call  
mummy bloggers and then a whole lot of  
judgement because there'll be people watching some of these  
videos because nothing  
stirs up a divide like parenting stuff.  
There will be some people watching this going, she's giving  
him a bottle. Do you see that? She's giving him a bottle  
and that bottle doesn't look like it's got the right teat for  
that age. I think that baby's only six weeks  
and that's definitely a 12 week teat and then  
there's always a danger  
to parenting in public and I don't  
mean to take something frivolous and fun  
seriously but that's the reality of it.  
There will be people over there sniping  
about this. So you've got to  
be careful that like parenting  
making it all look like a fun awesome  
adventure all the time. The difference  
to me, Claire, also between blogging  
and this and I'm not saying one is better  
than the other. I get that  
you can feel, I'll make one of these videos  
and I can feel seen and be part  
of this tribe because you're right, it can  
be isolating. If you don't have people who've got a baby  
in the exact same stage as you, it's  
can be really isolating. The reason that  
blogs were different is that  
there was a lot of nuance. Yes,

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I get that but  
I often think as somebody  
who's kind of in that phase just  
before having a baby  
hopefully. You're looking at what  
it looks like. I'm looking at it and  
I like a lot of those blogs  
and a lot of my experience  
working in women's media is  
incredibly negative about that phase  
and how awful it is and what you don't  
see is the voice  
and the fun and the funny  
and the fact that just like all of  
us, like I didn't realise with my dog  
like my dog has his own voice, he has his own personality  
I didn't realise you  
do that with your baby. All of our babies  
had their own voices. Our dog  
now has that voice. You just recycle the voice  
to be honest. So true.  
And you've always done the like, says  
Donnie, why did you do that? Like we've always done that  
shit, right? But now we put it on the internet.  
I need to show you all the videos Brent made  
when he was on Paternity Leave. He got very  
into it. He made Matilda be like the  
Mission Impossible baby like up in  
Galloway. So I think that speaks to the  
lack of mental stimulation of  
spending days with a  
person who can't talk. And you also love  
them so much that you want to make them into  
a little person even though they can't talk yet.  
I reckon the stuff about privacy in consent  
is hysterical.  
As somebody who is viewing all this stuff  
I only  
kind of start to think about  
consent and privacy  
when a kid is old enough  
maybe they're at school and you think  
they're going to go to school and other people have  
seen that. But at what point do you turn that tap off?

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But a newborn, I'm sorry, but even when you grow up, whatever, you see a picture of you as a newborn it's not you. You're not going to do anything embarrassing. No one's mocking a baby.

I have a recommendation that I'm very excited about.

There's a documentary on Netflix very serious topic.

It's called WAM.

Let's introduce the band. George.

Amanda.

We had a number one album.

We had a string of hit singles.

And we were selling out arenas.

How can the country

be in love with these two idiots?

We met when I was 11

and Andrew was 12.

And there was only one thing that I wanted to do.

You get so many.

Being a band with George. And that was it.

WAM.

So WAM, for anyone who doesn't know we're a band in the 80s and it's where George Michael came from.

You don't know who George Michael is in WAM.

Just get us out of your ears. Who even are you?

When you watch the WAM documentary

you will A, B reminded

of all their excellent songs. Like

Wake Me Up Before You Go Go.

There are actually some very good songs.

Everything she wants. Great song.

Anyway, the reason this

is a recommendation is it's a documentary that's not massively long. It's like 50 minutes or something. And it just deals

with the WAM years. So it doesn't then follow

George Michael and his very successful

solo career. And what is fascinating

about it is if you know anything about WAM

you'll know it was George Michael and Andrew Ridgely

and Andrew Ridgely was really, really handsome.

But his purpose in the



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band was very unclear.  
Like George Michael was clearly the talent.  
He was the singer. He wrote the songs.  
Although they did write the songs together at the beginning.  
Andrew Ridgely was better looking  
and continued my childhood  
tradition of  
being in love with gay men.  
Oh no, apparently not. Not Andrew.  
Apparently not. Straight.  
No, George gay. Oh, there's one for me.  
My god, I was better than I thought.  
It's not entirely clear but he definitely presents  
in this documentary that he was the straight one.  
Really? Anyway.  
The thing that's really interesting is it would be  
very easy to watch that dynamic  
and be like, well, there's the talented one.  
There's the silly one. George Michael  
had to transcend that. That must have been awful.  
But actually the story  
is much more complicated. Imagine that.  
The story is actually more complicated than that.  
Those two became friends at school.  
They were 12 years old. They found each other at high school.  
They're both sons of immigrants, right?  
So George has got the very conservative  
Greek Cypriot parents in London  
who wanted him to be a doctor, an accountant,  
a lawyer, something like that.  
Andrew had Egyptian parents or an Egyptian father  
and he was a rebel who was just hot  
and just wanted to have a good time.  
And they became best friends and completely  
inseparable through all of their teenage years.  
Did they have a relationship?  
Not suggested that they have a relationship at any time.  
And then Andrew gets a girlfriend, Shirley.  
She ends up in the band. If you remember Pepsi and Shirley.  
I remember Pepsi and Shirley.  
Then it goes into then they get really famous  
that it becomes clear that George Michael  
is going to be George Michael.  
And Andrew just isn't.

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He doesn't really want to be.  
George Michael is strategic.  
He is obsessed with the level of fame he wants.  
He wants four number ones a year and he gets really upset  
when one of his number ones, last Christmas,  
gets stolen by Band-Aid.  
Do they know it's Christmas?  
Even though that was feeding all the starving people in Africa.  
He's like, George Michael interviews  
throughout this whole thing.  
He's like, I was really happy to be part of Band-Aid  
but there was a little bit of me that was like,  
I don't know.  
Anyway.  
It becomes clear as it examines this relationship  
and they parted on very good terms.  
They decided whams over, George is going to be George.  
Let's do a big final show.  
They did a tour and all that stuff.  
George Michael himself says several times  
and of course this is being told  
post George Michael's death  
and it's Andrew Ridgely's story to a point.  
But certainly all the interviews  
and everything backs it up.  
George Michael would never have been George Michael  
to meet Andrew Ridgely.  
He needed, he was an insecure  
closeted gay man  
who kind of had all this self-hatred  
and doubt which made him a very good  
songwriter.  
But made him unable to become  
that pop star guy.  
If his best mate and his off-sider  
and his partner in crime was not this like  
Larry, let's do it George.  
Confidence man like who pushed him to that point  
and then when it became clear that  
George Michael's ambitions were much bigger  
and I just wanted to be in a band and get laid  
and have a good time.  
It is so interesting.  
It kind of turns all those dynamics

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about jealousy and stuff on their head.  
Plus the songs are great.  
Plus the fashion is ridiculous.  
So much fun.  
It's called Wham. It's on Netflix.  
Do yourself as a favour.  
You will immediately make a new Wham playlist.  
If you want something else to listen to right now  
if you haven't had enough of us  
on yesterday's episode  
there's a video that came out  
just a couple of days ago  
with Pixie Curtis showing her haul  
while she's in Paris  
and all the beauty products that she's bought.  
The easy thing would be to say  
Pixie Curtis, but we're not going to dump  
on a 12 year old or a 9 year old.  
What we spoke about is actually  
the whole phenomenon of how  
girls as young as 12  
or even younger from all different socio-economic  
backgrounds, not just wealthy ones  
lust after  
these incredibly prestige products.  
It's a really interesting conversation.  
We'll put a link in the show notes.  
Thank you for listening to us.  
Australia's number one news and pop culture show.  
This episode was produced by  
Emily Gazillis and Susanna Makin  
with Audio Production by Leah Porges  
and we'll see you tomorrow. Bye.  
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There is a link in the episode description.