

[Transcript] Mamamia Out Loud / The Great Wrinkle Reckoning Of 2023

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Things You Didn't Learn in School is the show that helps you realise that we weirdly all graduate without the basic life skills we actually need.

Should I buy or rent?

How does voting work?

Should I be investing my money?

How do I even talk to my mechanic?

And most importantly, where the hell do I park my car?

I'm Ann Burnham and I'll be the first to admit we obviously still have some things to learn.

But that is where our show comes in.

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No.

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Hello and welcome to Mamma Mia Out Loud, what we're actually talking about on Wednesday the 4th of October.

I'm Holly Wainwright.

I'm Mia Friedman.

And I'm Claire Stevens.

And on the show today, there's a very silly feud between sisters sucking up the internet's oxygen this week.

And Claire Stevens is going to recap it for you so you don't ever need to think about it ever again.

Also, why can't anyone agree about anything anymore?

Apparently, you'll be unsurprised to hear Australia is more divided than ever.

And is aging a choice?

Mia thinks yes, it's a series of choices in fact and she'd like fewer of them please.

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But first, in case you missed it, Mia Friedman, ballet flats are back. Millennials have apparently lost their grip on fashion because Out Loud is ballet flats are back.

I lived in those.

I had ballet flats in every colour and I lived in them for a certain period of time.

What year do you think it was?

I think it was the Nauties and I think I thought I was like Nicole Richie or something.

Yeah.

But I was not.

Yeah.

Amy Winehouse also pioneered the black ballet flat.

Now you can buy them anywhere, just about at any price point.

I bought a pair at Zara on the weekend and I'm going to take them back because I've come to my senses.

For those who don't know, the ballet flat is exactly what it sounds like.

It's a slipper-like, largely unstructured shoe style meant to evoke a ballerina's point shoe.

And they do on about 2% of the population.

Millennials were the original wearers of the ballet flat trend and they're the generation that are particularly knocked by their return.

Because there was an article in The Atlantic this week that said, wearing them is an act of violence against podiatry, yes, but their drawbacks go further.

Many ballet flats are so flimsy that they look trashed after only a few wears.

They're difficult to pair with socks so they stink like feet almost as quickly.

Ballet flats are in practical shoes that sneak into closets under the guise of practicality.

Hey, they're not high heels.

And prey on people who do not yet know better.

They're blisters that you get from ballet flats.

However, there's part of me that doesn't hate this.

You know, like Alexa Chung, you know how she loves a flat?

Yeah, but this is the thing.

This looks so good in flats.

The only people who look really good in flats, I'm just going to call it out, a tiny little way flight ballerinas.

Tiny people with like toothpick legs, like Nicole Ritchie's.

And so I believe in my soul that like they could look good, but they've never looked good on me and I always look stumpy.

I'll just leave that there.

Guys, there's a Courtney and Kim Kardashian fight that's an allegory for our time.

It's actually really profound and I need you to pay attention.

I like she's framed it like this so that Mia doesn't do a little vomit on the table.

She'd be like normally Mia would be like, we're talking about what?

It's actually quite relevant to you, Mia.

But if you say Shakespeare or allegory, then she's like, oh shit, I better look smart.

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I have to listen.

And I'd like to just flag that in the intro holler you described it as a silly little fight.

It's a silly little fight.

It's not a silly little fight.

I've missed this story completely.

So please.

Everybody quiet.

Like all good family fights, this started with a wedding.

Okay.

Last year, Courtney married Travis Barker in Portofino in Italy.

Is Courtney the oldest?

Yes.

Right.

In an extravagant ceremony that was very Dolce and Gabbana in that everybody was dressed by Dolce and Gabbana.

The filler it was held at was owned by them, it, the label.

Even though once upon a time one of the Gabbanas said that they were the cheapest family that had ever been invented.

The Kardashians.

It was a big collab.

So a lot of money I believe was exchanged and so that's fine.

Exactly.

And Courtney, the bride, wore Dolce and Gabbana.

Many looks.

Then in September, just a few months later, Kim Creative directed a Dolce and Gabbana runway show that drew from the fashion houses nineties archives.

Courtney felt like this was a violation because she had dressed her family in many looks from the same archive for her wedding.

So she felt Kim had heartlessly capitalized on her sister's wedding for a business deal.

Oh, but both the deals would have been negotiated by their momager, Kris Jenner.

Well, yes.

So maybe her beef should be with their mother.

You would think so.

Kim thought Courtney was being petty and that she was overlooking the personal and financial value of this opportunity for her sister.

Well, I personally don't think Kim needed that collaboration to like feed her family, but I digress.

There's been tensions between the sisters for years because Kim has always thought Courtney's lazy and doesn't take their job seriously.

And Courtney wants to prioritize her kids and her family.

And Kim thinks everyone should just get your fucking ass up and work.

She's said it.

It seems like nobody wants to work these days.

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They had a physical fight in season 18 of the show about about Kim saying first in the furious 2006 about Kim saying, Courtney, you don't work hard as the rest of us and Courtney hit her.

Anyway, the feud has been growing around the idea that Courtney is more concerned with protecting her boundaries than the family's business.

And she has said, she's on the record of saying, there's something about being content and happy with what you have and not feeling like you need more.

I think that's quite profound, Courtney.

This is hilarious because I love the degrees of boundaries in the Kardashians.

Like I think I've seen the inside of Courtney Kardashian's womb yet she's the one with the boundaries.

He's like, actually, no.

Now, I'm going to recap the phone call everyone is talking about because on the first episode of the new season of the Kardashians, three minutes in, we see this phone call between Kim and Courtney that feels like it never should have been aired and it is brilliant.

Basically, we find out the whole family going to Cabo on holiday and Courtney is not going because her and Kim had this fight on the phone.

Kim is sitting on her lounge in an outfit that looks like she's been dressed for a play.

It's ripped jeans and a ripped shirt.

And she's like casually sitting on her lounge with the phone on speaker, always on speaker.

Kim calls Courtney to say she's going to Milan for a dolce dinner.

She says, if Courtney would like to come, that would be lovely.

And Courtney says, no, I'm all dolce out, which I think is a great phrase that we should use more.

Dolce out.

I'm just a bit dolce out.

Courtney argues that Kim saw her wedding and saw something that wasn't hers and wanted it.

And Kim's like, no, you've got it wrong because I actually hated all the looks at your wedding.

I hated your wedding visually because I hated your wedding.

Kim then doubles down and says, Courtney, it's not that original.

Everyone does 90s.

Courtney fires back with, you cannot stand someone else being the center of attention.

You came to my wedding.

You couldn't be happy for me.

You complained from the second you got there to the second you left.

And she says you just could not be happy that somebody else had the attention, which is an interesting point because Kim has always been the main character in that family, right?

And in Courtney's defense, Kim has been married three times.

Courtney has been married once.

Let her have her wedding day.

Kim then turns it back on Courtney and insists she hates them all.

And she says that Courtney's friends call Kim complaining about her.

Here's what Kim says about Courtney's friends.

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All of your friends call us complaining whether you think they're the ones going to you. They're all coming to us on the side saying the opposite to us. So we're all confused and we're on a group chat that's actually labeled not Courtney so we know and have to funnel what your friends are saying to us and have to figure out why you're such a different person and why you have this vendetta out. Do you think I want to be a part of that? Like, absolutely not. They're your friends, the ones that you speak to on a daily basis, but you take it all out on me and I'm trying the best that I can to reconcile and figure it out and call you all the time. It's about you. You are a narcissist. It is all about you. Anything you do. It's all about you and about how it looks to the world about you. So you just want to clear up your facts. Take out my whole side of the episode. I don't give a f***. I can't. That's a classic mean girl tactic of going, everyone hates you and I'm speaking for the group. Awful. Can we also acknowledge what a terrible name for a group chat, be more creative, not Courtney. Okay. Oh, I don't know. I think that's quite handy. You know how easy it is to post in the wrong chat. That's very true. Fair. Then Kim turns it on Courtney and is like, are you happy? We don't think you're happy. And Courtney's like, I was five minutes ago, not on the phone to you. Kim repeats they're all concerned. Courtney's like, you're so concerned you have a group chat called not Courtney. And she says, the happiness comes when I get the f*** away from you guys, specifically you. Then Kim's like, your kids have come to me. Oh, that's a low play. And Courtney replies, you're just a f***ing witch and I hate you. That's a fair response. I can't. It's great television. They're so mad. And apparently throughout this season, we see the evolution of the fight and apparently

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it starts to heal, whatever, but I have a theory about why it has resonated so strongly. It's because it's an allegory for our time about what happens when capitalism and family mix.

So many iconic stories are about this tension from the days of Shakespeare, King Lear, but modern stories also lack succession because the fact is that the way parents and children and siblings and other family members interact with each other is meant to be different from how employers, employees and colleagues do.

An article in Time Magazine argues there are very different norms of behavior and expectations of altruism and conditional love for family.

And basically the Courtney Kim fight boils down to you chose money over me.

Mia, who do you think is in the right?

Mia's traumatized from the time you were so full of it.

That's not why people are loving this fight.

They just love, love, love nothing more than two women having a slanging fight.

But I think what the fight is about is fascinating.

I mean, obviously Mia has to answer a question, but I just cannot believe that if this is real, because this is a whole thing around it, right, is that it's probably not real.

These people are making content, right?

And I saw Kim posting on her Instagram the other day, like she's at Courtney's baby shower. Baby Travis is coming.

Woo.

So they're like, you know, rifts have been peeled, whatever.

It was filmed four or five months ago.

Yeah.

But if it is real, I do not understand sisters, which is true because I don't have a sister, right?

And my relationship with my brother is not like this.

But if anyone spoke to me in anything approaching that, I would never speak to them again.

Like we spend our lives telling kids that having a group chat called not Courtney, that is bullying, right?

If that was in a school, if that was in a friend group, if that was in any other situation, this is the kind of stuff that damages and limits your self-esteem forever.

And I know what you'll say, Clare Stevens, you'll say, yes, it explains so much of my life.

But like, I don't understand how families can talk to each other like this.

No wonder she wants to get away from them.

This is exactly how sisters speak to each other.

I can't believe that.

This is sisters.

Yes.

And then the next minute, you're like, hey, I've got M&M's, you want to watch a TV show?

And you're like, yes.

Yes.

So there is no one in my life who could talk to me like that, like no one.

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Oh, what about your daughter?

Oh, my daughter for sure.

Yeah, it's good call.

Good call.

She'd be like, here's my group chat.

Not mum.

Yeah.

Not dumb mum.

Exactly.

Anyway, Mia, sorry, go on.

It's just her and Billy.

I have literally nothing to add.

Like literally, all I would say is when you said at the beginning, it sounded like it wasn't meant to be aired.

All of these women are producers on the show.

They left their contract where they used to to keeping up with the Kardashians to take control of their show.

And even though the ratings aren't nearly as good as they were, it's basically a big infomercial for all of their different businesses and brands, which is genius.

I mean, you know, that works hard.

Kris Jenner works harder.

And she does work hard.

But I think that's a good point about when money and family mix, but anyone who's in a family business, including me, that stuff happens, you know, when it can be tricky.

But there's a way to navigate it.

You can see that the problem happens when you start looking at the people in your family as a commodity and as dollar figures, which is what is happening in the Kardashian family.

If you and Jesse are offered like, come and do this brand endorsement, we want both of you, right?

And we're going to pay you a bajillion dollars.

And you're or the other way around, I'm not casting aspersions on one of you wants to and one of you doesn't.

This exact fight would happen.

Exactly.

Is that what we're saying?

I mean, the opportunity hasn't come up.

So one of you would be saying, well, I need that money to feed my family.

And the other one's like, I'm all dolted out.

Yeah.

Literally.

Exactly.

And then the person who didn't would be like, you're so selfish, you're so selfish.

So how do we avoid this in this modern allegory?

Well, I think you look at the Kardashian family and you think you've built a business

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and you have lost all semblance of what it actually means to be an actual family.

How do you know?

Another symptom of this is, here's a question, where's Rob?

Rob isn't doing well.

And Rob.

You don't know that.

Oh, yes, I do.

Rob.

Maybe he just doesn't want any part of this insanity.

He doesn't.

The other thread running through this, there's what Kim's kind of saying about you've changed.

We're all worried about you.

It's because of Kourtney's relationship, right?

And I don't know anything about these people, but that relationship looks pretty whack.

If that was my imaginary sister, I'd also be going like, doll.

Well, I see you tongue kissing constantly.

It's healthier than Kim and Kanye.

True.

So I think it also comes down to the fact that with family and with the people we are closest to, you're always having one fight and it's the same fight.

And I reckon the fight that Kourtney and Kim have been having since they were toddlers is that Kim is always the center of attention and Kourtney never gets to be the center of attention.

But Kourtney doesn't want to be, otherwise she would have been in the show more.

She was the first one to back out of that show.

Well, I think she doesn't like being told what to do by Kim.

And I think she feels like Kim sold her soul for the success of this family and she also sold Kourtney's soul.

Oh, I think that's how Kourtney feels.

That's profound.

Yeah.

But I do think it's a modern day Shakespeare and we need to take it more seriously.

Honestly, I could talk about this all day.

I love an excuse to talk about celebrities, but you have outdone yourself in the bullshit index there.

Mother Mia out loud!

Who remembers the women's football World Cup?

Remember how we all were so happy?

Remember that glorious few weeks there when everyone in Australia agreed about something and that it was the Matildas were amazing, inspiring and hot as F.

Remember that, wasn't it lovely?

That was only six weeks ago, people.

Only six weeks ago that we all agreed on something.

And now, of course, it seems like we can't agree on anything.

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You can probably feel it, the mood on the internet at the moment.
It's about the voice referendum, which has been pitched as an us and them division, but it's not only about the voice referendum.
It's about everything from youth crime to parenting choices.
It feels like the mood is as combustible as it was back when we were arguing about border closures in 2020.
And that's actually probably relevant.
A couple of new surveys have come out taking the temperature of Australians when it comes to trust and togetherness, right?
And they've found that only a quarter of Australians feel like we're a country that's united on anything.
And almost half believe that we're more divided than we've been in the past.
And fascinatingly, if this division of mistrust is kind of at a very high level, so a falling sense of trust in institutions and governments, it's affecting us at a very human level.
One of the findings from the survey said that 76% of Australians would be less likely to help out someone who strongly disagreed with their views.
So you've fallen down in the street.
I'm going to ask you how you're voting in the referendum before I help you up.
One of the reasons that's cited for this lack of trust too and comes through in this research is that a large sections of the population do not feel listened to, which is kind of fascinating because you could argue that 10 years or more into social media, we've all never had more platforms on which to shout and feel listened to.
And also, it is clearly not only an Australian issue.
It's a polarization enormous obviously in America over the past decade, lots of countries around the world.
And we've always kind of been talking about priding ourselves a bit in Australia that we're not really like that.
We've got compulsory voting, we're more centrist, all that stuff.
But it feels like we're catching that disease.
So I want to know, why can't we agree about anything anymore?
Mia Friedman.
I think because of algorithms.
If you look at social media and how it actually works, it used to be that social media when it first started would just go chronologically.
And so everything that everybody posted, you'd go and look at your feed and you'd just look at it in reverse chronological order.
But then algorithms kicked in and the social media companies worked out that they could keep people on their platforms for longer and therefore monetize their eyeballs much more effectively.
If they served the more content that made them angry.
And that still holds true until today.
And that was an absolute turning point.
And we were part of that as well because we worked in the digital world.

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You saw straight away that if you published a controversial opinion or an incendiary article, it would do much better on social media than if you published a factual one or a reasonable one or a funny one or a sad one.

Anything that made people feel angry or outraged would do better.

So that has therefore the tail has wagged the dog and the algorithm has meant that our feeds have become and most people get the news from their feeds, for example.

Our feeds have become full of outrage.

That's what rises to the surface.

The cream doesn't rise to the surface. The outrage does.

So then we had a couple of other incidents.

We had Trump come to political power based on that algorithm because he was just all about outrage.

And then we had COVID, which united us for about one second when we were on balconies and then quickly divided us into vaccination, non-vaccination, lockdown,

COVID's a myth, COVID's real.

And it's kind of stayed that way.

So at the same time, there's also been fragmentation in media.

So it means that you used to have to, in your media, you would get a newspaper, you would get a TV, watch the TV news, or you would listen to the radio.

And there would be a set of stories that were factually based that were chosen by a media organization.

Now, you can find an entire media channel that supports whatever you believe, either by following individuals or by following particular media organizations with a particular point of view.

So that just sort of stokes your fire.

I mean, and that's how we've become so divided, I think.

I think the idea of togetherness and connection and unification is all based on communication, which is what this report says.

And our primary method of communication now is online.

And I would absorb more and communicate more with people I do not know and not in real life in a day than I do with real life interactions.

And because of that, I think the polarization has a huge impact because this idea of people not feeling listened to and not represented, statistically, they're not.

And it's really hard to remember when you're online and you're kind of swimming in this soup of outrage and really passionate opinions

that the vast, vast, vast majority of people sit in the middle.
They're not polarized.
So almost all of us are looking at the conversations online
and thinking, oh, well, I kind of think,
yeah, I think mostly that, but also a little bit this.
And I think maybe COVID was pretty well handled,
but there are a few things that could have been done better.
Most of us are somewhere in the middle
and that is not being represented
because the type of people who comment online,
whose opinions we're looking at, are not your average person.
I think that's really true
because what I was thinking about, and I was reading all this,
is it definitely feels true.
And it also feels true because smart politicians
and smart organisations of all kinds know how to harness this
for their own aims.
So, I mean, obviously, the voice referendum
is the example being cited here.
And there's no question.
It's exactly like, is this dress blue and white
or is this dress black and gold?
If I look at the comments on a video,
even that we post about the voice,
it's two separate sets of facts.
And people do not believe each other's facts
no matter what and you're a patsy for believing that
and you're a racist for believing that
and that's where we're all at.
But in real life, I don't know if that is true.
I think you're probably right, Claire,
that most of us are not that polarised
because I have strong feelings about the voice,
but I was just away camping for the weekend
with a group of old friends of mine
and in that group, there are diverse opinions about that.
We can still sit down and have our barbecue.
Now, I know before anybody points this out,
which is true that it's a privilege to be able to say,
you know, oh, put politics aside and sit down and talk.
Of course.
And the voice is a tricky example for that.
But if you use it as an example of all kinds of issues
that are very polarising in our ordinary lives,

we kind of do know that there are people around us who we disagree with and we would still help them up if they fell over.

But what I find scary is I think that it's the slippery slope that is being fuelled by the algorithms that Mia's talking about and then smart people taking advantage of that.

I mean, there's a lot of really hair-raising worry about next year's American election and AI and how that is going to be harnessed to seed even more false information in everybody's minds is that it does tip over into real life.

And you only have to see that in what happened in America on January the 6th last year.

And it's terrifying.

I would love to know how we fight it individually in our own lives.

Well, something I found really interesting was that this Togetherness Index identifies five communication drivers that have to be high in order for people to have a sense of togetherness and their closeness, listening, optimism, stories, and effectiveness.

And the one that stuck out to me was optimism because that is exactly what breaks down a sense of connection and a sense of togetherness.

And I don't want to sound polyanna about it and there's also, I think you guys have talked about it on the show, like toxic positivity.

I'm not talking about somebody being like, let's manifest happiness all the time.

That's not what I'm talking about.

But there are certain moments like the Matilda's.

The reason that was such a moment of togetherness is because it was about optimism and excitement and there was no negativity.

Same as Barbie, these cultural moments stick out because they're happy.

And I think it's really hard because there is social change that needs to happen and there are really, really pertinent social issues that we need to talk about and challenge.

But if we're constantly only talking about the negative things in society and being cynical and trying to work out

how angry and outraged we can get about how bad the world is, that is detrimental to any sense of togetherness.

But outrage and anger is galvanizing.

It's energizing. Remember that.

I think it's fake. I agree.

I think it's like a superficial level.

Oh, 100%.

I don't necessarily, I mean, in some ways it can be good.

Like if you look at big political movements like the Civil Rights Movement and the Suffolk Jets, you do.

But even the Civil Rights Movement, there was an element of optimism and there was an element of how we get through this is by putting our anger to the side and focusing on solutions.

So if you look at the US, for example, recently there was a lawsuit against Fox News and one of the things that came out in that evidence was that the audience really wanted them to talk about election fraud from the 2020 election, even though there was none.

It has been conclusively quashed as a declaim, despite Donald Trump insisting that it happened as a justification for why he lost.

But the Fox News audience really wanted that. And so what Fox News executives ended up doing was giving them content about something that actually wasn't happening because it's what their audience wanted and it was how they got ratings.

They didn't want good news.

So in Trump's America, they don't want conciliatory happy news.

They want to be riled up, anger, furious.

That's always the argument of media, though, and it's been the argument of media forever, which is like, well, people don't want to hear the good thing, so we can't give it to them and it's like,

I think media has to change.

Well, but also, I would argue, and I mean, I was taught this when I was studying journalism and I still hold on to it all the time today.

It's like, who's trying to make me scared of something

and what are they trying to make me scared of?
Because that is always the question worth asking.
When I see people stoking fear all the time
about if this happens, the sky will fall.
If that happens, the sky will fall.
It's always just worth asking.
Like, who wants me to know that?
And now, who wants me to know that?
Like, the Rupert Murdoch example is very basic.
They were literally talking about tabloid front pages
and now we're talking about,
without wanting to get too apocalyptic about it,
bots from all kinds of dictatorships.
But when we're talking about outrage and stoking outrage,
this isn't so much of the right stokes outrage.
No, no, no.
Because the left, who are responsible for a lot of cancel culture,
love nothing more than piling on someone.
Yes.
And creating outrage against someone who's committed,
you know, some alleged transgression.
I agree.
I don't, sorry.
Obviously, the politics of that cartoon I was explaining
is right, left situation to a point.
But I don't mean that it isn't a tactic employed by both sides.
I'd say it's, yeah.
A hundred percent.
Who's trying to make you afraid is always worth asking.
But it's also who's trying to make you angry.
And people who are trying to make you angry will often do it
to promote themselves up the algorithm
because they might have something to sell
because they're trying to gain traction
and gain audience and gain attention
in an attention economy.
If you can make people angry by virtue signaling
or, you know, piling on someone or starting a fight,
then you can.
That's how you get attention, thanks to the algorithm.
And I think it makes people feel alone and despondent.
It's been a big week for cultural conversations
about women aging.
Pamela Anderson turned up at Paris Fashion Week

wearing no makeup.

I don't know.

Something just kind of came over me
and I was dressing in these beautiful clothes
and I thought, I don't want to compete with the clothes.
I'm not trying to be the prettiest girl in the room.

I feel like it's just freedom.

It's like a relief.

Jamila Jamil has threatened to leave LA
because she says looking at all the surgically altered faces
is messing with her own idea of how she should look.
And the pop star, Sia, announced that she has had a facelift
and it's only Wednesday.

Sia's only 47.

Didn't even know that about Sia and the facelift.

Yeah.

And that's somebody who used to cover her face with wigs
because she didn't want to be identified.

It's true.

She shared the news while attending the fifth annual
Daytime Beauty Awards in Los Angeles over the weekend.

Don't know what happens at those awards,
but we announced we've had facelifts at 47.

I also wrote this week about aging
and I wrote about how a generation ago
there were only a couple of options if you wanted to look younger.

You could decide whether or not to dye your hair
and you could decide whether or not to have a facelift.

And the only people that got facelifts were like Hollywood movie stars
and rich society ladies.

Most people didn't.

So really you could dye your hair
and then you sort of just hope for the best.

Now there are so many choices.

You can get laser, you can get filler,
you can get a million and one different procedures.

And you are given all of these choices
from the time you are about 20 or 25
about how you want to age.

And even though I'm a big fan of choice, I wrote,
choice is good, particularly for women as we know.

But so much choice can be actually exhausting
because you don't just have to decide once.

You have to decide pretty much every time you look in the mirror.

Should I get injectables?

Should I get needling?

Should I buy a retinal serum?

Should I get my brows lifted?

These are all decisions that we have to make
and it becomes this massive mental load of aging
that women are carrying from a really, really frighteningly young age
from 25.

Claire, I've had Botox.

You haven't.

Holly's on the fence.

How are you feeling about all these choices?

Or do you just look in the mirror and say,
you get what you get and you don't get upset?

Well, I have been thinking about this a lot lately
because I think I'm a little bit grateful
that I'm kind of at that age

where a lot of people in my life are talking about it, getting it.

It's really in the zeitgeist for me.

But because I'm pregnant, then I'll be breastfeeding.

I can't get it.

I love not having the choice.

I love that the choice has been taken away from me
and that even I can't use retinol.

I can't use a whole lot of anti-aging products
and there's something that feels so empowering and affirming about that.

So you have a little time out hiatus
from the mental load of the aging choice.

Where it's like, even if I wanted to, I couldn't do it.

And I'm actually really grateful.

I like the vibe.

Yeah.

But it does feel like also the choice never ends
because, you know, Martha Stewart's on the cover of Sports Illustrated
looking young Pamela Anderson.

I was watching footage of her going to Fashion Week
with no makeup, which is great.

But she's still had a lot of work
and she still looks about like she's 23.

So it's not like she doesn't have to make choices.

But I do think that we talk about the choices
and we're aware of just the amount of choices women have.

I do think we need to keep talking about those choices
and what those choices mean.

[Transcript] Mamamia Out Loud / The Great Wrinkle Reckoning Of 2023

Because I reckon in the last few years,
we've swung completely to talk about it.
It's better to talk about it.
You'd rather somebody be open about what they're having done
rather than just look 25 when they're 50 and not acknowledge it.
But I think swinging that way normalizes it to the point
where everyone just thinks that's how you meant to look.
And you do become completely accustomed to no longer seeing women with faces
that look like they've lived.
But I want to talk about making the choices, not what it does.
But I want to ask about the burden of having the choices
because, you know, you think lots of choices are a good thing.
But is it a good thing, Hollow?
It's a spectrum, right?
Because I've got lots of friends who they still just wash their face
and put moisturiser on.
And then there's me with my like 10-step skincare routine.
It's not really 10 steps.
I'm exaggerating, but I love me a bit of skincare, right?
So I'm sitting there and then we've got,
for some reason we've arbitrarily decided
that Botox is some kind of hard wall that one must scale
when actually all of the women that we're looking at in magazines
and we're not in magazines,
but on our news feeds and on TV
are doing a whole lot of shit other than Botox.
Botox has just become like a kind of...
...catchall.
...catchall, like a catchall that we just mean
for doing a lot of things to your face.
I want to broaden it because to me, using a serum is a choice.
Of course it is.
You know, that's what I mean, right?
Using a moisturiser is a choice.
So it's a whole spectrum of, you know, do I deal with this?
And I don't feel a lot of mental load about that.
I know that I enjoy my relatively new discovery about skincare.
My bank balance doesn't, which is a whole other thing.
There's a sort of tax on being a woman with a face and aging
and that tax is dependent on how far you want to go,
but certainly a lot of this stuff is still not accessible
to everybody and skincare is expensive.
And I think that I don't necessarily feel paralysed by the choice,
but what I wrestle with is we live in a very ageist world we just do.

[Transcript] Mamamia Out Loud / The Great Wrinkle Reckoning Of 2023

So if I choose to not make any interventions whatsoever on my appearance, including skincare, makeup, hairdive, that's my thing, any of that stuff, it will actually impact my options, opportunities.

It will, right?

But I know that this is different depending on what area you work in, but there's research up the wazoo that's about how people who look, what we term as more attractive, get more opportunities and what we term as more attractive is younger.

And what we term as an ageism is a thing.

An ageism is a real thing.

So it's not just vanity.

It's not just women are being silly and frivolous.

It's the world we're living in.

But I wonder if we're making it worse by talking about it so much, because I genuinely think there are all these examples now of famous Gen X women doing amazing things.

But what we end up talking about 90% of the time is what they look like.

You and I have had this on the discussion of just like that,

all the time you'd be like,

why don't they talk about their appearance more?

And I'd be like, why do we want to watch a TV show

where people sit around talking about their appearance?

It's gaslighting if we don't talk about it.

But I feel like if even we have decided that what matters about aging is what you look like, we're contributing to the ageism.

We are genuinely doing that.

Thanks for that, Poliana.

But I think that there's how the world should be and there's how the world is.

But how do you change the world if it's not by changing little things about yourself and other people's behavior?

Well, if you're a sentient woman in the world

and if the filter for this podcast is what women are talking about,

women are talking about this.

Yeah, they are, but say the morning wars comes on TV, right?

And I say, how is it?

And you say Jennifer Aniston's face doesn't move.

I'm like, that's not what I asked you.

Do you know what I mean?

I'm like, you are immediately putting the number one important thing about a woman in her fifties is whether or not she's had work and whether or not she's done things to herself.

No.

Not whether the work she's putting out is any good, whether or not we, you know what I mean?

[Transcript] Mamamia Out Loud / The Great Wrinkle Reckoning Of 2023

I wonder that we are valuing it too highly.
That's a really good question.
I guess my point and the reason that I mentioned that is because it is so distracting and bizarre.
I think the reason we talk about it is that we're trying to make sense of it for ourselves.
And for me to watch a woman who is 55, who looks 21, I can't get lost in the story.
I can't appreciate her acting because, yeah, I am trying to work it out.
And when my girlfriends and I, in our WhatsApp groups called Not Holly, I'm just kidding.
It's not what they call it.
She is such a trade.
Trade photos of women in the public eye who look visibly very different to the way they used to look.
We share them not to mock those women or to even to criticize them, but to forensically try and work out what it is that they've done to understand what it means to be a woman who has a face in the world.
But what do you want from them?
This is my question, right?
Because I genuinely feel that like so many areas of women's lives, including family and babies and all the things, this is a no-win proposition.
If you try too hard to fight aging, which is an impossibility, then you are mocked for it.
You are mocked for it.
So my question is the women whose faces we're swapping around and going like, she's had too much, she hasn't had enough.
A lot of the women who look amazing and inverted commas without a lot of work always looked amazing as you just, you know, like Christie Turlington.
Or they've just had good work.
Supermodel.
Like great bone structure.
You know, it doesn't matter what she does to herself.
She's going to look amazing.
Like, so I kind of feel like I totally understand that we're trying to make sense of it.
But I also think we have elevated what a woman looks like to be the same state as how she aging.
And that's not really what aging is.
But so your point earlier about women almost don't have a choice that aging is bad for our careers and it's just overall bad.
And so therefore we're backed into a corner where we have to do something about it.
No, I'm not saying we're backed into a corner.
I'm saying that that's a real thing.
So I absolutely understand why we all do what we need to do.
Yes.
But what I'm saying is I do think that the only way that shifts is to stop obsessing.

[Transcript] Mamamia Out Loud / The Great Wrinkle Reckoning Of 2023

I think the way that shifts is for powerful women to not buy into it.
I think, I think that's the way it shifts is if a woman such as you, Holly Wayne, right?
Who is beloved by a lot of women.
If you go, you know what?
That's not fair.
I genuinely, and maybe not Holly, Holly, you do you.
It's completely fine.
But I do think that what it comes down to is women saying, I don't want to be valued
for how I look and I'm sick of women being valued for how they look.
What does that look like, Claire?
Because I will pursue this because me is right about it's not fair.
But also what does it look like?
So I haven't had anything invasive done.
So am I a hero for that?
And what about the fact that I spent \$120 on some peptide cream?
I think that would probably have been better spent on something else in my life.
Like, so am I a trader for the peptide cream, but not for the needles?
If we do all slippery slope, if we do everything women do to their appearance is all in the
same boat from having a facelift to using moisturizer, then stuff it.
We've already lost and that is not like a fair conversation.
But looking at women in the media and looking at, you know, that actress, Emilia Clarke,
who was on Game of Thrones, you look at her smile.
She has smile lines.
I look at that and I go, I feel relief and I look at her and think she looks bloody
beautiful.
And I think the more that we all just conform to this idea and start erasing signs of aging,
that's what makes the physical reality of aging.
Yeah.
That's what gives it stigma.
And that's what gives it judgment.
It's an arms race, but it's a lot to ask one individual woman such as Holly Wainwright
to lay down her arms while everybody else is stockpiling.
And I think that there is something to be said for women who have cultural capital, for
women who have followings, for women who have an audience to take a stand and not buy into
this.
We have to unpick the horror at aging.
We just do.
And I know your point, Mia, that like that's Pollyanna and that's not the world we live
in, but you don't change anything by not questioning it, right?
So we can question what the work that women are having done or not having done, but we
should also question the paradigm because then there has never been such a large generation
of women who are older in the public eye because they weren't, they were shooed off.
Like it used to be if you were 40, you're not on TV anymore, right?
And we didn't have women in their fifties who are CEOs and leading.

[Transcript] Mamamia Out Loud / The Great Wrinkle Reckoning Of 2023

So this is relatively new.

But if the only current way to hold on to your currency is to admit that aging is terrible and none of us want to do it, then we're never going to win it.

Tell us what you think out loud as what do you think is the way through this arms race?

Leave us a voice note or send us an email out loud at mama.mia.com.au

I have a recommendation and it is the best kind of recommendation because it came from the out loudest.

They're very good.

When I recommended Fisk, they said, I've got another one for you.

And they said only murders in the building is very different.

It's very different to Fisk, but it is really funny and really entertaining.

So it's about three strangers who live in the same building.

And they're played by Steven Martin, Martin Short and Selena Gomez.

They're obsessed with true crime.

They're obsessed with one true crime podcast and then somebody dies in their building and they start their own true crime podcast.

It's opening night and a big star drops dead on stage.

Oh my God, my leading man is dead.

Is this really happening?

Well, you know, who are we without a homicide?

It is just I'm up to the middle of season three.

I think there's four seasons.

I started with season three because Meryl Streep's in it.

Yes.

Meryl Streep, Paul Rudd, the cameos in this show.

Sting is in the first season becomes a suspect for a little bit.

Amy Schumer's in the second season.

It's the connections that they have, but it is laugh out loud funny.

It is so clever about our obsession with true crime and podcasting and like podcasting, gossip, podcasting wars, like that kind of thing.

It's really, really fresh.

And you know, who's great in it is bloody Selena Gomez.

Yeah, I thought that.

She's really good.

She's funny.

Her timing is great.

It has completely changed how I think about her.

I was judgmental about her.

I do not know why that is horrible of me, but she is so funny in it and the dynamics between the older men and her and how they can't text the terrible with technology.

They say things they shouldn't say.

It is laugh out loud funny, super entertaining.

I have an important question.

How long are the episodes?

[Transcript] Mamamia Out Loud / The Great Wrinkle Reckoning Of 2023

Oh, you know, when a show is so good, you can't, I think like 40 minutes.

Why?

Think about 40 minutes.

Because what I'm obsessed with at the minute is short episodes of things.

Like the reason I really like Fisk and I've been watching Mother and Son is that 25 minutes in and out.

Like, I just am enjoying that.

Everything is too long.

Is that a sign of getting old that you think everything's become too long?

Like movies are too long.

TV shows are too long.

Link is our attention spans.

Yeah.

Don't ask me because I can't even get into it.

I watch three minutes and then flick off.

But it's on Disney Plus.

Please watch it.

Tell me what you think.

Something that you also might like to listen to is our latest installment of the Proust questionnaire where the questions we answered were about our biggest fears, our greatest extravagances, shush, and what we each most dislike about.

We're a bit worried about getting cancelled for this one.

We are a bit worried about getting cancelled.

But listen, answer the questions, tell us what you think of our answers.

I have to say one thing.

Link in the show notes.

Link in the show notes.

You can listen right now.

I have to say one thing for our subscribers.

This is not an ad.

This is my real life.

I messaged Luca ahead of product.

Did you know, subscribers, that you can now listen to your subscriber content on Spotify?

You can link it.

You couldn't do that before, right?

That's amazing.

And for people like me who listened to podcasts when I'm driving, I used to yell at Luca a lot.

I'd be like, I want to listen to the second bit of me as no filter, but I can't because I'm driving my car and I can't stop to go over to the mom-and-me-rap.

You don't have to do that anymore.

You don't have to do it.

And there's quite a few platforms you don't have to do it on anymore.

So, subscribers, get wise to that.

[Transcript] Mamamia Out Loud / The Great Wrinkle Reckoning Of 2023

Incredible.

Life changed.

I sent Luca a message saying, thank you, Luca.

That's all we've got time for today.

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

This episode was produced by Emily Casillas, the assistant producer as Tali Blackman with audio production from Madeleine Duano.

Bye.

Bye.