



PROFESSOR  
LORNA  
PIATTI-FARNELL

# The Meaning of Fun: Storytelling and Identity in Popular Culture

TUESDAY  
27 OCTOBER

4.30–5.30pm

AUT City Campus  
WA Conference Centre  
55 Wellesley Street East  
Auckland 1010

To register for this event,  
please [CLICK HERE](#)

Refreshments will be served  
after the address.

It is far too easy to dismiss popular culture as being 'just entertainment' and mere fun. Indeed, the icons belonging to the popular world of the everyday are intrinsically connected to our modes of storytelling, and are able to reflect important shifts in our histories and cultures. Recent world events connected to the COVID pandemic have exposed the meaningful place occupied by entertainment and popular media, and how we express ourselves. In this professorial address, Professor Lorna Piatti-Farnell shares insights from her research on the importance of popular culture, exploring the power held by seemingly common entertainment practices to produce significant cultural meanings. She will focus particularly on how evocative icons and narratives are often too easily perceived to be mundane, even clichéd – from food, superheroes, and children's cartoons, to the vampires and zombies of Gothic horror.

As both cultural metaphors and historical codes, the images of popular culture speak loudly of our identities at a particular moment in time.

Born in the 1980s, Lorna grew up between Italy and the UK. Having trained as a literary and cultural historian at Loughborough University, she pursued her particular interests in popular icons. Her research remains firmly sited at the intersection between history and popular culture. In 2012, she founded the Gothic Association of New Zealand and Australia (GANZA), for which she also currently serves as President. At AUT, she has been Director of the Popular Culture Research Centre since 2014. In her spare time, Lorna loves discussing cult films and TV shows, watching Japanese anime, reading fantasy horror novels, and collecting historical artefacts. She waits eagerly to celebrate Halloween every year.

