



PALEOFANTASY

What evolution tells us about modern life



Photograph: UCA News Service

Are our bodies and brains truly at odds with modern life? Everyone is fond of paleofantasies, stories about how humans lived eons ago, and we use them to explain why many elements of our lives, from the food we eat to the way we raise our children, seem very distant from what nature intended. Many diets and self-help books are predicated on the notion that our behaviour and bodies evolved under a certain set of circumstances, from which we deviate to our peril. Implicit in that idea is the assumption that humans in a modern society aren't evolving any more, that we have somehow freed ourselves from evolution, or at the very least, that evolution always requires so long to act that we can't expect to have adapted to our current circumstances. But popular theories about how our ancestors lived and why we should emulate them are often based on speculation, not scientific evidence, and they reflect a basic misunderstanding about how evolution works. There was never a time when everything about us – our bodies, our minds, and our behaviour – was perfectly in synch with the environment.

Presented by Dr Marlene Zuk, Professor of Ecology, Evolution and Behaviour at the University of Minnesota, and author of *Paleofantasy: What evolution really tells us about sex, diet and how we live*.

PUBLIC TALKS BY PROFESSOR MARLENE ZUK

AUCKLAND: Friday 31 October, 6.15pm, Auckland Museum Events Centre, \$20 for general public, \$10 for Auckland Museum Institute members or students with ID | **WELLINGTON:** Monday 03 November, 6.00pm, Embassy Theatre, \$20 for general public, \$10 for students with ID | **PALMERSTON NORTH:** Tuesday 04 November, 6.30pm, Palmerston North City Library | **NELSON:** Wednesday 05 November, 6.00pm, Old St Johns, 320 Hardy Street | **HAMILTON:** Thursday 06 November, 6.30pm, Playhouse Theatre, Gallagher Academy of Performing Arts, University of Waikato | **TAURANGA:** Friday 07 November, 6.30pm, Baycourt Community & Arts Centre | **CHRISTCHURCH:** Monday 10 November, 6.30pm, Lecture Theatre C1, University of Canterbury | **DUNEDIN:** Wednesday 12 November, 6.30pm, College of Education Auditorium, University of Otago, Union Street East.



ALLAN WILSON CENTRE

BOOKINGS: To ensure a seat, and to purchase tickets (Auckland and Wellington only), go to: <http://www.allanwilsoncentre.ac.nz>
Click 'Register Online' under 'Events'. Reservations are essential for the Tauranga event for catering purposes.