



NEWS (/TOPICS/NEWS)

NEWS (/TOPICS/NEWS) CULTURE (/TOPICS/CULTURE)

CULTURE (/TOPICS/CULTURE)

COMMENT (/COMMENT\_ARTICLES)

COMMENT (/TOPICS/COMMENT)

MENTAL HEALTH (/TOPICS/MENTAL\_HEALTH) VIDEO (/ARTICLES/VIDEO)

# Morris, 2017



(L)

CONTACT US (/CONTACT-US)

 COMMENT

TERMS OF USE (/TERMS-OF-USE)

SUBMISSIONS (/SUBMISSIONS-GUIDELINES)

## The Pencilsword: Greed vs Need

NETWORK

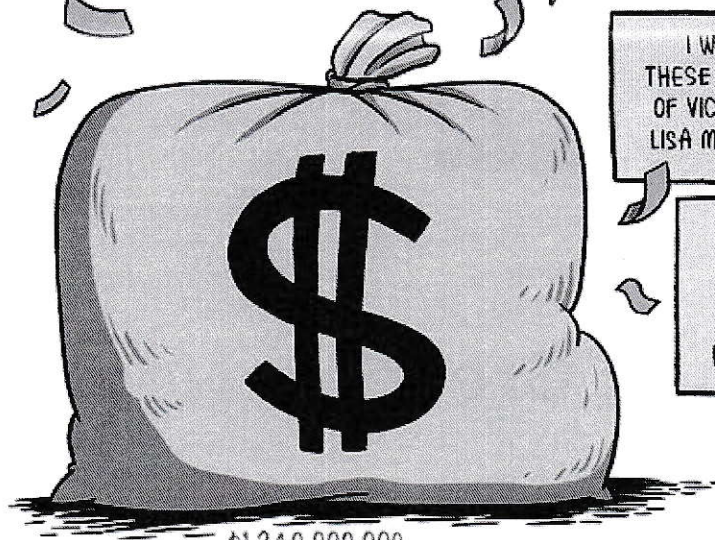


Wednesday 2nd August 2017

(<https://> (<https://>

(<https://mailto/> (<https://> [article](https://)  
[wireles](https://)  
[nz](https://))

# GREED vs NEED



\$1,240,000,000

I WANT TO SHOW YOU SOMETHING. THESE STATS COME FROM THE RESEARCH OF VICTORIA UNIVERSITY TAX PROFESSOR LISA MARRIOTT, BETWEEN 2008 AND 2014.

ONE OF THESE BAGS IS THE VALUE OF A YEAR'S WORTH OF BENEFIT FRAUD, AND THE OTHER IS A YEARS WORTH OF TAX EVASION. HAVE A GUESS WHICH ONE IS WHICH.



\$30,550,000

■ = \$10 Million

Value of tax evasion vs welfare fraud committed in 2014

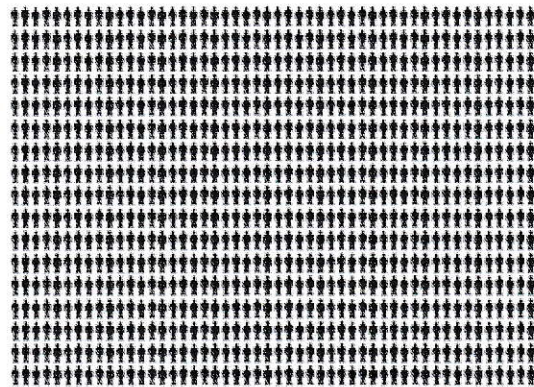
ON THE LEFT, 1.24 BILLION NEW ZEALAND DOLLARS IN STOLEN TAX REVENUE.

ON THE RIGHT - JUST OVER 30 MILLION IN DEFRAUDED BENEFIT MONEY.

SO OK, THEY'RE BOTH CRIMES, SO YOU'D IMAGINE PEOPLE GET PROSECUTED FOR BOTH PROPORTIONATELY RIGHT?



Tax Evasion: 60-80 (70)

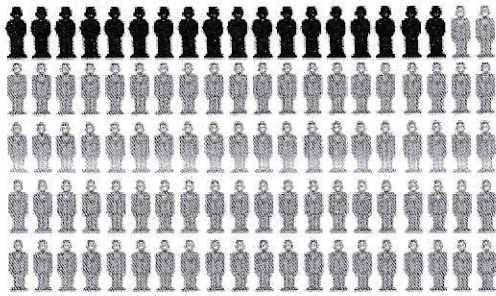


Benefit Fraud: 800-1000 (900)

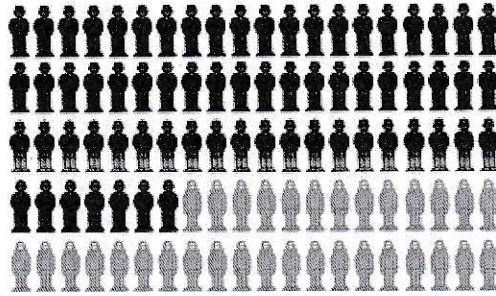
Average number of prosecutions brought forward in a year



HMMM. BUT SURELY THESE TWO GROUPS ARE CONVICTED AT THE SAME RATE, RIGHT?



Tax Evasion: 18%

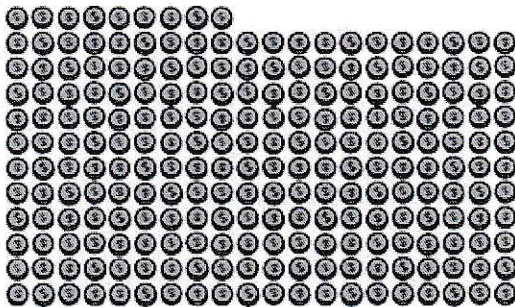


Benefit Fraud: 67%

Average portion of offenders who received prison sentences

OK, MAYBE THAT'S BECAUSE THE AVERAGE TAX EVADER IS ONLY CHEATING ON A SMALL AMOUNT?

AGAIN, WRONG.



Tax Evasion: \$229,000



Benefit Fraud: \$77,000

Average value of offending

● = \$1,000

AND IF YOU'RE NOT MAD ALREADY, HAVE A LOOK AT HOW MUCH WE SPEND FIGHTING EACH CRIME.



Tax Evasion: \$3 (per \$100 recovered)



Benefit Fraud: \$17 (per \$100 recovered)

Average amount spent by MSD/IRD per \$100 recovered



THIS IMBALANCE IS STRUCTURAL.  
IN-BUILT. OFFICIAL.



WHEN YOU'RE CAUGHT CHEATING ON  
TAX, THE DEBT CAN BE WRITTEN OFF IF  
HAVING TO PAY IT BACK WOULD MEAN THE  
OFFENDER IS UNABLE TO MEET "NORMAL  
STANDARDS OF COMMUNITY LIVING".

BUT NOT WITH BENEFIT  
FRAUD. MINISTRY OF SOCIAL  
DEVELOPMENT DOCUMENTS  
STATE CURRENT PRACTICE IS:

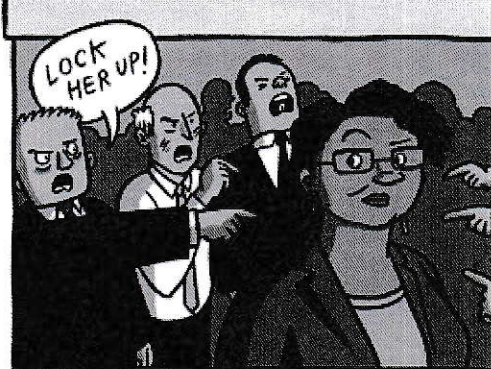


"all monies owed to  
the crown are actively  
pursued and debts remain  
with each individual until  
all avenues to recover have  
been exhausted".

WHEN WEALTHY WHITE GUYS IN  
SUITS WORK THEIR WAY OUT PAYING  
TAX, WE CONSIDER THEM SHREWD,  
OR CRAFTY, OR RESOURCEFUL.  
TRUMP BRAGGED ABOUT IT, AND WON.



BUT WHEN PEOPLE LIE TO FEED THEIR  
FAMILIES? WE CALL THAT DECEITFUL,  
DISHONEST, SHAMEFUL.

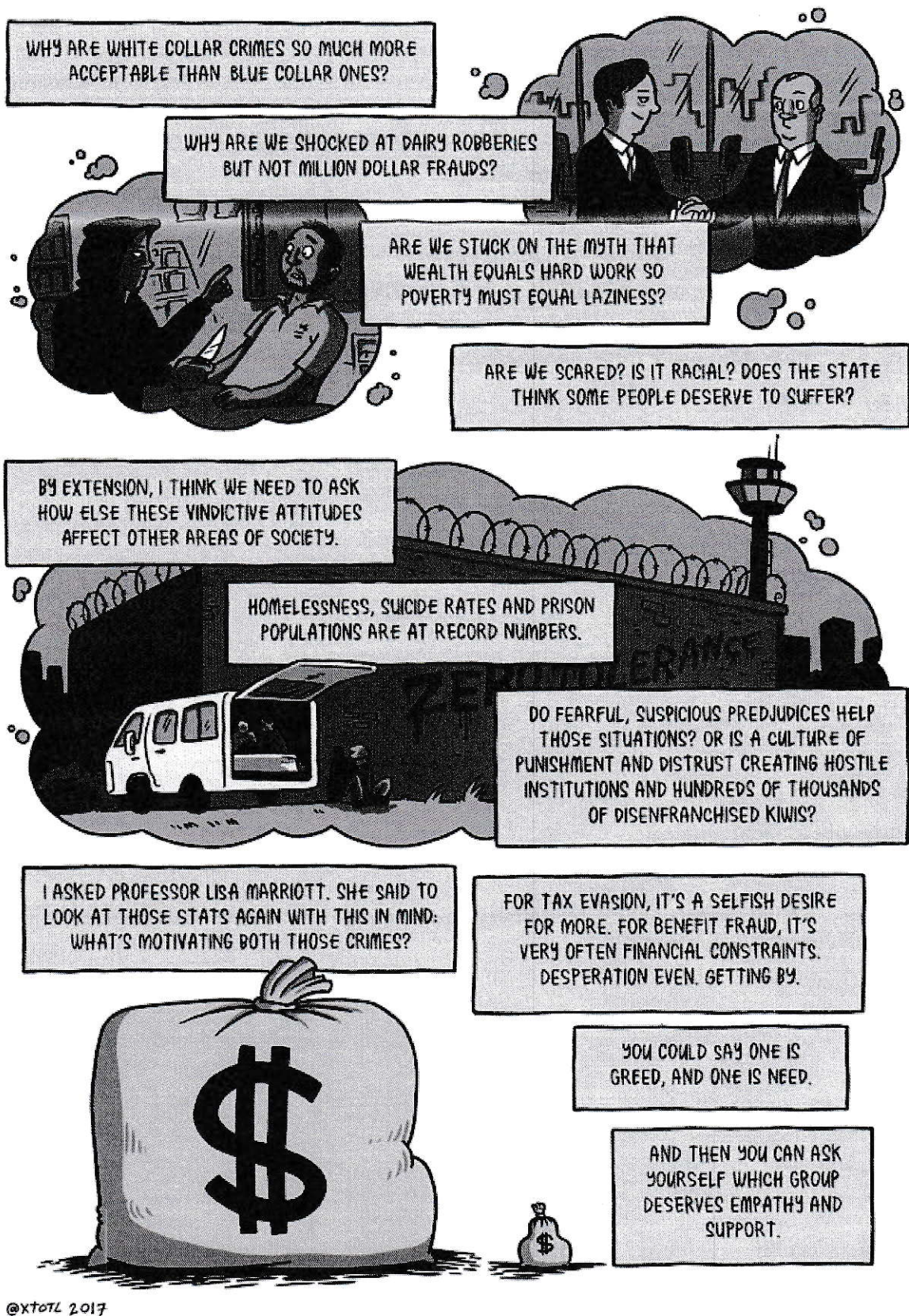


TO ME THIS RAISES HUGE QUESTIONS  
AROUND CLASS, ABOUT WHO WE POINT THE  
BLAME AT, AND ABOUT OUR DEEP ROOTED  
PERCEPTIONS OF WHO DESERVES WHAT.



WHO DO WE SEE WHEN WE PICTURE A TAX  
EVADER, OR A BENEFIT CHEAT? WHO DO WE  
SEE WHEN WE PICTURE A CRIMINAL?





SHARE



SIGN UP

Sign up to hear when new stuff gets loaded

GO

JOIN THE DISCUSSION »

(/articles/the-pencilword-greed-vs-need/discussion)

"This was rather well written however, a couple of points.



Inland Revenue leaves prosecution as a last resort, because it costs you the taxpayer a crazy amount of money and also the department would rather work with people to get it repaid, fixed and provide education (hitting people with a big stick can be counter productive). Proving fraud can also be quite difficult and time consuming (again costs the general public money)

Have a look at <http://www.ird.govt.nz/resources/d/7/d7d56768-e030-44bb-af63-cda63c06add0/budget-2017-four-year-plan.pdf>

With benefit fraud, its pretty straightforward to catch and to prove, person starts work while on dpb, that information gets picked up. (they have a contract etc)

Do people really claim more benefit than they should due to the need to feed themselves....no...they do it for greed pure and simple. The ones that get prosecuted and normally conducting quite large benefit fraud not otherwise again its not worth the cost.

” – scott lewis

---

## Login to post a comment

[LOGIN \(/USERS/SIGN\\_IN\)](#) or [SIGNUP \(/USERS/SIGN\\_UP\)](#)

---

## Comment



Include video, audio or image

Paste URL

In accordance with our Comments Policy (</comments-policy>), all comments are moderated before they appear on the site. This happens 7am to 7pm each weekday.

POST

---



(toby-morris)

## Toby Morris

ILLUSTRATOR

Toby Morris is an Auckland based illustrator and comic artist. He is the creator of the Pencilsword and also half of the Toby and Toby duo behind the series 'That is the question' at [radionz.co.nz](http://radionz.co.nz)

Email Toby (<mailto:smokevswater@gmail.com>)

@XTOTL (<http://twitter.com/XTOTL>)

## JOIN THE DISCUSSION

Discuss, comment and read comments about this article.

18 comments (</articles/the-pencilsword-greed-vs-need/discussion>)

---

SHARE



## UPFRONT. IN-DEPTH. IN TUNE.

The Wireless aims to produce inspiring, insightful and entertaining stories for New Zealanders who have grown up in the digital age. The site is updated with new content every weekday. Share your story tips, ideas and opinions. (mailto:editor@thewireless.co.nz)



\_(/)

## ABOUT

Contact us  
(/contact-us)  
Terms of use  
(/terms-of-use)  
Submissions  
(/submissions-guidelines)

## SIGN UP

Sign up to hear  
when new stuff gets  
loaded

your email

GO

## NETWORK



(https:(https:(https:  
wireless  
nz)



