

Critic

Est. 1925

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A blue watercolor-style graphic with irregular, organic edges, located in the bottom right corner of the page.



FEATURES

18 THE GUY WHO WANTS TO BE A GOAT

Thomas Thwaites is a designer based in London, UK. Among his many bizarre projects – such as building a toaster from scratch, which ended up with a TED talk gathering over one million views – his latest endeavour is what intrigued us the most. Thwaites is attempting to become as close to a goat as he possibly can ... by literally trying to become a goat.

BY JOSIE COCHRANE

22 CHINA'S FORGOTTEN TRIBE

The Dalai Lama's image is synonymous with the cause of Tibetan freedom and his is a household name. Far fewer people know the names of Rebiya Kadeer or Dolkun Isa and the struggle for self-determination taking place in China's far west.

BY LAWRENCE HAMILTON

26 HOT DATES FOR CHEAPSKATES

You've met a new potential romantic partner, whether they're grooving on the dance floor at Boogie, slaying some squats at Unipol or, more commonly, you both swiped right. After dazzling them with your charming pick-up lines, you finally achieve the goal of a date. If only you weren't living off \$40 a week.

BY AMBER ALLOTT

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GO ON. GIVE IT A GOAT!

» WE CAN ALL BE GOATS ONE DAY.

Welcome back to the final hill of the year! Keep chugging along cause the break is nearly here — ya know, that time when you can stop thinking about study and exams. Instead, you can start stressing about going from hardly any money each week to no income, no job and no idea where you're going in life. Yay, life!

This week I spoke to a very cool guy, albeit slightly off his rocker, who just discovered "it's an impossible goal that I can not become a goat". It took over \$65,000 of funding to decide that. But I love this guy. In fact, one day we might sleep in a barn, go get married, and spend our lives frolicking with his goat friends.

Not only is he cool enough to not be stalkable on Facebook, but he's only ever done what he's passionate about. Is he a builder? Sort of. Is he a designer? Sort of. Is he an inventor? Sort of. Is he a writer? Sort of. Is he a goat? No, but only upon definitely making sure there was no way he could be.

When someone says to you, go out and be whatever you want to be, please give it a goat. That's going to be a thing now — give it a goat, in Urban Dictionary style —

"OMG, she failed health sci once, and then did average as the second time, and she's applying for med again cause she aced her random undergrad degree — she's so cool, just gives always gives it a goat."

"Bro, he tried to ask her out but then she said no, so he asked her for a drink, but she said no, so then he just gives it a goat for reals and brought flowers to her office and made her come for a coffee."

Yea, in both of these analogies, they become goats.

So there will be things you can't do ... jumping from a plane with no form of parachute is probably not worth testing out. But while you're here at uni, with the sparkling goals we'd hope you are setting for yourself, try everything. If it doesn't work out, then try again. And again, and again. Sometimes it might mean a very long route, but don't be an elephant. This environment was made for you.

I know some of you may argue that "give it a goat" is a stupid saying or that this editorial is stupid — and I hear you "ain't nobody goat time for dat" — for the analogy currently stands at "you can never be a goat". Nay I say — you simply can't be a goat yet. Don't be a quitter ... keep at it, Billy.

Read the interview — it'll all make more sense.

Josie xxxx

JOSIE COCHRANE,
CRITIC EDITOR

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OUSA Finally Fronts Up Debt

» EXECUTIVE STOP "BEATING THEIR CHESTS"

BY BRIDIE BOYD

After refusing to make the payment for most of the year, the OUSA Executive have paid NZUSA the \$21,275 owed in membership fees.

After months of claiming they will "reallocate" the funds they contractually owe, Hunt announced the decision to pay on the day the money was due. When speaking to Critic an hour before the due time, NZUSA President Rory McCourt said he still had not heard from Hunt about the payment.

In a press release following the decision, Hunt said they would make the payment to ensure ill feeling does not prevent the development of an alternative model.

Hunt refutes the claim that this shows indecisiveness: "I can see how it looks that way, but it has been part of a strategy to show the harshness of the leaving, to show alternatives to [the] NZUSA structure, and to force change."

Hunt said by refusing to pay the fee, OUSA "wanted to demonstrate the harshness of the leaving clause and cause discussion [about the clause] on the public sphere".

McCourt, however, said there have been "repeated refusals to pay, and now a (potential) massive backdown".

"Students should question whether the last few months have been more about individuals beating their chests, rather than responsible stewardship of [the] organisation and its liabilities," argued McCourt.

After OUSA was invoiced for the bill last month, McCourt said NZUSA was "absolutely" prepared to take legal action. "We've said to our lawyer that we are prepared to engage them further if [OUSA] continue flout their contractual obligation."

Hunt says that the threat of legal action did not impact their decision. "We never had the threat [of legal action] because we never got to that stage, the due date was today, we paid on the due date."

Late last year OUSA announced its decision to withdraw from NZUSA. However, the constitution states there is a one-year withdrawal period in which members are required to pay the \$45,000 yearly fee. OUSA paid their first

instalment earlier this year, but originally decided against paying the second instalment.

Hunt said the reason was because there are "better uses of the money" and paying the fee "blocks projects which are more beneficial to Otago students".

Hunt said the decision was made "so that the conversation about how to better represent students nationally would happen faster. NZUSA has been in this situation of uncertainty for years."

Hunt argued there needs to be an "affordable model" developed "where members have greater control over how their funds are spent". However, "we will not continue to throw away large amounts of precious reserves".

"NZUSA always wants to lead the discussions about alternative structures. Often a current association president wants to be NZUSA president, or the current NZUSA president asks their friends to run for executives around the country. An honest and open discussion about the best structure is hard to have in this situation," Hunt argued.

McCourt, however, said he rejects "any notion that NZUSA has not been effective on behalf of Otago students this year". NZUSA's "important research and lobbying activities were shown to lead to more Otago students getting their allowances and loans on time and time saved in filling out StudyLink applications".

Hunt said he favours a structure where association presidents from around New Zealand all meet "on a regular basis", and that funding should go to specific projects and professional lobbying, "not one where funding is more on salaries".

McCourt said that now the payment will be made, OUSA can "front up with its much-talked-about proposed model and do the hard yards of getting the support needed for making it a reality".

McCourt hopes the payment "represents a turning point in OUSA's engagement with other associations". ○



Central Countdown in the Crap

» ALCOHOL BAN FOR DUNEDIN COUNTDOWN

BY JOE HIGHAM

Central Dunedin's Countdown store has been handed a three-day ban on selling alcohol as a result of selling illegally discounted drinks on two separate occasions earlier this year. The ban will run from 7–10 September.

The store, located on Cumberland Street, was caught out after breaking section 237 of the Sale and Supply of Alcohol Act 2012. The section states it is against the law to "lead people to believe that the price is 25% or more below the price at which the alcohol is ordinarily sold".

A spokesperson for Progressive Enterprises, which owns Countdown, Fresh Choice, Supervalu and Woolworths supermarkets, said the breach was a simple mistake.

"We serve more than 2.7 million customers a week across the country and we take our responsibilities around selling alcohol very seriously," said the spokesperson. "Mistakes do occasionally happen, but very rarely, and we understand that where we get it wrong there are serious consequences."

The spokesperson said Countdown "will comply with the three-day suspension at the Dunedin Cumberland Street store".

Kevin Mechen, Dunedin City Council's liquor licensing co-ordinator said this is the "first time anyone has been taken to the Alcohol Regulatory and Licensing Authority for such a breach".

According to Mechen, the "maximum penalty" for such a breach is "a seven-day

suspension and a fine of up to \$10k". He said for a first-time breach, like in the case with Countdown, a three-day suspension "is getting up there ... I'm assuming the judge has made the point that this is a very serious breach of the Act".

The suspension could be financially detrimental for the Countdown store, and Mechen said "if people want to buy alcohol with their groceries and aren't too brand loyal, they may move to the nearby New World and stay there".

Mechen said Countdown's suspension will start "from a Monday [so] it may not be as bad as it could be, [for example] from a Thursday, which would prevent weekend alcohol sales". ●



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Slow Chat, Slow Timetable Release

BY BRIDIE BOYD

With OUSA elections just around the corner, the executive had two major issues to discuss. First was the appointment of an independent arbitrator. The executive unanimously agreed that Professor Paul Roth, from the Faculty of Law, would take on this role. The role is in case the Returning Officer makes any disputed decisions, such as disqualifying candidates, which might require an appeals process.

The second major issue was the vice-presidency. The discussion was split into talk of the upcoming referendum and, once again, what exactly the vice-president restructuring should be. According to President Paul Hunt, "everyone seems to agree there is a need for change".

The executive agreed that if Postgraduate Officer Chris Martin's proposal for two VPs were to be introduced, adding a new 10-hour

position to the existing executive would be useful. The executive debated whether the new role should be a general representative, or a clubs and societies officer.

Those arguing for a general representative suggested that it could be useful when someone in an existing role was particularly strained. This follows the recent passing of quarterly reports, when some of the executive admitted to not working their required hours as they did not have enough work to do.

Finance Officer Nina Harrap suggested that a general representative could "run for a particular project". Campaigns Officer Nick Findlay also supported a general representative "but with safeguards". Colleges Officer TaoTao Li, however, argued that "adding another general executive is not really solving the issue". She, along with others, supported adding a Clubs and Societies Officer to help take the

pressure off the current Recreation Officer.

In regards to which vice-president system the executive wanted, opinions were split between having two 20-hour vice-presidents or adding one full-time vice-president. Both options, as well as a "status quo" option, will be put to referendum. A public forum, or debate, will be held at a later date to discuss the options with students.

The last issue discussed was the slowness of the university exam timetable's release. Findlay said that the university was "leaving it a bit late", especially as students needed to book travel home. A motion was passed that OUSA supports a position to have the university set the exam dates within a week of the last day of paper deletion.

Congratulations were offered to Hunt for his graduation the previous Saturday. ●

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Council Admits Cycle Network a Botched Job

» DCC: "WE DIDN'T GET THESE DESIGNS RIGHT FIRST TIME"

BY SANAA BASHARATI

After admitting the South Dunedin Cycle Network was designed poorly, the Dunedin City Council has announced changes to the network will begin shortly.

The main issues with the current network are a lack of signage and problems with vehicle access and road markings. Intersections are also said to be too narrow.

In a press release on the changes, General Manager for Infrastructure and Networks Ruth Stokes said the DCC has "accepted we didn't get these designs right first time". However, "we have taken on board what the community has told us and we are making changes".

Stokes said the main priority of the alterations will be safety, "not just for cyclists, but

for pedestrians and motorists too".

Floating traffic islands in certain areas will be removed, and two-way traffic flows will be reinstated at some intersections after complaints from residents. "Ghost" road markings will also be removed and replaced with new markings. More informative signage is also said to be a priority in the upgrades.

Stokes said there will also "be a new urban design element to the construction" that will "enhance every street which has a cycleway".

Xanthe Musgrave, a local cyclist, says she hopes the alterations will "improve the cycleway and make [cycling] a more enjoyable experience for everyone".

Fellow cyclist Troy Smith said cycling in South Dunedin can be extremely dangerous.

"South Dunedin has a lot of traffic and is known to have a bad history of cyclist crashes," said Smith. "I think it is important to emphasise cyclist safety."

"A safer cycleway system could also lead to less cars on the road due to people riding to work or school. This has all kinds of benefits such as helping to fight obesity and reducing Dunedin's carbon footprint. So I think it's a great idea to better Dunedin's cycleway systems."

The design of the current network is set to be reviewed in the coming months, and residents will be asked for feedback before any designs are finalised. ●

Victory for Vic Students

» ELECTED STUDENT SEATS TO REMAIN ON COUNCIL

BY LAURA MUNRO

Victoria University of Wellington has announced that they will retain two democratically-elected student seats on their University Council.

Victoria University of Wellington Students' Association President Rick Zwaan said, "it took a lot of work" to retain two student seats and he is "glad it paid off".

The council will have two elected academic staff, two elected students, the vice-chancellor, three appointed members, and four ministerial appointments.

Zwaan said, "it's great that [Victoria University] has decided to have the most representative and democratic council in the country and I'm sure it will serve the university well."

Earlier this year, university councils were forced to reduce their size after Tertiary Education Minister Steven Joyce introduced the Education Amendment Act 2015. The amendment

cut the maximum number of seats allowed from 20 to 12. If councils were to have 12 seats, four must be reserved for ministerial appointments.

Due to the new regulations, student seats on the Otago University Council have reduced been from two to one, despite the Otago University Students' Association lobbying for the student seats to remain.

After the council announced an initial proposal which "would've seen all members of the council appointed by the committee rather than elected," VUWSA says they "engage[d] as any students as possible" in a protest on campus.

VUWSA also "set up a simple submission tool" for students to voice their opinion on the changes. "We also worked a lot with concerned staff and alumni to ensure that the council reflected the university community and its values."

Earlier this year OUSA ran similar

campaigns, hoping to retain two student seats.

OUSA President Paul Hunt said Victoria's announcement is "great news" and "OUSA congratulates VUWSA for what was no doubt a lot of hard work to achieve two student positions."

When asked whether OUSA will continue to fight for two student seats, Hunt said "[OUSA] are focusing on achieving greater access to other decision making forums within the University."

He adds, "should the chance arise to advocate to have more students on council, we will pursue it."

New Zealand Union of Students' Association President Rory McCourt said they "welcome Victoria's decision". However, "it doesn't change the reality that this power-grab by Minister Joyce needs to be reversed through legislation so that communities, not the Beehive, can decide the future of our uni." ●

20 Killed in Bangkok Bombing

» TERRORISTS TARGET TOURIST SPOT

BY OLIVER GASKELL

More than 20 people have been killed and over 100 injured after a bomb exploded at a Hindu shrine in central Bangkok. The bomb, which killed nine tourists, exploded on Monday 17 August at 7pm local time.

National police chief, Somyot Poompanmuang said in a press conference that the attackers purposely targeted the shrine during one of its busiest periods.

"Those who have planted this bomb are cruel ... They aim to kill because everyone knows that at 7pm the shrine is crowded with Thais and foreigners. Planting a bomb here means they want to see a lot of dead people."

Human body parts and debris littered the area, with medics still picking them up for at least two hours after the explosion.

Poompanmuang said that explosion was caused by a pipe bomb. The blast was

powerful enough to send a metre-wide chunk of metal almost 50 metres away to a third-storey balcony on the opposite side of the street.

Police are looking for a man in a yellow T-shirt, spotted on surveillance footage, in relation to the bombing. Police Lieutenant General Prawut Thavornsiri has said the man "is not just the suspect. He is the bomber."

Several images of the man have been released to the public, taken from closed-circuit video at the Erwan shrine shortly before the explosion. However, police face a major obstacle in identifying the man as up to 75 percent of the security cameras were broken along the getaway route he is believed to have taken.

However, many reports about those supposedly behind the attack have been



contradictory and vague, with police saying that as many as 10 people may have been involved in the attack.

Police have acknowledged that they may never catch the perpetrators, with Poompanmuang saying that they "may have already fled the country".

Poompanmuang said police will "need some luck" to catch those responsible, saying that if they have "good fortune, we might be able to make an arrest".

While authorities are still unsure of the motive behind the attack, Thailand's prime minister, Prayuth Chan-ocha, said that the suspects were believed to be from an "anti-government group based in Thailand's northeast". ●

French Gunman Denies Terrorism Accusations

» HEROES "GAVE A LESSON IN COURAGE"

BY ANGUS SHAW

Four men have been recognised for their bravery after overpowering a heavily armed gunman on a train in northern France. The three Americans and one Briton were subsequently awarded France's highest honour, the Légion d'honneur, for their role in stopping what is suspected to be a terrorist attack on the high-speed train.

The men were national guardsman Alek Skarlatos, US airman Spencer Stone, their friend Anthony Sadler and British businessman Chris Norman.

The incident happened on the Valys service heading from Amsterdam to Paris on Friday 21 August. The men subdued the attacker and removed an AK-47 assault rifle and a handgun from him as he

attempted to move down the train.

A French man encountered the gunman as he tried to enter a toilet on the train. He attempted to overpower the man and a shot was discharged, seriously injuring another passenger. The two American men intervened shortly after.

When presenting medals, French President François Hollande said the men's actions showed "that faced with terror, we have the power to resist. You also gave a lesson in courage, in will, and thus in hope."

Both Skarlatos and Stone were soldiers, but Hollande said "on Friday, you were simply passengers. You behaved as soldiers but also as responsible men."

The 25-year-old Moroccan suspect, Ayoub El-Khazzani, is being held in custody

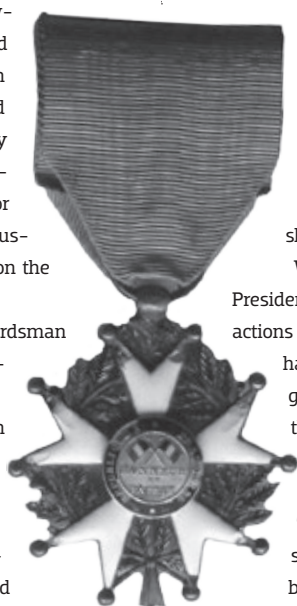
while he is questioned by the French counter-terrorism police.

Speaking a press conference on Saturday, French Interior Minister Bernard Cazeneuve confirmed that authorities believe El-Khazzani holds radical Islamic beliefs. He said that the man's details were flagged by their Spanish counterparts in February 2014.

El-Khazzani's lawyer, Sophie David, told France's *Le Parisien* newspaper that her client does not understand the accusations of terrorism and denies that a person was wounded, believing no shots to have been fired.

"He says he only wanted to extort money from the Thalys passengers, and nothing else," she said. "He denies any terrorist dimension to his actions — the suggestion makes him almost laugh."

David says her client told her he found the firearms "in a suitcase abandoned in a park near Brussels railway station, where he used to sleep rough". ●





North and South Korea Attempt to Defuse Tensions

» COUNTRIES NO LONGER ON "THE BRINK OF WAR"

BY JESSICA THOMPSON CARR

North and South Korea have successfully met to defuse tensions between the nations after recent confrontations escalated.

The talks ended on Tuesday 25 August with South Korea agreeing to halt propaganda broadcasts and North Korea expressing "regret" over the incident.

Tensions rose between North and South Korea after two South Korean soldiers were seriously wounded by a landmine. One soldier lost both legs, while the other lost one. The mine was located in the demilitarised zone (DMZ) south of the border between the two nations.

South Korea accused North Korea of planting the weapon, an accusation that North Korea has denied.

After the blast, anti-North Korean propaganda began to be played on loudspeakers across the border, provoking North Korea to retaliate with gunfire on 20 August. The North fired shells into a border town aiming at the loudspeakers. According to South Korean news agency Yonhap, the shots did not cause visible damage.

South Korea fired back several shells of its own, but no casualties were reported by either side.

Residents of areas targeted by North Korea on Thursday were evacuated, although many have since returned.

Prior to the defusion talks, the North Korean ambassador to China, Ji Jae Ryong, told journalists in Beijing that, "the situation of the country is now inching closer to the brink of war".

North Korean UN ambassador An Myong Hun also said that all North Korean frontline combined units had "entered into a wartime state ... fully armed to launch any surprise operations and finish their preparations for action".

While this is not the first time the two sides have clashed, the incident was said to be particularly unusual because of the types of weapons used around the demilitarised zone.

Senior analyst at IHS Country Risk, Alison Evans, told CNN that "Cross-border attacks have mainly involved small-arms fire or, as in October 2014, anti-aircraft heavy machine guns."

"In contrast, there have been frequent exchanges of artillery and rocket fire across the Northern Limit Line (NLL), the de facto maritime border. ●

ISIS Deputy Killed in US Airstrike

» MUTAZZ IS "100 PERCENT" DEAD

BY OLIVER GASKELL

The deputy leader of ISIS has been killed in an American airstrike on Tuesday 18 August, near Mosul, in Iraq.

Ned Price, a spokesperson for the US National Security Council, made the announcement in a statement from the White House on Friday 21 August.

"Fadhil Ahmad al-Hayali, also known as Hajji Mutazz, the second in command of the terrorist group ISIL, was killed in a U.S. military air strike on August 18," said Price.

"Al-Hayali was an ISIL Shura Council member ... He supported ISIL operations in both countries and was in charge of ISIL operations in Iraq, where he was instrumental in planning operations over the past two years, including the ISIL offensive in Mosul in June 2014."

The US government has revealed little information about the specifics of the strike due to its sensitivity. However, a US official told CNN that the strike was based on "actionable intelligence", meaning that the US government knew where Mutazz would be located and when he would be there.

Several major news organisations had previously reported Mutazz as dead in 2014, based on information from senior US administration officials.

A senior official with the American-led coalition that is fighting the Islamic State told the New York Times that this time they are "100 percent certain" that Mutazz is dead. "We have multiple confirmations [that] he was in the car at the moment of the strike."

Mutazz was an ethnic Turk born in Tal Afar, northern Iraq. Mutazz served as an army commander under the late Saddam Hussein, later joining the anti-US insurgency in protest of the 2003 US invasion of Iraq.

The US and its coalition partners have for months been conducting airstrikes against the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria. In Iraq, where ISIS has taken control of a number of towns and cities, American military have targeted many senior leaders as part of what the White House says is an effort to "degrade and destroy" the militant group.

Since 2014 the US military has eliminated several of ISIL chief Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi's deputies, though these operatives have been quickly replaced. ●



IMAGE OF KING TUHEITIA: CC BY 2.0 (WIKI) KAHUROA

Claim for Auckland Unlikely to be Heard

» "KEEP OUT OF AUCKLAND UNTIL WE'VE FINISHED" SAYS IWI

BY POLITICS EDITOR **HENRY NAPIER**

The Māori King has launched a Treaty claim for the wider Auckland area. Speaking at his annual coronation two weeks ago, King Tuheitia addressed the Kīngitanga's new claim for sovereignty over the city.

The king spoke to an audience of over 1000 people, including Prime Minister John Key. Towards the end of his annual speech, the king addressed the issue of sovereignty, saying he was obliged to advocate for a "new era of rights and claims" despite likely disagreements as a result.

"It must be done and I am determined to do it with the start of the Kīngitanga claim in Tāmaki," announced Tuheitia, "to further address and resolve the question of sovereignty of the Kīngitanga with the Government and the Crown."

However, the government doubts the validity of the king's claim. Speaking on Radio Live last week, Minister of Treaty Negotiations Chris

Finlayson indicated that formal procedure for a Treaty claim has yet to be seen.

Finlayson outlined the process of Treaty settlements, saying that a claim must have a mandate in order to be heard.

"The first thing you have to do is show me that you're authorised to negotiate a full and final agreement with the Crown in respect of those issues," said Finlayson. "I don't just sit down with anyone."

Finlayson said anyone wanting to make a claim has "to show that they have gone through the correct procedures and have [the] requisite level of support to negotiate full and final agreements".

The government has argued that Kīngitanga do not have a mandate as they are not iwi or hapu. Kīngitanga, also known as the Māori King movement, is the long-standing Māori unity movement. It was started in the 1850s when northern iwi sought to establish

a unified presence in New Zealand under a monarch similar to that of Britain.

In order for the Kīngitanga claim to be validated, it would need support from an iwi or hapu, something that seems unlikely following counter-claims from northern iwi.

Last week, the northern iwi Ngāpuhi publicly rejected King Tuheitia's claim, arguing that the Auckland area is subject to pre-existing negotiations following a purported breach of the Treaty during crown settlements with Ngāti Whātua.

Speaking to One News, Ngāpuhi leader David Rankin sent a clear message to the Māori King: "Keep out of Auckland until we've finished it."

Key has also expressed doubt about the claim, saying that the 2008 deadline seems to have been missed. The Treaty of Waitangi Amendment Act 2006 prevents any claims being made after 1 September 2008. ●

Health and Safety Bill Has "Fundamental Flaws"

» THE DANGERS OF WORMS AND MINI-GOLF

BY POLITICS EDITOR **HENRY NAPIER**

The Health and Safety Reform Bill was back in the spotlight last week following a 14-hour parliamentary debate. The bill will now continue to its third reading where it is likely to pass into law.

Workplace Relations and Safety Minister Michael Woodhouse, the minister in charge of the bill, has released 57 "high-risk" industries that would require a health and safety representative in every business irrespective of its size.

However, the reform has been publicly criticised for its bizarre inclusion of worm farms and mini-golf under the "high-risk" category, while excluding dairy and cattle farms.

Speaking on TV3's The Nation last week, Labour Party leader Andrew Little publicly opposed the bill, saying it had "fundamental flaws".

"You get these silly absurdities where worm farming, which according to the minister caused deaths, is regarded as more high risk than the

[dairy and beef farming] industry that has killed over a hundred people in the last three years."

The bill, which had originally received cross-party support, was stalled in May after a reported disagreement in the National Party caucus. As a result, Labour has accused the government of succumbing to lobbying efforts by the farming industries.

"I think what's happened is that the National Party has decided, or their supporters in

In My Opinion: Henry's word

Labour in the Lurch: Where Do They Stand?

I was talking to my mum last week about New Zealand politics, and on the topic of the Labour Party she said: "I still can't figure Labour out, what do they stand for?"

As my mother often does, she hit the nail on the head. Labour has had, and continues to have, trouble getting its message on point. The party seem to jump from issue to issue in an incoherent way that reflects an unshakable sense of inconsistency. This is part of the problem with solidifying its message as a political party.

The party's stand on the TPPA is a good example. Labour, despite capitalising on the public opposition to the controversial agreement, fundamentally does support it. The party's public stance is that a number of criteria would need to be upheld if it were to support the agreement, including protection of Pharmac, legislative

freedom and so on. These are mostly ambiguous things that would never be clearly implicated in an agreement. This allows Labour to pitch a tent in a nice middle-ground space where the party seems like it is opposing the agreement but ultimately it won't have to.

I read a blog last week on Politik, written by Richard Harman, that outlined how Labour is hardening its stance on the TPPA. The caucus has set its five bottom-line principles that must be upheld and, if not, according to party leader Andrew Little, the agreement will be unratified by a future Labour government.

It seems unlikely this would ever happen. If you were to use the first of Labour's bottom-line principles as a case study: "Pharmac must be protected". The language is broad stroke and not at all specific as to what would force Labour to

oppose the agreement. But it's been written this way so the party doesn't have to be specific and never will.

If the government pays slightly more for pharmaceuticals through Pharmac as a result of the TPPA, it will not have compromised its safety as the system in which New Zealanders can access medicines cheaply. The budget allocation to Pharmac will be more, but it will still exist in a broad-stroke way where it could be said to be "protected". This is masterful politics.

However, engaging in this type of political savviness is where Labour needs to rethink how it operates.

I often write columns highlighting where Labour is falling short and end up providing some quasi-advice on how the party should proceed. However, it's worth pointing out that the Labour Party has many meritorious principles and a lot of outstanding MPs, including Dunedin North's David Clark.

But playing politics is hurting many of Labour's redeeming qualities. The party capitalised on the TPPA, but also blurred its stance on it. It's confusing.

Labour needs to define its ideology in a way that can be used as a framework when applied to issues like the TPPA. In doing so, the party will create a sense of consistency and continuity in its decision-making that hasn't been present since Helen walked. ●

CAUTION

the farming lobbies have said, we don't want a bar of this," said Little.

"Even though that is the sector that has the worst record of fatalities and serious accidents, this government is bending over backwards to exclude farming businesses that actually need legislation like this to improve their performance."

Woodhouse has rejected claims that the exclusion of dairy and cattle farms would install

compliance, arguing that the process around the bill has not finished yet.

"I think we need to just recalibrate what's been said over the last week because people are describing worm farms and dairy farms as if we've come to the end of a process. We haven't even started that process," said Woodhouse.

The bill has also come under fire for its recent inclusion of a provision that would allow criminal prosecutions to be based

on confidential evidence, unavailable to the defendant or their lawyers.

In a press release last week, the New Zealand Law Society said the provision "should not have been inserted at this late stage of the legislative process". The society's president, Chris Moore, said he recommends the removal of the provision from the bill. ●

News in Briefs

BY AMBER ALLOTT



World Watch

1 BARNSTAPLE, UNITED KINGDOM

A high school student who committed an armed robbery after believing he had failed his GCSE A-levels has been offered a place at the University of Plymouth. The 18-year-old was sentenced to three years and eight months at a young offenders' institute after attempting to rob a jewelry store. The shop's 71-year-old owner, a martial arts expert, grabbed a baseball bat and forced the man out of the store.

2 BELFAST, IRELAND

A man has been tasered on an Easyjet flight in Belfast after refusing to leave the aircraft. The argument started when the man, said to be in his 40s, tried to take two pieces of hand luggage on the flight. The man became abusive to staff after refusing to give up his "man purse", and police were called to assist. After around 20 minutes of attempting to persuade the man to leave the plane, he was tasered and removed by police.

3 BELGIUM

Three people have been wounded after a gunman opened fire on a high-speed train travelling from Amsterdam to Paris. Sliman Hamzi, a 26-year-old from Morocco, was shooting with an automatic weapon, which has left two of the victims in critical condition. The investigation is being led by France's special anti-terror police. The train was passing through Belgium when the attack took place.

4 GERMANY

A message in a bottle, which is said to have been thrown in the sea 108 years ago by British scientists, has washed up on the shores of

Germany. Inside the bottle was a postcard with a message, written in English, German and Dutch, promising a reward of a shilling to whoever returned it. The bottle was one of 1020 released between 1904 and 1906 as part of a project to measure deep sea currents. It is believed to be the oldest message in a bottle ever discovered.

5 SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS

The US government has been ordered to release immigrant children and their mothers who had attempted to illegally enter the US from Mexico. The US government attempted to have the federal judge reverse her decision, claiming the facilities were short-term processing centres. The attempted reversal was denied, and the judge said the women and children must be released by 23 October this year.

6 GREECE

Greece's Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras has officially resigned from his position after Greece's financial woes accelerated earlier this year. Tsipras called for an early election to be held in September, which will be Greece's fifth election in six years. A date has not yet been set, but a government spokesperson has said she expects the election to be held on 20 September, the same day New Zealand's elections were held last year.

7 SOUTH AFRICA

28-year-old paralympian, Oscar Pistorius, is set to have his potential release reviewed by a parole board after the intervention of a South African justice minister. Pistorius, who shot and killed his girlfriend Reeva Steenkamp in 2013, was expected to be released from a South African prison on 21 August. News of his release caused controversy worldwide, which caused Michael Masuth to intervene. Steenkamp would have turned 32 two days before his expected release.

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Grapevine



"It was doing a big loop the loop and I thought, 'that's coming in low' and then there was a massive fireball. There were many burnt-out cars and motorbikes lying on their side. It was absolute carnage."



Chris Blewett, paramedic

The Shoreham Air Show, near Brighton in South England, ended in disaster after a fighter jet failed to pull out of a loop manoeuvre on time, crashing into a busy bypass. Many cars were hit, including a wedding limousine, resulting in seven fatalities and 14 injuries.

"I saw the slop bucket that we call the GOP field, the one-woman show on the Democratic side, and the lack of any third party candidate and thought 'man, Deez Nuts would be better than any of these guys.'"

Brady Olson aka Deez Nuts, presidential candidate

Despite being twenty years too young to be the US president, Brady Olson, a fifteen-year-old from rural Iowa, has proven popular in US presidential opinion polls under the alias 'Deez Nuts'. Nuts gained nine percent support in North Carolina, the third-ranking candidate after Democrat frontrunner Hillary Clinton and Republican candidate Donald Trump.



"With its muddy, un-made-up walkways and ruined surfaces Dismaland gives an impression of cackhanded thrown-togetherness that belies the real money behind it and technical expertise that has brought the whole thing into being, completed just hours before the global media's arrival. The defining tone of his latest show is one of gleeful, establishment-blaming, adolescent despair."



Mark Hudson, art critic for UK Telegraph

Popular street artist, Banksy, has finally launched his latest, top-secret creation, 'Dismaland'. The dark, brutal satire of Dismaland has received mixed responses from both fans and critics, ranging from those praising the dystopian fun on social media, to those panning it as thin, threadbare and quite boring.

"It shows that our female monarchs last the longest. The Queen's longevity is a great source of her strength and popularity. She has lived through World War Two and throughout the 20th century. Many people will not have known a different monarch."

Dr Kate Williams, historian

Queen Elizabeth is expected to become the longest reigning British monarch. On 9 September this year, Elizabeth will break the current record, held by her great-grandmother Queen Victoria who reigned for 23,226 days, 16 hours and 23 minutes. After the death of her father George VI, Elizabeth took the throne on 6 February 1952.



FACTS & FIGURES



303

The number of convicted felons who have been exonerated by DNA evidence in the US since 1989.

Moon dust

smells like burnt gunpowder.

350–400

Hours of sleep a new baby deprives its parents of in the first year.

A beaver

has a set of lips behind its front teeth.

100

the number of times the earth is struck by lightning per second.

A Tyrannosaur's teeth

were roughly the size of bananas.

7

The number of bars of soap that can be made from an average person's fat.

All swans

in the UK are owned by the queen.



Warriors Need a Miracle

» STILL HOPING TO REACH THE FINALS

BY SPORTS EDITOR **DANIEL LORMANS**

With just two games remaining in the regular season, the New Zealand Warriors sit 10th on the NRL ladder having taken 22 points from 22 games. This doesn't sound too bad on paper, but the nature of what was their sixth successive defeat has really compounded their late season misery — the Warriors gave up an early 16-point lead by conceding 50 unanswered points to the high-flying Cowboys in the Warriors' last home game of the season.

The result leaves the Warriors without a win since beating the Storm at Mt. Smart Stadium on 12 July and they have since conceded 184 points, scoring just 52, and have been held scoreless twice. Their longest ever losing streak reached 11 matches

over the 2012/13 seasons, and in 2000 their worst ever single-season losing streak ran to seven matches.

In stark contrast, the result put the Cowboys third on the ladder, level on points with the second- and first-placed Broncos and Roosters in what will be a three-way shoot-out for the minor premiership. None of these top three teams play each other again, which leaves the Roosters in pole position for the playoffs with their superior points differential.

The Warriors had looked certain to play their way into the finals, but when their key player, Shaun Johnson, was taken out for the rest of the season with a broken leg against Manly in Round 20, their season took a dramatic turn for the worse. The Warriors went on

to lose that game 32–12 and haven't won since.

Even the coaches have been at a loss to explain why they have struggled so much since losing Johnson — showing just how important he is to this side. You couldn't blame head coach Andrew McFadden for just wanting to get on with next season with the exciting prospects of Roger Tuivasa-Sheck and Issac Luke signed for the club earlier this year. McFadden is the club's 10th coach in just 20 years, so will be feeling the pressure to perform, and knows that a few new signings will not turn things around instantly.

As for the remaining games, McFadden is realistic, saying that all they can do is show up and "have a good crack at it" — that's the spirit, mate! ●

ITM Cup to Help Fine-Tune All Blacks

» TOUGH DECISIONS TO BE MADE

BY SPORTS EDITOR **DANIEL LORMANS**

The ITM has lost some of its importance recently with Super Rugby and All Blacks games taking precedence over the domestic provincial championship. This season though — instead of wrapping their players up in cotton wool before the World Cup — some of the All Blacks have been released back to their provinces to gain a bit more match fitness and for the selectors to have one last look at them before making their final squad decisions. The All Blacks forward pack looks very much settled upon unless injuries force a rethink, so it is just a few key positions in the backline that are still to be finalised.

Lima Sopoaga helped the Southland Stags to a 27–18 win over Northland, continuing his attacking kicking game that helped the Highlanders to the Super Rugby title. Sopoaga feels that he has done all he can do to make the World Cup squad after he played a big part in the All Blacks' win over South Africa on his debut. Dan Carter has the starting spot locked

down, and Beauden Barrett has plenty of All Blacks experience and can cover at fullback from the bench as well. This leaves Sopoaga in a straight fight with Colin Slade, who has been restricted to a utility role so far.

There is no argument as to the pecking order of the halfbacks, with Aaron Smith the first choice and TJ Perenara and Andy Ellis the backup options. With nothing more to learn, it is no surprise that none of them were called up for ITM duty.

Charles Piutau featured in Auckland's 30–24 win over Taranaki and should feel confident of retaining one of the winger's spots, with big injury doubts still hanging over Cory Jane and Waisake Naholo. Jane put in a great performance at fullback in Wellington's 43–0 thrashing of North Harbour but is still not fully fit.

Julian Savea has a monopoly on the left-wing spot, so what happens on the right wing could have a big impact at fullback as well. Israel Dagg was back in action for Hawkes

Bay, and he touched down three times for the Magpies to really send out a challenge to Ben Smith for that All Blacks fullback jersey. Luckily for Smith, he could easily shift to the right wing to accommodate Dagg at the back — something the All Blacks selectors have persisted with in the past.

Ryan Crotty popped up in the red and black to help Canterbury beat Counties 20–15, but he is facing the real prospect of more game time for Canterbury unless he can force out one of Nonu, Conrad Smith, SBW or Fekitoa, who are all in the mix for the two starting spots and the one place on the bench for the centres.

Some tough decisions will have to be taken before the final World Cup squad is announced on Sunday 30 August. The three selectors, Steve Hansen, Ian Foster and Grant Fox, will notify all the players by phone before the official announcement, which is to be held at a fancy Parliament press conference — so expect an awkward handshake from John Key to see the boys off! ●

Updates

BY SPORTS EDITOR **DANIEL LORMANS**

FOOTBALL



Manchester City kicked off the English Premier League season with ominous intent by winning their opening three games without conceding a goal and beating defending champions Chelsea 3–0.

FORMULA ONE



Lewis Hamilton dominated the Belgian Grand Prix weekend, taking pole position and winning the race to take a 28-point lead over teammate Nico Rosberg, who had to settle for fastest lap.

BASKETBALL



A freshman from Illinois has won a semester's free tuition at Ball State University after sinking a shot from the halfway line during a halftime promotion.

GOLF



Kiwi golfer Lydia Ko has won another major tournament, taking out the Canadian Open for the third time in four years and winning another \$500,000.

TENNIS



Roger Federer goes into next week's US Open in New York with a win over world number one, Novak Djokovic, in the final of the Cincinnati Masters.

ATHLETICS



Usain Bolt beat known drug cheat Justin Gatlin by a narrow margin of 0.01 seconds to win the 100 metre final at the World Champs in Beijing.

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THE GUY WHO WANTS TO BE A GOAT

HE'S NOT EVEN KIDDING

JOSIE COCHRANE

Thomas Thwaites is a designer based in London, UK. Among his many bizarre projects – such as building a toaster from scratch, which ended up with a TED Talk gathering over one million views – his latest endeavour is what has intrigued us the most. Thwaites is attempting to become as close to a goat as he possibly can ... by literally trying to become a goat.

Critic: So this is the most bizarre project we have heard of in a while. Can you give us a rundown of what the project is?

Thwaites: I tried to become a goat. Simple, really. Everyone gets pissed off with stresses and strains, and worries and regrets and all these human anxieties that we have to deal with. And I just thought, wouldn't it be nice to take a holiday from all that? No more worrying about why you're here, what you're doing with your life. I thought "wouldn't it be nice to become an animal?" It's like this idea from childhood in a way – I can remember fantasising that if only I could be the cat and then I wouldn't have to go to school and face all these horrible people.

It's an interesting idea to explore as a more mature adult. So I wrote to this biomedical charity that does arts funding – the Welcome Trust – and they were interested

in the idea. They were probably as curious to see what I would come up with as I was.

How much was put towards this goat idea?

It was quite a lot, something like €27,000 [approx NZ\$65,000]. I guess I'm a fairly established designer now. I've been doing this project for about a year. You can't really talk about trying to take on the perception of another creature without getting into the philosophy of mind and neuroscience. So there's quite a lot to the project before actually just going to the Alps and living with goats.

So how did you start?

The first thing I should say is that I started out trying to become an elephant. I started looking into elephants, [but] I went to see a shaman – they are a sort of expert in human-animal relations – and she said you shouldn't be an elephant, you should be a goat. And she was absolutely right, really. When she said that, it felt right to me. Goat! Yeah, that's the level I'm on.

You are on the level of a goat?

Well yeah, her reasoning was that I could never be an elephant because I have no shared cultural or environmental history with an elephant. She said as you live in

London and don't live in the bush in South Africa, you should be an animal you have in London.

Human beings have always tried to take on this idea of being animals, or taking on the characteristics of animals. There are various cave paintings of humans with animal heads [and] even the earliest sculpture we've ever discovered made by human hands is a sculpture of a human figure with a lion's head. It was dug up just before the Second World War by the Nazis. It sounds like something out of Indiana Jones, but it made me think, maybe this becoming an animal thing is justified. I started to think of this as seeing how modern technology could help us achieve this age-old human dream.

So you had prosthetics on your legs and arms, and I hear you attempted to get a stomach made too?

Obviously if I was going to become a goat, I needed to be able to eat grass and digest it. Mammals don't let you produce the enzyme to digest cellulose, but goats are mammals too. The difference is they have this foregut – their rumen – which is before their stomach and it has a whole other community of bacteria and fungi which are specialised in breaking down cellulose – the main molecule which makes up

the fibrous bits in plants. I went up to Aberystwyth where they have a research group actually making artificial rumens. I told them "I'm trying to be a goat" and they were all "oh that's great, hahaha".

I told them I was thinking of making a fermenter, or a bag, and then I would put some grass in it. I wanted to put a sample of the bacteria from the goat into my artificial fermenter. They said that's how they did their research, for rumen biology. Then I said ok, I'm going to strap this thing to me, walk around, spit grass into it and then suck out the fermented product from another tube. They suddenly went very quiet and were like "no, you mustn't do that". Their argument was that they are discovering all sorts of weird bacteria and fungi in the rumen, I'd not just be ill but possibly giving myself some kind of virulent bacteria infection. Some people think Crohn's Disease is caused by a bacteria infection in the gut, they said I was at risk of giving myself a serious long-term condition if I did that. So yeah, that nixed that idea.

I ended up having to spit grass into a bag and at the end of the day I'd pressure cook it to break down the cellulose. And then I ate that.

So you still ate the grass?

Well, yeah. It was way harder than I thought. I did chemical tests on myself for sugar and I was getting some sugar from it but it was such hard work. Being on four legs and getting sick, I had to eat human food too.

How long did you last?

Well I was at the goat farm for three days but in my original application to the Welcome Trust, I said I was going to cross the Alps. So after three days of learning from the goats and learning how crap I was at being a goat, I set off to cross the Alps. They are, um, much higher than I thought.

Haha! Well, yeah, they're not hills.

Haha, no they are not! I'd never really walked in the Alps before. They just kept

on going up and up and up. So I ended up on a glacier and thought "this is ridiculous".

Where did you sleep?

I slept in the shed on the goat farm. But crossing the Alps, I slept in little rest stops. I didn't sleep outside in the Alps cause I probably would have died. The doctor who made the prosthetics for me, he said when you're asleep, you don't know that you're a goat, so you don't know you're not a goat, so he justified it as a philosophy of mind type thing.

I do appreciate how you've managed to wheedle your way out of certain parts of this.

Exactly! When you're faced with a chance of catching hypothermia and at the end of a long day, sweating all day and then freezing cold ... a chance of philosophically reasoning yourself out of having to sleep outside in a bush becomes very attractive.

How did the goats warm to you personally?

They were scared really at first. When we first arrived at the goat farm, I hadn't told the goat herd owner [what we were going to do]. We were having to use Google Translate to communicate, so I hadn't told him. They were doing that migration the day after I arrived, so I had to get up the next day and join the herd. As we were herded down the mountain, I realised just how crap a goat I would be. This stream of goats flow down these extremely steep mountains and I was there on my four legs, terrified of slipping cause I didn't have any hands obviously to stop myself from falling or smashing myself into a rock.

Did you ever fall over?

Yeah, quite a few times. I would try and trot. But it was so easy to just fall.

Eventually when we got to the pasture and I was

just eating with them ... they gradually got to know me and I think I even made like a goat friend. Prior to going, I had talked to a goat behavioural psychologist – yes, they do exist – goats have this dominance hierarchy thing and have friends and enemies. I think I made a goat friend.

There was this moment where I found myself the highest goat in the goat herd and I looked up and everyone had stopped chewing on their grass and was just staring at me. And I was like "ok, this is weird". I was in the middle of the herd. I felt something was going on. I think I may have committed some sort of goat faux pas, because I had read that you can show dominance by being physically higher. I think I'd inadvertently done a challenge and it was like "Oh God". I started seeing these pointy horns and there was a bit of tension and movement going on. But luckily, I think my friend defused the situation. I dunno, I might be fantasising again.

There was that one moment though where I thought I'd have to go up on two legs and sort of wallop one with my hoof [but] I purposefully avoided the rutting season when they'd be sexually charged.

What did you learn about humans, goats, and the differences?

Visiting the shaman was really interesting. When I was finally with the goats in the pasture, it was sort of meditative. I'd been to see a neuroscientist to try and switch off parts of my brain so I could be more like a goat. He used transcranial magnetic stimulation to switch off my speech centre.





It was temporary but it was an experience. He said they don't think goats have an episodic memory like they think goats are very much in the moment, kind of stuck in time. And so it struck me that a lot of when people tell you to meditate, be in the moment, be present in the moment – I think being a goat is all a lot about being present, in the moment.

When you were on the Alps, was your brain all switched on?

Yeah. I had fantasies of making a sort of skull cap – like a portable transcranial magnetic stimulation machine. But the neuroscientist said I was basically 50 years too early. He said we could slightly disrupt areas of my brain, but he said about two-thirds of your brain is involved in language and episodic memory, so we'd have to switch off about two-thirds of my brain.

Do you think goats have a healthier sort of attitude?

Goats don't have this tendency to be jumping around in time like humans do. In a way, goats are sort of Buddhists, I suppose. Haha don't quote me on that. It's absolute bullshit. They are very present with themselves. I guess they're very in touch with their goaty selves.

We are all about wonderful technology and where human beings are going to go in the future, more efficient, faster, better, we're going to go to Mars and stuff, which I love as well. But there also has to be a space for an alternative view of the future – maybe using technology for living a simpler life. We need to be remembering our animal selves as well.

Is it these kind of findings that you're writing your book about?



I guess the whole project – yes, it is an impossible goal. Yes, I realise that now. To say I'm going to become a goat, it's not actually possible to become a goat. So, the book – the shaman had one perspective of animals. And then the behavioural psychologists focusing on goats had another perspective. And then I dissected a goat with an anatomist. All these kind of ways of thinking about animals, and of course humans are animals ... the book is a way of putting all that research down.

I guess this is more just that perhaps in the future we'll need to use technology to be happier in the present. Just to be able to really love eating grass in a field, that's quite, I don't know, is that a good thing?

Do you think they were happy?

Well, there's this quote by the philosopher John Stuart Mill: "It's better to be a human being dissatisfied than a pig satisfied. It's better to be Socrates dissatisfied than a fool satisfied. And if the fool, or the pig, says otherwise, it is only because they know their side of the question." And I thought, well, maybe it's not. Maybe it's better to be a pig satisfied or a goat satisfied.

I mean I think a goat is satisfied with just eating delicious fresh green grass. Humans are constantly dissatisfied somehow and I was trying to get at the disconnect.

Have you thought about becoming a drunk goat as an easier way of achieving the same lack of awareness?

Yeah I did ask that. Would being a goat be like just being really drunk, impulsive? The goat psychologists just laughed at me. They don't assume that animals have the human experience – like if I ask if goats are happy? That just doesn't really apply. We can't know what they're experiencing.



They are trying to learn what the hell is going on in an animal's mind.

What made other researchers you spoke to choose goats over elephants, for example?

Goats are cognitively interesting and they're neophilic, which means they're curious about new things. When they're presented with some new apparatus, they'll investigate it. They are naturally inclined to participate in your experiment. They're basically easier to study. They're fun.

Did you learn any goat games?

Well, it's a game sometimes being the highest on the mountain. Trying to maintain your place on the hill, in the herd.

I told people I needed to make these prosthetics so that I could gallop like a goat and spring over the mountains. But the people who make limbs for amputees ... they said I don't think you know how much difficulty [and] how much pain you're going to have when you try and take your weight and put it through parts of your body which aren't evolved to do that.

Surely they thought you were a nutter?

Well, I researched the clinic. I found a guy whose undergrad was in zoology and I guess the clinician took the bait. I still consider the whole thing a prototype. It's such a good dream to be able to gallop through the hills and eat grass.

So one day it's going to happen?

Yeah, one day! I just need to be able to get to the ultimate prosthetics. We've already made a better version of the back legs. I'm going back to the workshop on better front legs. I'll get there somehow.

We've had a few random questions from students here. How did you manage to go to the toilet with your goat suit on?

Well, I had a zip. I'm aware walking around with my willie out would just be a bit ... you know. I really didn't want to emphasise any of the sexual aspects [of goat life] ... I was quite keen to not emphasise that in the project. Not telling the goatherd that I planned on sharing a barn with his goats ... first try, I guessed it was better to keep things tucked away.

How loud can you bleat?

Oh God. [head online to hear!]

Thanks so much for talking to us.

I could talk to you for hours about your other projects.

Haha yes, well, there's the toaster too! I don't know, maybe it's my New Zealand parentage. She'll be right, give it a go combined with the English eccentricity which may have had a role in doing these stupid things. I thought I'd mention that my dad did go to Otago University. I think he studied economics but didn't shine as a student!

It's a small world!



To listen to the whole interview and hear how loud Thwaites can bleat, head to critic. co.nz/goatman!

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"IT'S SUCH A GOOD DREAM TO BE ABLE TO GALLOP THROUGH THE HILLS AND EAT GRASS."



CHINA'S FOR GOTTEN PEOPLE

Lawrence Hamilton

The Dalai Llama's image is synonymous with the cause of Tibetan freedom and his is a household name. Far fewer people know the names of Rebiya Kadeer or Dolkun Isa and the struggle for self-determination taking place in China's far west.

When most people think of China, what comes to mind are chopsticks, the Great Wall, pandas, kitschy images of Chairman Mao and perhaps grainy footage of a student standing in front of a tank during the Tiananmen Square protests. While most people are aware that China has a huge population, fewer are aware of how this demographic breaks down or that it includes an ethnic group of people with ancestry much closer to Istanbul rather than Beijing, people who are locked into what they perceive as a mortal struggle to preserve their culture and their homeland.

The overwhelming majority of China's 1.3 billion inhabitants are Han Chinese, who make up a little over 91 percent of the population. China's population is spread across 23 provinces and five autonomous regions, with the bulk of the population living on the more highly developed east coast. group who speak a Turkic language and in almost no respect reflect the traditional impression of "Chinese". Uyghurs make up roughly 0.47 percent of China's population.

Following the Japanese Occupation during the Second World War, China was in the midst of a brutal civil war that would eventually see the rise to power of the Communist party in 1955. To help ease the toll the burgeoning population was taking on China's land, Chairman Mao declared that China needed a united motherland. This policy aimed to bring back areas that were historically part of China. These included Tibet and Turkestan, the latter being the home of the Uyghurs. By 1955, fresh on the heels of Mao's pronouncements, this starkly beautiful region was incorporated into the People's Republic as the Xinjiang autonomous region.

To call this new autonomous region large would be an understatement. It is exceedingly vast. It comfortably contains the world's second largest desert, the Taklimakan, and shares borders with Russia, Mongolia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Afghanistan, Pakistan and the porous boundary line with the Tibetan Autonomous Region. It covers 1.6 million square kilometres and is the eighth largest coun-

try subdivision in the world. Along with being an important strategic loggerhead, it contains large oil reserves and is currently China's largest producer of natural gas.

Despite its large size, the population of Xinjiang was quite small. In 1945 the total population of Xinjiang was 3.6 million, with 82.7 percent being Uyghur and only 6 percent Han Chinese. Since 1955 the Uyghurs have suddenly found themselves minorities in their homeland and cast off from the decision makers in the government.

With the tightening grip of Chinese control, and the discovery of natural wealth, the Chinese state began one of the largest state-orchestrated migrations in human history. By 2008, the six percent of Han Chinese jumped to 40 percent of the overall population. The total population rose to roughly 21 million.

"In 60 years we have not seen autonomy, autonomy is just on paper," said Dolkun Isa, the executive director of the World Uyghur Congress (WUC). "We need democracy and we need self-determination."

As Isa and I talked over Skype, the computer delays failed to hide the fact that Dolkun Isa was exasperated and more than a little sad.

"They killed 25 people yesterday," Isa said before our interview began.

The "they" he was referring to was the Chinese government and the 25 people were Uyghur refugees, who were in Thailand trying to be resettled in Turkey. The Thai government, citing the refugees' lack of documents, sent them back to China where, according to the WUC, they were promptly executed. Thai officials would later say the refugees were safe. Over the coming weeks, a further 109 refugees would be sent back. Neighbouring countries praised Thailand for not meddling in China's internal affairs.

Stories like these abound on the Congress's website. The Congress, which was spear-headed by activist Rebiya Hadeer, seeks to document to the outside world the daily conditions that Muslims face living in

the People's Republic of China. A cursory look at the website paints a grim picture of life in Xinjiang, whether it is a ban on fasting for Ramadan or a sidebar with rotating pictures of Uyghurs being held in Chinese prisons.

With the attacks on the World Trade Center in 2001, suddenly Central Asia was not only a place of natural wealth but an area of potential danger. The Chinese government focused on groups fomenting terrorist activity, and activists with "independence" agendas were specifically targeted. China pledged support to the West's War on Terror. The government strengthened its already tight grip by putting more police throughout the province, monitoring mosques and arresting those accused of separatism. Uyghur leaders blame the heavy-handed policy for eruptions of violence that sporadically occur throughout the region and the country.

It was with this as a backdrop that the WUC was founded in 2004. Its headquarters are in Munich, Germany. Its mission is "to promote democracy, human rights and freedom for the Uyghur people and use peaceful, nonviolent, and democratic means to determine their political future." For its part, the Chinese government has labelled the Congress a terrorist organisation.

Lacking a congenial figurehead, such as the Tibetans' Dalai Lama, or a well-funded media campaign to advertise their plight, the Uyghurs have been forced into their role as China's forgotten people. Despite all the talk of China's economic miracle, the Uyghur people find themselves continually slipping through the cracks.

"Actually China doesn't need the Uyghur people," Isa stated. "They just need our resources. Uranium and gold all get exported to inner China. Never have the Uyghur people benefited, only the benefits for the Chinese. They don't need the Uyghurs, they need our territory."

The Economist recently detailed openly discriminatory employment practices that see Han Chinese hired over their Uyghur and Tibetan counterparts. In a recent report, the magazine reported that nearly 83

percent of Uyghurs remained farmers, despite the rapid urbanisation of the country as a whole. By comparison, the number of Chinese living on farms has gone down by a third since 2000. While the population of Han Chinese in Xinjiang has exploded, less than one percent of Uyghurs have resettled outside their native province.

"If you travel around Turkestan (the Congress doesn't use the term Xinjiang) you will see a rich country and you will see the Uyghurs are very poor in our country. The opportunities only exist for the Han Chinese," Isa lamented.

No matter who the opportunities might exist for, the Chinese economic miracle continues to chug on unabated. Recently a "New Silk Road" was proposed linking the east coast of China to western Europe. The name is a play on the traditional trade route that carried goods from Asia to Europe across Central Asia. This large-scale super-highway will clock in at over 8000 kilometres and is hoped to reduce the transport of goods to a mere ten days (it currently takes 40 days). The president of Kazakhstan called it the construction of the century. Urumqi, Xinjiang's capital, and the Horgos, a town on the China/Kazakhstan border, will feature prominently in this new development. Whether this new construction project will have any benefits for Uyghurs remains to be seen.

"This new Silk Road will not benefit Uyghurs, maybe it is worse for us," Isa flatly stated.

Wade Shepard, author of *Ghost Cities of China* and currently writing a book about the new Silk Road, agreed that even bigger changes are coming for most, if not all, of Xinjiang.

"Yes, lives of the Uyghurs will be fundamentally changed. First of all, the very landscapes where people live are going to be changed permanently. Villages are going to disappear, neighbourhoods are to be razed to the ground, new metropolises are going to go up where there were none before and people from other parts of the

country are going to flood in," Shepard stated. "The past will be exterminated and a new era will be ushered in. This era will see a flood of new endings and beginnings both positive and negative."

This new development and focus on trade means the standard of living will more than likely rise for the people of Xinjiang, more educational opportunities will become available and more economic options will be created. China is hoping its economic miracle will be enough to stop the uneven growth that has separated the interior of the country from the more prosperous east coast.

"When applied to Xinjiang, it is the most economically, culturally and geographically remote area in the country. And changing has become a top priority for the Chinese government," Shepard stated. "So we are going to see a Xinjiang that is totally reworked — literally from the ground up. Traditional communities are being broken up, ancient villages replaced with high rises and a culture that's being more watered down generation after generation."

Given the history between China and Turkestan, it is not a difficult leap to think this will all be on the terms of the Chinese government. Whether it is claiming territories across the South China Sea or negotiating with the military junta in Myanmar, China uses its economic development as a tool. It tries to obtain political and social stability through economics. This isn't just by destroying and reorganising but by holding the carrot of better physical health, educational opportunities and economic well-being.

Determining who historically controls these types of regions is fraught with peril. The documented history of Xinjiang dates back 2500 years and the region has been ruled by a colourful menagerie of dynasties and tribes. Chairman Mao historically claimed Chinese control based on types of pottery discovered in Xinjiang's towns. The WUC makes some bold claims about the small size of the Chinese population

in 1949, which are vehemently denied by various academics. It might even be fantasy for the Uyghurs to believe they would have lived in peace. The Soviet Union exerted control on most of neighbouring Central Asia and Mongolia and even attempted to subdue Xinjiang in the 1930s.

Over the past decade, unrest and disillusionment have grown in Uyghur communities. This has spilled over into violent attacks both in Xinjiang and the infamous Kunming railway attack where six Uyghurs stabbed 29 Han Chinese to death. While the WUC denounces these attacks, many in the Uyghur community see the heavy-handed police presence throughout Xinjiang as being a major cause of these violent outbursts. Chinese officials see the police presence as necessary against what they perceive as a threat from radical Islamists.

Any hope for future reapproachment seems bleak. China continues to hope economic developments, like the new Silk Road, will raise the standard of living and thus give Uyghurs a reason to integrate and embrace the Chinese economic model. The WUC maintains that no economic gain is worth the destruction of their homeland and that China is only interested in erasing their history for the betterment of Han Chinese.

"What's ironic about the new Silk Road is that through the process of reviving these traces of history and ancient culture, it goes hand in hand with making sure traditional ways of life are being decimated and replaced with nothing but the super modern," Shepard stated. "It is going back to a time when China was the centre of the world, and it is erasing everything that has occurred during the intermediary millennia."

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HOT DATES FOR CHEADSKATES

A GUIDE TO BATING ON THE CHEAP IN DUNEDIN

... BY AMBER ALLOTT ...



LET'S JUST SAY YOU'VE MET A NEW potential romantic partner, whether they're grooving on the dance floor at Boogie, slaying some squats at Unipol or, more commonly, you both swiped right. You begin wondering how you can sweep them off their feet. After dazzling them with your most charming pick-up lines, perhaps shouting them a drink or two, you finally achieve the goal of a date. If only you weren't living off \$40 a week.

You don't have to spend \$80 on a dinner for two at a ritzy restaurant while trying to woo the lady, gentleman, or otherwise-identifying individual of your dreams. Fortunately, there are dozens of alternatives that are equally romantic, and much kinder to the wallet.

1. THE DUNEDIN CHINESE GARDENS

Cost: \$6 with student ID

Situated on the corner of Rattray and Cumberland streets are the beautiful Chinese Gardens, designed over eight years to ensure complete authenticity and cultural integrity. The garden was built to honour Dunedin's Chinese heritage by creating a permanent feature recognising the Chinese people who migrated to Otago during the gold rush of the 1860s, with many staying on to establish the businesses that made Dunedin the commercial capital of New Zealand. This allowed for the building of railroads, schools, and the university itself. Throughout the year, the garden hosts a number of special events, but it will be cheapest if you just go along on a normal day.

While there are a number of extras you can purchase, like a guided or audio tour, I'd recommend just grabbing a map and finding your own way around. There are plenty of informative plaques, little tables with games and puzzles on them in the courtyard, and a room where you can try on traditional Chinese attire. Warning: the staff tiptoe around very quietly, so if you decide to use this room for making out, check the stairs first. Save yourself some awkward stares as you continue to explore the garden. There are also a lovely gift shop and a tea house, which sells a variety of teas and steamed buns. Plus, you can buy fish food for a dollar here, to amuse yourself by watching the delightfully plump, greedy goldfish wolf it down.

2. OTAGO MUSEUM'S TROPICAL FOREST

Cost: \$9 with student ID

Most of Otago Museum is free entry, with the exception of the Tropical Forest. It's the only experience of its kind in Australasia, complete with a glass swing-bridge, top and bottom levels, and a shimmering cascade of hundreds of exotic butterflies. While the butterflies are the main attraction, there are also birds, turtles, fish and some really neat plant-life that'll give you the illusion of being somewhere in the tropics with 75 percent humidity and a temperature that can actually reach 28 degrees.

If, like me, you don't have a friendly relationship with the world's largest moths, or with getting up close and personal with great quantities of flying insects that have no problem landing on you, then this date may not be for you. But it sure is beautiful, especially if you

manage to catch it when there's nobody else around. I'd recommend going in the morning, at 11am. This is when the newly emerged butterflies take their first flight around the forest. They let visitors help, and there's nothing quite as romantic as watching a bunch of baby creatures experience their world for the first time right? Aww.

3. OPEN MIC NIGHT AT RE:FUEL

Cost: Buy them a beer

Just about every Tuesday night during the semester, student bar Re:Fuel hosts an open mic/open decks night. Usually, there's a headlining musical act, but the open mic and decks are the real attraction here. Re:Fuel is not only giving local musicians, bands, DJs, poets and comedians the opportunity to perform to an audience of their peers, but the fun, variety-show vibe and Re:Fuel's trendy, student-oriented feel make it a great place for a low-cost date.

If the acts themselves aren't particularly interesting to you, there are cosy couches and booths scattered around the bar. With \$5 beer handles and a selection of great cheese toasties, pool, arcade game machines and TV monitors playing an endless cycle of increasingly surreal and disturbing gifs. At the very least, these are good for starting a conversation.

4. WALK TO TUNNEL BEACH

Cost: Free – \$4.40 for bus fares

If either you or your partner has a car available, that would be preferable, but if you're prepared for a bit of a hike, you

can catch the number 38 bus that heads from the university to Concord, jumping off around Mulford Street. From the car park at the top, there's about a fifteen-minute walk downhill, following a track through farmland. At the end of this track, there is a hand-carved passage through solid rock, allowing access to a unique sheltered beach hiding at the base of the cliff.

This tunnel for which the beach is named was carved in the 1870s. It was commissioned by a local politician, John Cargill, so that his children could play on their own secluded beach. The beach is best to visit at low tide, so that you and your date can take in the wild majesty of the sandstone cliffs, caves and rock arches, carved over hundreds of years by the constant hammering of the sea. During the walk, you may find fossils in the rock, ranging from fragments of shells to sea urchins and, rarely, the bones of extinct whales.

5. DUNEDIN PUBLIC ART GALLERY

Cost: Free

Located in the Octagon, the Dunedin Public Art Gallery hosts an impressive range of pieces from around the world, as well as having a particular focus on New Zealand art. There are always several special exhibitions and, with free entry, it would be almost silly not to bring your date along for an afternoon that will surely increase the cultural capital of both of you.

The gallery includes some wonderful British and European paintings, many

of which are the works of European art's big names that even the least artistically inclined are bound to recognise: Monet, Machiavelli, Pissarro, Gainsborough, Reynolds and Turner. If you're less interested in old paintings from the Western world, there are also collections of twentieth-century Australian works, Japanese prints and decorative arts. Most significantly, there is a vast array of New Zealand works, with the place of honour dedicated to Dunedin painter Frances Hodgkins, well-known in England as a contributor to the Neo-Romantic movement.

On your way out is the ritzy café, Nova. If you so desired, you and your date could get a bowl of fries and a coffee with the money you saved by choosing a free activity. The staff constantly refill your glasses with bubbling water, and you get waited on at your table, so you can play at being fancy-schmancy art connoisseurs while you sip lattes and discuss the exhibition.

6. MINI-GOLF AND LASER TAG

Cost: \$8 each with student ID

If you have the feeling your date might be a bit of an adrenaline junkie, why not take them for a round of laser tag at Megazone? If the two of you are feeling a little more laid back, you could always enjoy a game of mini-golf for the same price, but I'd highly recommend the former.

Megazone is a captivating sci-fi experience, which will have you fully submerged in the storyline. You and your

team member play space adventurers from the near future, navigating your way through a facility filled with hostile enemy forces. You're armed with combat armour and a laser gun and, as an awesome addition, Megazone have just upgraded from their former system to the latest in laser tag technology, including forty-four new suits and a host of new game modes.

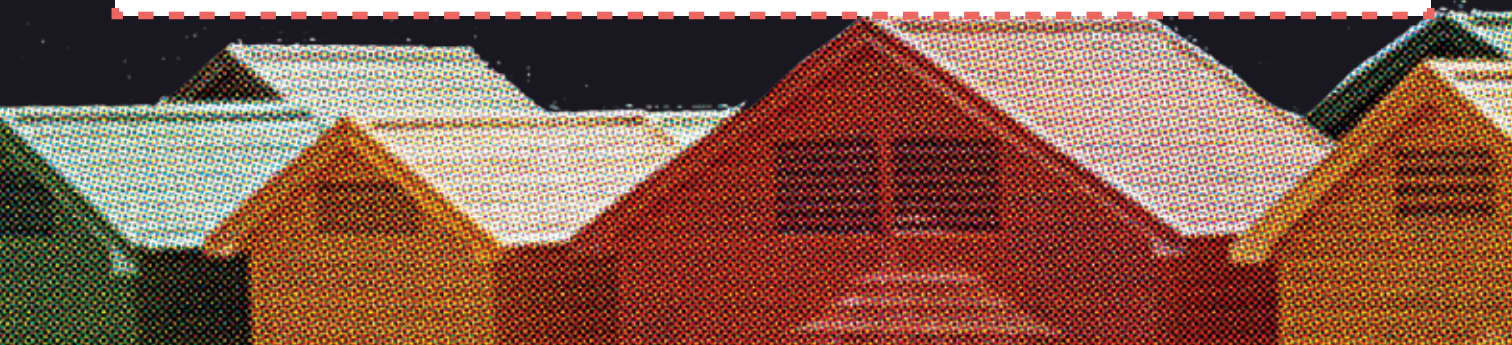
The complex also features, for an additional cost, a café, nine-foot pool tables, a video game arcade and, of course, the mini-golf. The video game arcade in particular is recommended, so you can impress your new beau by achieving that elusive high score.

7. ST CLAIR

Cost: Coffee + \$2.50 for bus fares

The esplanade at St Clair is a lovely place to venture on either a warm or cold day — but is preferable on a warm day. A number of cafes line the stretch, so you could pick a place, order a coffee or cup of tea, and relax with bae.

St Clair is one of the most popular surfing spots in Dunedin, so there is usually at least one person out there on a surfboard waiting for a wave. I don't know about you, but I find them mesmerising to watch. After coffee, you could venture down to the beach for a romantic stroll on the sand while holding hands. Progress right there.



8. NETFLIX AND CHILL

Cost: \$7.99/month or use up the free one-month trial

One of the more well-known dates, Netflix and Chill is something you can always fall back on for a date if you're totally strapped for cash. Venturing over to your significant other's place for a steamy session of Netflix and Chill is the definitive poor-man date. Although, we all know that Netflix and Chill doesn't actually involve paying attention to Netflix, nor really chilling. For those who don't want to pay for a Netflix subscription, there's always the option of finding some cheeky online streaming service that provides access to a TV show you can ignore while "chilling". We all know what the plan really is, so why fork out cash?

Netflix and Chill is not a viable first date option — inviting a newbie to your house for sex under the guise that you'll at least try to watch some TV is pretty half-assed. At least offer home-made popcorn.

9. ROMANTIC PICNIC

Cost: Depends on luxury/hunger levels

As we slowly tiptoe into spring, Dunedin is beginning to tentatively heat up. Plan ahead by picking a day that is supposed to go above 15 degrees — a cold picnic will be a bad picnic. You've got a couple of options in terms of picnic food. You could head into the Gardens New World

with your date to select your food items together or, if you want to show off your baking and cooking skills, you could get busy in your kitchen earlier in the day.

There is a multitude of lovely grassy areas in Dunedin. You could make your way into the Dunedin Botanical Gardens and locate a corner somewhere or follow the footpaths leading up the hill to the aviary.

If you're not feeling the Botanical Gardens, try Woodhaugh Gardens, which has several entrances along Duke Street (down from Willowbank dairy) and off the north end of George Street before the over-bridge. Woodhaugh is a little more closed over than the Botanical Gardens, but its best features include: climb-able trees, picnic tables, a park with swings, a forest with little pathways running through it, and a river running alongside the main walkway. How romantic.

10. STUDY DATE

Cost: Nothing but lollies

If study is getting a little too much, which it always is at this time of year, a study date might be on the cards. Taking your honey out to Central for an evening of hardcore study might be exactly what you need. Every frustrated groan could be met with a cuddle or a motivating smile, and let's not forget about the potential for make-out breaks. We're all university students here, we know how stressful it is — and the support of your other half could potentially make the whole evening that much better.

In saying that, there's also the potential for distraction as you compete on Words with Friends or frustration as the other one spends the whole time eating. I guess it's a gamble, but we think it's worth a shot!



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A rarity these days, and for a great number of people, their university years will be the time that they first begin to see relationships a little more seriously.

Whether we're experimenting with who we are, or we're experimenting with the sort of people we'd like to surround ourselves with, the relationships we form (or attempt to form) can be great learning curves for the future.

Where you go on a date may not seem like the most important thing in the world to you (some of us are quite content with bedtime activities), but for your partner, it can be a meaningful gesture that lets them know that you care about them. Having cool experiences together not only keeps your relationship fun, but it creates scores of happy memories that will stay with you throughout your lives. After all, isn't that what our uni years are about? If you can manage it without begging for a bigger for an increase on the overdraft, that's pretty awesome too.



Massaman Roast Beef

BY SOPHIE EDMONDS

INGREDIENTS

SERVES 4

- **1kg** bolar roast beef (or stewing steak would work)
- **Splash** of oil
- **2 tablespoons** Thai yellow curry paste
- **2** cinnamon quills
- **3 whole** star anise
- **1 tablespoon** coriander seeds
- **1cm** ginger, sliced
- **1 400g tin** coconut cream
- **1 tablespoon** fish sauce
- **2 tablespoons** of good peanut butter
- **Juice** of 2 limes
- **2 cups** vegetable stock
- **3 small** kumara, diced
- **3 large** carrots, sliced into rounds
- **Fresh** coriander to serve
- **½ cup** salted peanuts
- Rice and roti to serve

I got really excited at Pak'nSave the other day. Every time I see a beef roast on the cheap, I buy it without really thinking. I always slow cook my beef roasts, so this one has been sitting in my freezer for a few weeks now while I thought of ways to make it slightly more interesting than my typical stew.

After mastering Vietnamese pho a few weeks back, I decided to try my hand at my second-favourite dish from my adventures in

South East Asia last year. Massaman curry was that such dish. Its lovely mild flavours and vibrant yellow texture make it an excellent comfort food and definitely one worth making.

Most people make their curries by using chopped-up stewing beef, but I thought, hey, why can't I cook a whole bolar roast in the sauce and end up with a pulled-beef-style curry? Well, clearly nothing was stopping me, so I gave it a hoon. It worked wonderfully. The

flavours in the sauce were definitely a lot more intense than usual because of the epic cooking time but well worth it. It is traditionally made with potatoes, but I didn't have any and by using kumara it makes it even more a Kiwi fusion dish, which is oh so trendy at the moment.

Also, forgive this bastardisation of a national Thai treasure. This really isn't very authentic, but it is easy and at 11pm last night when I put this on, easy was all I really cared about. ●

METHOD

1. Trim any excess fat off your beef, then place it in the slow cooker. In a frying pan, heat up the oil and toast the curry paste with the cinnamon, star anise, coriander seeds and ginger slices until fragrant — about three minutes. Add in half a can of the coconut cream and dissolve the curry paste into it.
2. Pour the contents of the pan over the beef and add the remaining coconut cream, fish sauce, peanut butter, lime juice and vegetable stock. Pop the lid on the top of the cooker and cook for 8 hours on high. After this time, add in the vegetables and cook for another 3–4 hours until the beef starts to fall apart and the vegetables are tender.
3. Using two forks, pull the beef apart and stir the shreds through the sauce to disperse among the vegetables. Serve atop roti and rice and garnish with fresh coriander and chopped peanuts. Another fresh squeeze of lime wouldn't go amiss either.



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Ralph Hotere Ceramic Collection;
Otago Museum Collection

Intersections: Ceramics from Ralph Hotere's Personal Collection

» OTAGO MUSEUM | 21 MARCH – 6 SEPTEMBER

BY SUE NUNN

As one of New Zealand's most significant twentieth-century artists, the late Dunedin painter, Ralph Hotere (1931–2013), had a life intrinsically shaped by the connections he made with people and through art. These relationships are the focus of *Intersections: Ceramics from Ralph Hotere's Personal Collection*.

This special exhibition at the Otago Museum offers new insights into Hotere's artistic interests, art collection, professional and personal relationships, his home, garden and studio. It features over 70 pieces, many by notable New Zealand ceramicists. Some pieces in his collection were by artists Hotere admired and spent time with, other pieces are work he bought, exchanged, or collected and retained for personal reasons. The stories of these pieces and the artists who made them are interwoven with stories of Hotere's life.

The exhibition begins with a memorial post made and gifted by Barry Brickell on the death of Hotere's father in 1982. It represents a totara fence post and features a poem about the annual return of the godwits from Alaska in eight days. This post, along with a large coiled pot

that split when Brickell fired it, has stood in Hotere's garden for many years.

Brickell, a master of ceramics and close friend of Hotere, made most of the pieces in the collection. While his Driving Creek, Coromandel, studio was under construction in 1975, Brickell moved to Dunedin and Hotere provided him with a house and studio in Port Chalmers. Here he built a kiln, using waste pine bark from the wharf at Port Chalmers to fire it. The pots that Brickell made were exhibited at Dunedin's Bosshard Gallery in 1977 along with works by Hotere and Michael Trumic. Echoing this early exhibition and further highlighting the connection between Brickell and Hotere, are two Hotere paintings, loaned by Brickell. These works are from Hotere's Test Piece series, which was inspired by Brickell's kiln firings. Hotere was influenced by Brickell firing pots, just as Brickell was influenced by Hotere's incorporation of text in his paintings. Hotere was inspired enough to make ceramics on rare occasions — an example is the one plate on display from a set of six that he decorated in 1985.

While Hotere was widely known and respected as a painter, his friendships with New Zealand potters and his interest in their ceramics were

less understood. Works by other New Zealand potters Nicholas Brandon, Lawrence Ewing, Mirek Smíšek, Ann Verdcourt, Michael Trumic and Chester Neale, and Dunedin artist Adair Bruce are found in Hotere's collection. Some of the artists had come to New Zealand to escape the aftermath of World War II in Europe. Hotere also felt personally affected by this reality as someone he viewed as a brother had been buried in a war grave in Italy.

The white domestic furniture positioned throughout the show illustrates how Hotere used his collection in his domestic domain. A black painted corrugated iron fence, which displays several large photographs of Hotere's home, serves as a tribute to Hotere's use of corrugated iron in his art works. There are also two drums by Adair Bruce: she gifted the taller drum to Hotere and he purchased the other. Bruce will be down in September to demonstrate the drums.

Whether they lasted a brief moment in time or over a longer period of collaboration and friendship, the intersections highlighted in this exhibitions reflect Ralph Hotere's relationships with the people and art that surrounded him during his lifetime. ●





Trainwreck

» DIRECTED BY **JUDD APATOW**

REVIEWED BY **SHAUN SWAIN**



Judd Apatow's rom-com, *Trainwreck*, is anything but a trainwreck — rather, it's a tightened, secure and mostly enjoyable ride.

Trainwreck is about magazine writer Amy (Amy Schumer), who is a heavily career- and goal-oriented woman who barely gives the concept of monogamy the time of day, preferring to indulge in bouts of quick, yet unsatisfying, casual sex. However, while writing about

sports doctor, Aaron Connors (Bill Hader), Amy starts to question her rejection of genuine romantic relationships in a familiarly formulaic "will-they-or-won't-they" narrative typical of the rom-com genre.

At first, I was a little confused by the cast of actors and cameos — like John Cena and LeBron James. But their performances were delightfully surprising due to the colour and range that each individual brought to the film.

Often, when it comes to rom-coms, there's an idea of multiple branching stories that exist to "pair the spares", but this was not completely the case in *Trainwreck*. Instead, it felt like each character had a distinct life of their own and developed themselves implicitly and purely through their performances.

However, once *Trainwreck* gets past its refreshing sex-positive premise and introduction of unique characters, it falls into the same routine you can expect from any romantic comedy. While the laughs don't cease (although there are one or two moments of stagnancy), it was quite disappointing to see the film dilute its potential. The runtime was a little excessive, especially since it existed to accommodate some of the more uncomfortable and forced jokes that occasionally popped up. Luckily, the film's plot and actors pulled *Trainwreck* through to stop that from completely being the case.

While *Trainwreck* isn't overly groundbreaking and nor does it redefine the genre, it is an interesting, bright and entertaining rom-com with an exciting premise that lived on long enough for me to endure the wave of common romance tropes and clichés waiting beyond the first half of the film. ●

Fantastic Four

» DIRECTED BY **JOSH TRANK**

REVIEWED BY **MAYA DODD**



At best, the 2005 version of *Fantastic Four* was average. The acting was poor, the storyline was mediocre, and the flexible guy really freaked me out. But with Miles Teller now playing Reed Richards (the flexible one), I had hope for the revival of *Fantastic Four*. Teller is funny, cute and he has played a couple of roles in other films that I've quite enjoyed. Unfortunately, Teller couldn't carry this particular film, especially one with the same sub-par acting, terrible storyline and plain bad jokes as its predecessor.

Reed Richards is a dorky kid who, with the help of his best friend, Ben Grimm (Jamie Bell), creates a teleportation device for his school science fair that teleports toy cars to another dimension and brings them back again. His device gains the attention of Dr. Franklin Storm (Reg E. Cathey), who offers Reed a full scholarship to work for him and assist in the creation of a teleportation device large enough

to transport humans. Storm's children, Sue Storm (Kate Mara) and Johnny Storm (Michael B. Jordan), along with Victor Von Doom (Toby Kebbell), work with Reed to build it.

Upon completion, the boys decide to use it before NASA can get their hands on it and Reed invites Ben to join as well. Victor screws up exponentially, and pisses off the volatile energy that the alternate dimension contains. Sue manually overrides the device to get the boys back to safety, minus Victor, who is consumed by the green energy. The resulting explosion as it re-enters Earth's dimension gives each of the four, including Sue, special powers. A year later, the four of them have learned to harness their powers and reunite to destroy Victor, who did not die in the explosion and is now intent on destroying the Earth.

The fight that ensues is won by the good guys far too quickly — there were no nail-biting moments whatsoever. The individual in-



roduction of the characters took far too long, and not enough time was spent on the actual development of their relationships. Despite the promise the *Fantastic Four* held, the film was a disappointing repeat of the 2005 version and, if possible, it was worse. Teller, you let me down. ●



The Man from U.N.C.L.E.

» DIRECTED BY **GUY RITCHIE**

REVIEWED BY **SIOBON INU**



Guy Ritchie's ability to successfully revive iconic films — ones with sophisticated and mysterious plotlines — through a modern cinematic approach has given audiences high expectations of his directorial skills. However, although full of action and suspense, *The Man from U.N.C.L.E.* fails to provide any depth to its plotline; instead, the audience is given a typical action film that has more brawn than brain.

Based on the 1960s television series of the same name, *The Man from U.N.C.L.E.* focuses on the antagonistic relationship between CIA agent, Napoleon Solo (Henry Cavill) and KGB agent, Illya Kuryakin (Armie Hammer) during the height of the Cold War. After removing Gabriella "Gaby" Teller (Alicia Vikander), the daughter of a US collaborator, from East Berlin, Napoleon and Illya must put aside their differences and work together to

help their respective agencies stop an international criminal organisation from creating nuclear weapons. Although their ultimate goals are to save Gaby's father and to steal the schematics of these nuclear weapons, it is the pair's relationship that is highlighted — their different outlooks, upbringings, pasts, and ulterior motives are pushed aside for something more important. As Napoleon and Illya continue to work together, their initial hostility eventually turns into a partnership — one that becomes solidified when they join the United Network Command for Law and Enforcement (U.N.C.L.E.).

With witty and humorous dialogue and progressive fighting sequences, the relationship between the two protagonists clearly reflects the relationship between America and Russia. Seeing this history personified within the film makes it hard not to think about the actual events that took place during the Cold War, but that is as far as the audience's engagement goes with the film. Trivialising the 1960s crime genre with attractive actors and a dull plotline, *The Man from U.N.C.L.E.* sits more as a comedy — one that is exaggerated, over-drawn, and unfortunately unsatisfying. ●



Rebecca

» DIRECTED BY **ALFRED HITCHCOCK**

REVIEWED BY **ROSIE JENSEN**

CLASSIC

Hollywood has made every flavour of brooding, handsome bachelor-zillionaire who loses his shit over the shy, boring heroine. So when a film like *Gone Girl* comes along, it's refreshing and thrilling. Unbeknown to many people, before *Gone Girl*, there was Alfred Hitchcock's *Rebecca*. Painted in a dark palette of female jealousy and obsession, *Rebecca* is a captivating film that challenges gender roles and female sexuality.

Narrated by a nameless heroine (Joan Fontaine), the audience learns that *Rebecca* is an extended flashback — one that offers an unsettled feeling of repression for the audience through the film's setting, Manderley, a spooky ruined mansion that embodies an

oppressive patriarchal order the heroine has failed to inhabit. After a playful affair, the heroine weds Maxim de Winter (Laurence Olivier), a man who recently lost his first wife, Rebecca. Glamorous, intelligent and fantastically beautiful, Rebecca is everywhere in the house; her name is embroidered on pillows and etched in letterheads. Her presence is concentrated in the West Wing, which the housekeeper, Mrs. Danvers (Judith Anderson), maintains as a shrine.

Convincing Maxim that they should host a costume ball, the heroine disastrously picks a dress previously worn by Rebecca, making Maxim explode with rage. Feeling as though she will never match Maxim's first wife, the

night takes an even more unlikely turn when Rebecca's body is recovered from the boat in which she perished. Maxim confesses to the heroine that he detested Rebecca, a wicked woman. Like *Gone Girl*'s Amy, Rebecca's villainy is uncertain. Her crime? Resisting male definition and exploring her sexual desires — a romantic relationship with Mrs Danvers is heavily implied.

Maxim is soon placed on trial for murdering his wife, but his name is eventually cleared. Distraught, Mrs. Danvers withdraws into insanity and burns down Manderley. Fire, the ultimate symbol of retribution, releases the heroine from the mansion's patriarchal control. The end forecasts an unhappy future for Maxim, as the heroine possesses the one quality he most dreads, experience.

Shot entirely in a studio, the film is dreamy and restless; the Oscar-winning cinematography encapsulates the heroine's experience within a suffocating, utterly interior world, which is also felt by the audience as Rebecca offers them an enthralling look into lurid Hitchcock mania and melodrama. ●



Alison Embleton Presents *The Merchant of Venice*

» INTERVIEW WITH THE DIRECTOR OF COUNTERPOINT

BY MANDY TE

Mandy Te got the chance to talk to director, Alison Embleton, about her version of *The Merchant of Venice* and the process of adapting William Shakespeare for a modern audience.

The Merchant of Venice will be showing from 2 to 5 September at St. Paul's Cathedral Crypt. Student tickets are \$15 and are available from Eventfinda.

What drew you to direct *The Merchant of Venice*?

I knew I wanted to direct something Shakespearean, and *The Merchant of Venice* was his play that lingered on my mind the most. Initially, it was the fact that nobody seems to ever stage it as a full-length production and I felt a little bad for it. As I thought about it more and more, the complexities of the script and the opportunities it presented from a directorial point of view grew steadily more appealing.

Why did you specifically choose to modify Shakespeare's *The Merchant of Venice*?

The Merchant of Venice is often referred to as one of Shakespeare's "problem plays". Its tone shifts disconcertingly between light-hearted comedy and heavy drama, then back to comedy again. It also contains a lot of repetition throughout the script and there are many

surplus characters who don't actively contribute to the plot or character development. Not to mention the fact that the original text also runs at approximately 200 minutes! Modifying the script is something of a necessity when it comes to making the play more accessible to a modern audience. Removing all the excess characters also makes casting a much less daunting task, although the final edit still requires 12 actors, playing 16 characters.

Dan Goodwin (who plays Shylock) was a tremendous help when it came to editing. He listened to all my ideas and concerns about the play, as well as sharing his own, then we hacked the thing to pieces. The process continued after rehearsals began as well, and I also made a decision to modify the ending of the play; the original text has a very unsatisfying ending for Shylock, so I wanted to give him a better send off. But, you'll have to come along to see the show if you want to know more!

What was the adaptation process like when it came to giving this play a contemporary setting?

For the most part, it was relatively simple. A lot of the storylines and characters lend themselves to modern context rather nicely. There are a few sticky spots and the audience is still required to suspend belief in places (I like to think we live in a society that wouldn't

normally allow a person to demand human flesh as payment) but, overall, the process was actually rather fun.

I've chosen to reflect a modern society and, as such, the relationships depicted aim to represent what we see every day. This change has added a layer to the script, which has allowed the actors to explore the characters in new and interesting ways.

How would you describe the directorial process for this play?

It has been amazing and I have learned so much while working on this production. Patrick Davies (director and actor in the Fortune Theatre's *The Hound of the Baskervilles*) has given me so much advice and has been a wonderful supporter throughout the process. The cast have also been brilliant; they're all really engaged and are bringing fantastic offers to every rehearsal. I've also received a massive amount of support from assistant director, Nell Guy.

What is it like working with Counterpoint Productions, your cast of young professionals and University of Otago students?

Counterpoint have been superb. Their philosophy of fostering theatre industry opportunities for young people in Dunedin is something I wholeheartedly support and it's been so lovely seeing their engagement in the whole process — two of their team are even in the cast! Having such a supportive network has meant that I've been able to focus on the creative side of the production, without worrying that everything else will grind to a halt in the process. Counterpoint facilitate the whole package: finding tech designers and operators, stage management, wardrobe, props, marketing ... everything!

What can the audience expect from this version of *The Merchant of Venice*?

They can expect to be challenged in interesting ways, to laugh, to find themselves clenching their fists without realising it, to have their allegiances shift throughout the play and — more than anything else — to experience great theatre that will linger on their minds long after they've left their seats. ●



THE FISH LADDER

A Journey
Upstream

'A lovely book'
Jo Brand

The Fish Ladder: A Journey Upstream

» WRITTEN BY **KATHERINE NORBURY**

REVIEWED BY **BRIDGET VOSBURGH**

The *Fish Ladder: A Journey Upstream* is a memoir by Katherine Norbury. After miscarrying a much-desired pregnancy, Norbury distracts herself from her grief with the writing of a man named Neil Gunn. One of Gunn's novels, *The Highland River*, tells the story of a young man walking a river to its source. Norbury finds that the river in the book is a real river, and resolves to make the same journey. *The Fish Ladder* tells the story of this journey, and many other journeys that

Norbury takes, which are usually accompanied by her nine-year-old daughter, Evie. Norbury winds her experiences with breast cancer, mental illness and being an adopted child into this narrative.

Norbury also retells folk stories, quotes poetry and shares seemingly random anecdotes about her life — skipping backwards and forwards between different times and different settings. This results in a loose, meandering effect, but Norbury's writing still sweeps the

reader along until it seems like an intentional stylistic choice, an echo of the running water that this book is about. Norbury is the kind of person who constantly sees omens in animals and various meanings layered over life's events. If you don't care for humanity's tendency to project patterns onto absolutely anything, Norbury might annoy you.

Norbury's relationship with her daughter is the best part of the book. Evie is never dwelled on or over-described. She's just there sometimes, as a very real person and a very real child, with her own priorities and her own insights. Most striking, however, is the sensation Norbury conveys of herself and her daughter being a team. Towards the end of the book, when Norbury is meeting a member of her birth family for the first time, Evie reassures and supports her mother. These are things children often do for their parents, and yet this is hardly ever shown in depictions of parent-child relationships. It's lovely to read.

Part of Norbury's book deals with her experiences of fertility treatment. Her doctor tells her that: "He had noticed that a disproportionately large number of people who were adopted, relative to the normal population, presented themselves for fertility treatment. In other words, either adoptees with impaired fertility had a greater desire to create a child of their own than non-adopted people in the same circumstance, or adopted people were proportionately more likely to encounter difficulties conceiving than the non-adopted population." This is interesting, but seems to be based entirely on one man's casual observation, and so he can hardly be sure those two given options are the only ones. Norbury treats this anecdote as true science and ties it in with her own experiences of adoption and alienation. It works for the memoir, but would seem less of a leap in logic if some reference were made to the doctor having actual data, not just nebulous noticing.

The Fish Ladder is Norbury's first book, and it's a good one. The range of subjects it touches on is a little overwhelming, but hopefully Norbury will keep writing and improving. *The Fish Ladder* is an excellent start. ●



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Ghosts of Electricity **Trolls**

» **PUNK, ROCK** | 2015



REVIEWED BY **BASTI MENKES**



A punk band is a curious thing nowadays. Four decades ago, The Clash, The Sex Pistols and The Ramones were raging against the establishment and the decadence of mainstream rock with their lo-fi, hard-hitting, no-nonsense blasts of musical anger. Sure the music was unsophisticated, but was that not the point? The crude production was a by-product of this more democratic everyman style of music, able to be enjoyed and created by people of any class. It was characterised by a lack of deliberate refinement.

In the modern age, punk has become a shadow of its former self, totally divorced from its anarchist roots. I'm not even talking about the howling insincerity of pop punk, a genre that tries to reconcile marketability with a rebellious philosophy. I'm talking about the equally hypocritical like of Japandroids, perfectly described by Simon Sweetman as part of "a bratty emperor's-new-clothes punk scam". These are bands that go out of their way to make their music sound like it was recorded with a potato, even though production technology has in fact made it much easier to make clean home recordings. They use the bare compositions associated with classic punk music to disguise a lack of talent. There is a certain charm to lo-fi recordings and simple song structures, but that isn't enough to qualify as punk. The bare-bones aesthetics

of classic punk music were an attribute very much time- and technology-specific. How can a band claim to stand for heterogeneity and candidness when they try so desperately to fit a pre-existing mould? Raw sound quality and simple songs are characteristics associated with punk; they are not sufficient to make something punk. What these bands need is substance and passion, not just to appeal to the principles of "fast", "loud" and "grainy".

Thankfully, there are still real punk bands out there. These bands don't just sound punk thanks to a desperate posturing, they actually fucking are. An example is Pussy Riot, an all-female Russian punk group who attack despotism and patriarchy. Other fairly recent examples are Flipper and Fugazi, bands who certainly meet the punk ideals of DIY production and musical straightforwardness, but also offer a seething and profound existentialism.

I am overjoyed to say that *Trolls*, the upcoming album from Auckland trio Ghosts of Electricity, is an actual punk album. It is not punk out of a desperate desire to emulate other punk bands. The band seems to have met punk paradigms organically and by complete accident. The band does not namedrop The Ramones in interviews, but heralds ambient electronica and Randy fucking Newman as their musical inspirations. Their songs don't carry a vague anti-establishment message; they deal with

race, gender and individualism in surprisingly eloquent ways.

Unlike the smug and calculated majority of punk bands nowadays, Ghosts of Electricity are not hiding lazily behind their music. They are in fact inside their songs, hammering them into interesting shapes, leading them to exciting places. "Parle Blanc" and "Guatemala" are prime examples of modern punk done right, stinking with sweat while wearing a shit-eating grin which they've actually earned.

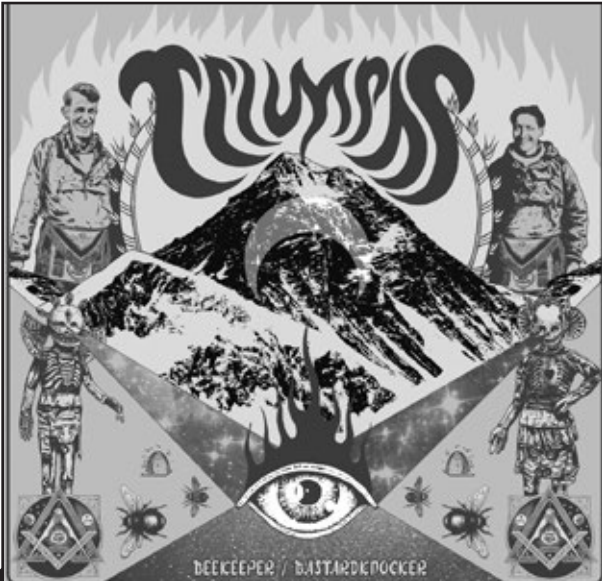
Is fuzzy, assaultive rock music all Ghosts of Electricity have to offer? Apparently not. "On the Beach" does sentimental soft rock better than Kings of Leon have in years. "Between the Lines" is a curiosity indeed, sounding like a punk song playing at half speed and imbued with heartbreak. It sounds a little like Scratch Acid covering "Under Control" by The Strokes.

For those of you yearning for honest punk music in 2015, you needn't look very far. Punk is alive and well, and apparently living somewhere in Auckland. Unlike so many others, Ghosts of Electricity spurn emulation and affectation. As the band themselves purport, theirs is "the sound of the real New Zealand, the poetry of a generation of wandering Kiwis, staggering home, wondering what the hell happened". One heck of a debut from what may become a national treasure, Ghosts of Electricity's *Trolls* is well worth your time. ●

Singles Reviews

» REVIEWED BY **BASTI MENKES**

New Tracks



Triumphs

"Beekeeper" and "Solid Bones"

Triumphs are a heavy instrumental duo from Dunedin, consisting of guitarist John Bollen and drummer Mathew Anderson. The bearded beaus are about to release their debut album, *Beekeeper/Bastardknocker*, on Monkey Killer Records. According to the label, it will be a concept album that "pays tribute to New Zealand's forgotten history of psychedelic mountaineering through mind-bending riffs and ritualistic drums, tracing Sir Edmund Hillary's transformation from humble beekeeper to world-striding bastardknocker". At least one metal album has sketched a transformative skyward climb before to thrilling effect, namely Mastodon's *Blood Mountain*. But instead of the faceless monomythical figure of Mastodon's album, Triumphs will be drawing on the rich history of one of New Zealand's most beloved national treasures.

"Beekeeper" and "Solid Bones" are the two songs from *Beekeeper/Bastardknocker* we've been treated to thus far. "Beekeeper" begins with gorgeous alpine echoes made with guitar, not unlike something we might hear from post-rockers Hammock, before an avalanche of a groove descends upon the listener. It is a rare treat to hear heaviness mixed with melancholia as convincingly as this. "Solid Bones" is the more immediate of the two tracks, launching right away into its tasty variations of sludgy verses and glassy, optimistic choruses. The pair of songs is distinctive, but also indicates a strong overarching style for the band. Head over to Triumphs' Bandcamp to hear this great couple of tunes right away, and keep an ear out for *Beekeeper/Bastardknocker* in the immediate future. ●



Joanna Newsom

"Sapokanikan"

It has been much too long since we last heard Joanna Newsom's weird and wonderful voice. "Sapokanikan" is the curiously titled new single from the Californian, taken from an upcoming album entitled *Divers* out in late October. The trio of albums she's released already are all stunning, from the lilting Appalachian folk of *The Milk-Eyed Mender* to the Narnian grandeur of *Ys* through to the sprawling lavishness of *Have One on Me*. "Sapokanikan" sees Newsom not so much distancing herself from her previous styles as throwing them all into a blender.

"Sapokanikan" is both bluesy and capricious, its melodic swaying prone to sudden fits and starts. The core components of old-time piano and Newsom's voice are joined periodically by drums, glockenspiel and harp. The most impressive element of "Sapokanikan", however, is its kaleidoscopic lyrics. The number of classical allusions, literary references and word plays in the song showcase Newsom as one of the best lyricists working today. Not since Kate Bush can I think of a songwriter with as much poetic flair.

If you can listen past her peculiar folksy drawl, Joanna Newsom's new single "Sapokanikan" is well worth your time. ●



Bloodborne

» **PS4** | DEVELOPED BY FROM SOFTWARE; PUBLISHED BY SONY

REVIEWED BY **CAMPBELL CALVERLEY**



Anyone familiar with From Software's action-adventure Souls games will know how much of a commitment they are. Rushing into them unawares will lead to frustration and despair, while patience, exploration and a level head will be well rewarded. Speaking as someone who clawed his way through *Dark Souls* and then swore never to play it again, *Bloodborne* feels both like familiar territory and something jaw-droppingly exciting and original.

The plot of *Bloodborne* is very, very sparsely told. You are a cursed individual who has come to the city of Yharnam to find release. Upon your arrival, you undergo a blood transfusion and suddenly discover that the city is overrun with hideous beings who know nothing except violence. You must then take on the mantle of a gun-and-axe-armed Hunter, to either rid the city of the plague that has corrupted it or find a way to escape. Slowly but surely, you gather pieces of information that hint at a Lovecraftian conspiracy to birth an ancient god into the world. The city you are in may not be real: it may all just be a horrible nightmare that you cannot wake up from.

While previous Souls games had an underlying existential-horror element — focusing on the death of the world — *Bloodborne* goes completely balls out on its horror theme. The aesthetic of this game is soaked in blood, plague and dark magic. Unlike a lot of horror games that lazily use jump-scares, *Bloodborne* relies on building tension and despair in its haunted environment. This stretches from the gothic environments you fight your way through, to the astonishing variety of hideous, malformed beasts you must slay. Even the items you collect fit in with the theme of blood and death: you purchase items and level up with Blood Echoes, heal yourself with Blood Vials, and reinforce your weapons with Bloodstones. The atmosphere of the game is palpable — the sound design makes for unsettlingly quiet patches between hectic and intense battles, and the music that plays during boss fights induces a feeling of utter panic.

Much like the Souls games, *Bloodborne* is notable for how difficult it is. However, while the Souls games were only for the dedicated and the insane, *Bloodborne* is more accessible to new players. The combat system is very fast and fluid, allowing for some mistakes but

still punishing you if you aren't quick enough. Unlike games that continue to hold your hand even after you've learned everything, *Bloodborne* tells you the basics and that's it — it is entirely down to you to refine your gameplay style. But the game is still fair; it just teaches you indirectly, even if that means hiding enemies behind corners to teach you not to rush into things.

Although you have a decent quantity of Blood Vials to heal yourself with, your health bar is only incrementally worn down by enemies. If you manage to strike back at your enemies quickly enough, you can regain lost health. On top of this are visceral attacks: if you shoot an enemy just as they are about to attack you, they will stagger and leave themselves open to an attack from you that will literally rip their guts out. A huge amount of precision and timing is required, but good god it is satisfying.

If I were to try to level any negative criticism at *Bloodborne*, it would mainly be about how exhausting it is. It is genuinely difficult to play this game for long stretches at a time without feeling drained. You are on your toes for every second of playtime, from the moment you pick the controller up until you burn out. Playing this game is like struggling in the jaws of a dragon: you will probably die, but you will look and feel awesome doing it. ●

University Book Shop



LETTER OF THE WEEK

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That's One Way To Avoid Responding

Dear OUSA,

Maybe Nick Findlay is too exhausted from all those awesome campaigns he's been running this year to read the news, and maybe Zachariah Al-Alami is too busy slapping waiters to understand what a binding contract is.

The fact is that OUSA knew all along about the 12-month notice period for withdrawing from NZUSA. It knew about this in 2006, when it threatened to withdraw; it knew about this in 2010, when it actually did withdraw, only to re-join the following year; it knew about this last year, when it withdrew again. If OUSA wanted to save money on its fees, maybe it should have withdrawn earlier (or shown some damn follow-through), rather than throwing its toys around over a figure that represents about one percent of its operational budget.

This year NZUSA has worked with the government to cut Studylink waiting times

(reducing the number of dropped calls by over 99 per cent), and has successfully lobbied the government to require insulation in rental properties. These are things OUSA, and Otago students, have been bitching about for years.

Rather than dismiss an 85 year old institution as "redundant" after less than a year in the job, maybe it's time these OUSA execs stepped up their own fucking act. Telling themselves they could lobby central government (especially THIS government) more effectively than NZUSA is a bit of a stretch when they can't keep two student seats on Uni Council, they can't even SPELL Uni Council, and they haven't stood up to the influx of academically bankrupt Conversion Masters' courses (or indeed challenged the University on anything that doesn't involve alcohol). Face it: OUSA is a university service provider, and its Executive is a glorified social clique full of entitled Knox pisseheads. Anybody who thinks that somehow NZUSA is the reason OUSA has no political voice is seriously deluded.

Go slap some more waiters,

Sam McChesney

Response from OUSA:

Dear Sam

Sounds like you wish you were a student politician or the Critic editor again.

Love OUSA

xoxo

spent the whole time trying (and failing) to get on top of all the assignments I have due on the first day back.

This isn't a break. This is me doing the same work in a different location.

Can uni plz realise that we are all really tired and just need to hibernate for a week or so?

Sincerely,

C's get degrees

Yes, They Take Their Sweet Time

Dear uni,

I speak on behalf of the yik yak community who speaks on behalf of the general student population who says your exam timetable release tactics need revising. Please! Why does it even take until "mid August" to come up with it anyway? Also can we honour the races and ban exams on Melbourne cup day please?

From the great horde of whingers & whiners



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LETTERS POLICY

Letters should be 200 words or fewer. Deadline is Thursday at 5pm. Send letters to critic@critic.co.nz, post them to PO Box 1436, Dunedin, or drop into the Critic office. All letters must include full contact details, even if you don't want these printed. Letters of a serious nature directly addressing a specific person or group will not be published under a pseudonym, except in extraordinary circumstances negotiated with the Editor. Critic reserves the right to edit, abridge or decline letters without explanation. We don't fix the spelling or grammar in letters. If a writer looks stupid, it's because they are.

04 902 0963

Dear Critic,

I just wanted to write to you guys to let you know how much I have appreciated the critic this year. It's so interesting! The articles are really engaging for uni students wanting a bit of something to procrastinate over. The editing is fantastic. I'm proud that my university for producing such a beautiful piece of work. Ps Josie Cochrane, wanna go on a date?

Critic Wants Two Weeks Off Too

Dear Critic,

I am only writing this letter because I'm avoiding an essay I was supposed to finish my tomorrow. Lol, key word: supposed to.

I just want to say that it is really unfair that Christchurch gets a 2 week mid semester break. I've been home for about 4 days now and I have

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Yik Yak

My boyfriend has taped tennis balls to his back to keep himself from rolling over onto his back and keeping me up with his snoring. It's the funniest thing I've ever seen. 77

Holding in your farts around bae all day to the point where your stomach hurts. He just told me I go off like I rocket when I sleep anyway. 49

Whoever smelt it, dealt it. So the weed is yours officer. 76

Apparently there's a new film out about tractors, but I've only seen the trailer 155

Does anyone ration the toilet paper so that there's just enough left behind so you don't have to change it 176

Cause I'm just a teeenaaaage dñirtbaaaag baaabyyyy 65

I just got judged for admitting I pee in the shower. Team it's normal right? Am I right? 277

Realizing I only have limited time with the people I've met in Dunedin before we graduate. Not ready to leave this behind. 97

Since living in Dunedin I have come to a conclusion. Anything above 10 degrees is summer 137

Calling my dick the Mirror of Erised because people always find it but it never fulfills their desires 47

Did you know that the new iPhone 6s helps you lose weight? You buy it then you can't afford food for a month! 125

When all my bills and period sync up 49

Deleting one "ha" from your "hahaha" bcas you think it's too much 142

Sick of judgmental 'friends' making snide comments about my Sunday night drinking - it's the freaking weekend 51

Christmas in 4 months, you know what that means guys... Fucking carols. 219

Otago Uni's idea of a midterm break: making the due date of a big assignment for the first day back. Can't wait to "relax" on my holiday.. 185

My parents think I have a boyfriend cause I smile at my phone a lot - in reality I'm just watching funny cat videos 219



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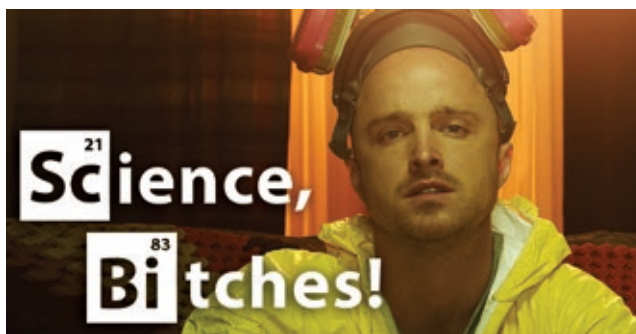
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Perceiving Risk

BY SAM FRASER

Are humans really as smart as we think we are? In a generally safe, urbanised and scientific world, one might argue that we are now rational, and act upon reason. Sophocles, an ancient Greek playwright, wrote "reason is God's crowning gift to man". Sophocles believed that humans' ability to reason is what sets us apart from animals and allows us to develop and progress the world we live in. If Sophocles could see into our future, he might be a little disappointed.

The world seems to be full of issues where reason or science are misused. People still refuse to vaccinate their children because of the perceived risk of autism. Anti-vaccinators have been deemed responsible for a recent measles outbreak at Disneyland. And how often have you heard the debate on GMO foods? The world's leading science panels agree that GMOs pose no known risk to humans, while presenting a plethora of health benefits.

While the scientific evidence is there, it seems like these debates aren't about the facts. Instead, they are driven by emotion. This is because risk perception for humans is about more than the facts. We are animals with well-developed subconscious instincts. The brain's function is to keep us alive, and its instincts include making rapid, protective judgements about a risk. These judgements influence how scary a risk may feel.

When we evaluate risk, our brain often consults with what it does know about the risk. For GMO foods, fears of "pesticides" and mistrust of "chemical companies" may pop up. GMO foods, in this case, must then represent something that feels scary. The concept of "loss aversion" is another factor that restricts the rationalisation of issues — this is when someone gives more emotional significance to loss than gain.

While the probability of a risk may be small, the potential for harm carries much greater emotional power. As a result, fear overwhelms objective rationalisation of scientific evidence. This idea was reflected in the Western Australia shark cull last year, which was implemented to mitigate shark attacks. In some polarising issues, perhaps humans need to avoid letting emotion interfere with reason.



The One Night Stand

BY T. ANTRIC

So you want to have a night of hot, consensual, no-strings-attached sex with a person who you have no intentions of seeing or sleeping with again.

You've your lube and your condoms (I hate nagging, but I will nag people to wear condoms with their one night stands until the day I die. My grandkids are going to be very embarrassed). Maybe you've lit some tea light candles and put your nicest silk sheets on your bed. Let's go.

First off, and you will have been told this in first year and it will never lose its vitality; do not screw the crew. "But we'll be chill after, we're great friends and -". No. Don't do it. "He's really hot and I've had a few drin-". Don't. "We won't make it awkward-". You will.

Boundaries! Make them, and stick to them. If you only want it to be a one night stand, leave it at that. Don't invite them to stay all day. Don't go out for breakfast or lunch or dinner later. It makes everything confusing, and can end up hurting people. Stick to what you've discussed. Don't lead people on. Don't accidentally say 'I love you' during it, like a particularly traumatising experience of my friend's.

Don't be drunk or sleep with someone who is. I know one night stands generally seem like the best idea when you're a few sheets to the wind, but being sloppy drunk only leaves open room for embarrassment. In the particularly pervasive drinking culture we have down here it's hard, but having sex with someone who is too intoxicated is never okay. Take their number and take a rain check.

Have a great night, kiss them goodbye in the morning, maybe flick them a message saying you hope they got home safe; and then viola! One night stand complete, without a faux pas, horrible gaffe or otherwise cringe-worthy moment.

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SCEPTIC SCHISM

Colonic Irrigation

BY WEE DOUBT



DAVID CLARK

TPPA: Labour's Thoughts

BY DR DAVID CLARK, MP

Colonic irrigation is a process that its proponents claim will remove nonspecific "toxins" from the colon and intestinal tract. Water or other liquids are injected into the colon via a tube inserted into the rectum. It's basically an enema that goes a lot further up. The idea is to wash out accumulations of putrefied faeces that line the walls of the large intestine where they can harbour parasites or pathogenic gut flora, causing a long list of complaints and diseases of every kind. Colonic irrigation therapists claim to be able to treat everything from acne to back pain to cancer.

The Vitalis Colon Care Clinic in Dunedin claims on its webpage that colonic irrigation will flush out "toxins", parasites and blockages in the colon. These problems apparently occur because the society we live in is "filled with [sic] substances or chemicals, which are foreign and often harmful to our body". This is correct. Being hit by a car is harmful to your body, and cars are made of substances and chemicals. Foreign objects inserted into the body, such as samurai swords, are harmful. The actual harmful chemicals to watch out for are not specified by Vitalis, and neither are the parasites supposedly living up your butt.

It all sounds quite refreshing, but there is no evidence that colonic irrigation will help cure what ails you. Colonic irrigation carries the risk of perforation of the bowel, and disruptions to the complex bacterial fauna of the gut, or the introduction of new bacteria, can wreak havoc on your bowel function. Overuse of colonics can cause severe dehydration and even death. There is no reason to believe that a regular, functioning bowel needs "detoxing". Yes, poo is gross and riddled with bacteria, but colons are there to deal with it. Doctors do not prescribe colonics to people. Enemas are sometimes given for medical reasons such as severe constipation, and a patient's colon may need to be cleaned out before a colonoscopy, but washing out your entire colon is not treatment in itself.

What would you pay to have a stranger squirt water up your bum for no reason? Vitalis will clean out your guts for \$115, with additional treatments offered at a slightly lower price. If you want to commit to six sessions, it will cost you \$480. A consultation costs \$25, and an abdominal massage before your session is a further \$30. Do yourself a favour and save your money: these people literally don't know shit.

As more information has leaked about the highly secretive draft Trans-Pacific Partnership Agreement, I've become more concerned about just what the government wants to sign us up for. Don't get me wrong, Labour supports free trade. That's why we signed a free trade agreement with China in 2008. And we consider it important to be at the negotiating table when access to 40 percent of global trade is discussed.

New Zealand is a trading nation. Our country would be in a pretty poor state if we stopped receiving payment for our dairy produce or tourism. With these export earnings, we buy iPhones and televisions. Even if I were willing to give up technology, I'd struggle without bananas and coffee.

Given the politics of the situation, it would be easy to adopt a populist approach that opposed any trade deal regardless of its merits — particularly one that hasn't been exposed to public scrutiny. Or alternatively to support all trade, full-stop. But reality is more complex than that: there are good trade deals, and bad trade deals. Everyone knows the pros and cons of trade deals aren't easily captured by a chant at a political rally — important though they are.

Alarming, however, leaked TPPA negotiating documents suggest that the government may be willing to trade away sovereignty in a way Kiwis would balk at if they knew. Because the TPPA is more than just a trade agreement, and because of the secrecy around the deal, Labour has sought to be crystal clear on the principles we believe must be upheld before we will lend any support to the deal.

Accordingly, Labour will not support the TPPA unless we are confident it is in New Zealand's interests and will not undermine our sovereignty. This means Pharmac must be protected; Corporations cannot successfully sue the government for regulating in the public interest; New Zealand maintains the right to restrict sales of land and housing to non-resident foreign buyers; the Treaty of Waitangi must be upheld; Meaningful gains are made for our farmers in tariff reductions and market access

Labour is clear on this issue: if these bottom lines are not met, we will not support the progress of the TPPA. Going by the emails I've received, and conversations I've had around campus, this clarity is appreciated.



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Such an Itch

BY ISA ALCHEMIST

Campus is great for socialising and making friends, but the large number of students living in close proximity to each other also makes it easier for outbreaks of afflictions to occur. If you've got something crawling under your skin, it's likely to be tiny parasite known as scabies. Although scabies may sound terrifying, it can be treated easily. The problem is that it is really difficult to diagnose. Even dermatologists can miss it.

If you have spots, or a rash, go through these points to help:

- Are the spots itchy, especially at night?
- Are they spreading?
- Do other people that you are in close contact with have similar problems?
- Do the itchy spots "track" along the body?

If it's yes to some of these, get a doctor or pharmacist to check it out. The treatment involves leaving a cream or lotion on overnight, from neck to toes. The mites can live for up to 24 hours without a host, so it's often suggested that bedding should be washed.

You can only catch scabies by close bodily contact, and sharing clothes. But before you jump to any conclusions about your partner, a handshake can do it — I have even been told about mites being transmitted from the seat of an infamous forklift in a Dunedin store! For this reason, try to treat the whole flat, or people living close by in halls, at the same time. Sometimes the eggs can be missed, which is why a repeat treatment is recommended within 7 to 10 days. Scabies is an itch, but — with a little attention — it's no big deal.



I Need Money Urgently

BY STUDENT SUPPORT

Dear Ethel,

Help! I had to go to my nana's funeral up north and I now have absolutely no money left. I've already had to borrow money off mum to pay my rent this week, and she doesn't have much money so I can't ask for any more. I don't even have any money for food and I'm hungry :C.

I'm so sorry to hear that your nana passed away. To fix your immediate hunger issues, feel free to drop into OUSA Student Support at 5 Ethel B and pick yourself up a food pack. This is free and will give you at least a couple of days' worth of food, including fruit and veg, which are important to keep your vitamins up to combat winter and tough times!

Other avenues are available to you as well. Studylink/WINZ have some money available through their "Special Needs — Essential" and "Special Needs — Emergency" grants. You can google these on their website to find out the criteria. Some of them are "non-recoverable", i.e. you don't have to pay them back, and some are "recoverable", meaning you will have to pay them back over a period of time. If you want to find out more about these grants, you'll need to make an appointment to go in and see someone about. You have to take a bank balance and a couple of other things in with you, but they'll let you know exactly what you need.

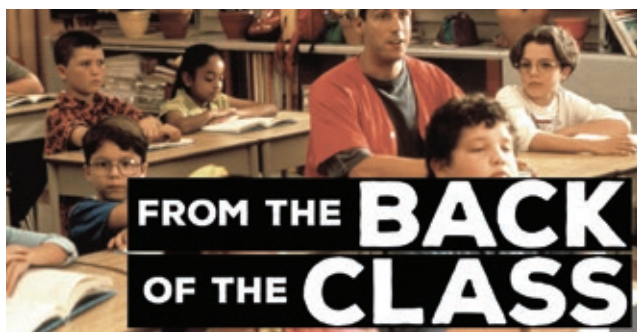
I'm not sure how you got up north but if you flew via Air NZ, you might retrospectively qualify for a compassionate fare. You can check out the conditions for that here: www.airnewzealand.co.nz/compassionate-fares.

The university does have an emergency fund which you may have been able to access before flying up north. Unfortunately, they don't give money retrospectively, but I thought I'd mention it here in case other students might qualify for the fund. It is for emergencies — unexpected events that leave you in financial trouble — not for general hardship (student allowance not stretching quite far enough).

Come and have a chat with one of our friendly advocates at 5 Ethel B to get some more ideas. I hope you have good friends, whanau and support to help you through the aftermath of bereavement. Whole lotta love ox

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The White Feather

BY FINBARR NOBLE

Previously in this column there has been cause to celebrate feminists like Emmeline Pankhurst and the suffragettes for their fearless advocacy for the rights of women. But now, I must castigate some of them for their behaviour during the Great War.

In August 1914, at the outset of World War One, militarist and meddler Admiral Charles Fitzgerald founded the Order of the White Feather. The order sought to shame men into enlisting in the army by having women present them with white feathers. The white feather is a traditional symbol of cowardice in British military culture and is partly why it is the Kiwi and not the silver fern that represents our own defence force.

To question their masculinity in such a manner in the early twentieth century was immensely powerful and led many men, and boys, to enlist. Will Elsworth-Jones' book on conscientious objectors recounts how a boy of 16, having lied already about his age, caught a fever at the Battle of Ypres and was sent home. As he walked across Putney Bridge, four girls presented him with white feathers. He tried to explain that he'd already been in the army and was only 16. However, "[s]everal people had collected around the girls and there was giggling, and [he] felt ... very humiliated". He walked into the recruiting office and re-enlisted.

I don't wish to cast aspersions on the entire suffragette movement. History is a nuanced discipline and is almost never black and white. The movement itself was split during World War One between those, like Sylvia Pankhurst, who dealt in passivism and those, like her mother and sister, who dealt in militarism. Some suffragettes saw militarism as an extension of their own militancy for emancipation, and in fact the absence of many British men did further women's emancipation by thrusting them into traditional male spheres and proving that they could do a "man's job" just as well.

The absurdity of this is best encompassed by the presentation of a white feather to George Samson, who was on his way to a public reception in his honour after having been awarded the Victoria Cross for bravery. Eventually badges had to be issued to those engaged in war work so that they wouldn't be mistaken for a shirker or, worse still, *shudder* a conscientious objector.



Get Tiddly on Vegemite

BY STEPH TAYLOR

Couple admit child not theirs

Not the greatest idea to steal your sister's child and claim that he's yours while going through customs.

'Thanks' letter for Queen's birthday painting by girl (8)

Apparently to get a letter from the Queen, it's as easy as sending an average drawing of the Queen. Perhaps I'll start sending in my colouring-in pictures.

Happy little Vegemites

Like potato is to vodka, Vegemite is the new alcoholic brew of choice. Getting tiddly on a yeasty spread sounds delightful!

Corker porker stalkers thwarted

Well done, ODT, for an outstanding title of the week; I always admire a little bit of rhyming in the morning.

Our boy Ben likely to bounce back

We were a bit worried about our boy Ben Smith for a wee while there, but he's bounced back strongly, kind of like how "Up the Landers" is still being chanted strongly six weeks after the Highlanders' win #upthelanders.

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B A R

Love is blind

Critic's infamous blind date column brings you weekly shutdowns, hilariously mismatched pairs, and the occasional hookup. Each week, we lure two singletons to Di Lusso, ply them with food and alcohol, then wait for their reports to arrive in our inbox. If this sounds like you, email critic@critic.co.nz. But be warned – if you dine on the free food and dash without sending us a writeup, a Critic writer will write one under your name. And that won't end well for you.

Chris

Despite the changing fizz levels, this date was also pretty sub-par.

I had a dreadfully early 5am start to my Friday. I was quick up out of bed though as I knew what awaited me in the next 15 or so hours. I had a very busy day, but I was full of childlike anticipation.

I was first to the date and sat myself down with a refreshing lemon G&T. Only two minutes would pass until she walked in. My first impressions were that she was hot. She sat herself down with a Raspberry and Gin concoction as we greeted each other. I tried to think of how the choice of drink could have been a metaphor for the two of us, but to be honest, there is no real point ... The fizz is already starting to wear off.

The conversation was good, it flowed well, but it must have been 80 percent her and 20 percent me. This didn't bother me too much but I got the feeling pretty early on that this was going to be a dud. It was her birthday and she had made prior plans to go with friends to the casino not too long after the date would finish. After finishing off the food and the bar tab, we decided to go to the lesbian, gay, bi and transgender association function (how we came to that decision, I'll never know).

We sat at the bar and fortunately for me some of my mates were working the bar. By this point my fizz levels were next to non-existent. We eventually left and she asked for my number, and suggested we go out on another date the following evening. She was aware that most of these Critic date stories are sub-par and "wanted to get together and make a really good one". Which I now assume means "you'll probably never hear from me again".

On the bright side I was able to get a solid 8 hours sleep, leaving me charged for what would become a successful Saturday night. Fizz levels replenished! I apologise for the time you just wasted reading this.

Gwyneth

Bad form for a first date, even if it is her birthday. She brought friends, booked an after-date casino trip, and gave us bad metaphors.

After being asked to do a blind date and with some encouragement from my kind work mate who entered me, I thought that I could hit two birds with one stone by going on this date ... it was my birthday and as a bar tab is kindly supplied, I thought "free drinks and also a potential birthday bang!"

After arriving at Di Lusso, my potential future husband was already sitting waiting. I was pleased with what I saw so I grabbed a drink and prepared myself. I had enough liquid courage by now to go up and make a fool out of myself and not even care so off I went with my extremely average, never ending chat.

Little did he know, but he was not only on a date with me; my two flat-ties also came along to help me make good choices and sat at a nearby table. After learning his age, I sadly knew that nothing would come of this as he wasn't in my range, but I didn't let that get in the way of some fun. Not long into the night the fire wasn't the only thing in Di Lusso that was heating up. With a platter supplied, I picked up a gerkin, gave him the eye and began to munch. After a while he started to pick up what I was putting down ... A few more drinks deep and it was time to act. I don't like to kiss and tell but I would just like to thank Di Lusso for supplying a sturdy hand basin.

A big thanks to Critic for supplying a fun filled way to spend my birthday!

Cheers.



OUSA President's Column

Students deserve a better model of representation: why OUSA will not keep throwing \$45,000 p.a. at a failed model.

You may have seen some news stories about a group called the "New Zealand Union of Students' Associations (NZUSA)". NZUSA, for many years, has failed to deliver the robust and professional lobbying students deserve. We believe an alternative model of representation which is more affordable and effective is needed.

Students around New Zealand have questioned the value of NZUSA for many years. Before OUSA withdrew membership last year, the Canterbury, Waikato and Victoria University students' associations were withdrawing or had already left NZUSA. NZUSA promised to reform and be more effective, but no improvements have occurred. After questioning the value of membership since 2010, in 2014 the OUSA executive unanimously concluded the problems with NZUSA were caused by factors inherent to its structure, and thus withdrew our membership.

What are the problems with NZUSA?

NZUSA is supposed to influence central government decision makers on core student issues, like student loans, allowances and fees. However they don't spend membership fees in a targeted and focused way to achieve these goals. Instead, significant amounts are spent on the salaries of generalists who operate with little control from

member associations. As reported in a 2013 Salient article, NZUSA employs an executive director who earns a salary in excess of \$90,000, along with a president on a \$40,000 salary.

The following problems have arisen from the structure. Firstly, there is too greater focus on rhetoric based press releases and not enough focus on well thought out policy positions. Secondly, NZUSA has simply not had enough lobbying contact with decision makers over recent years. Change cannot be achieved just through public statements - key decision makers have to be persuaded. Thirdly, NZUSA has involved itself on issues which are irrelevant to core student interests or those that members didn't want involvement in.

For example, OUSA ran a campaign to retain two student representatives on the University Council. I take full responsibility for the failure of that campaign. At a national level, NZUSA focused on sound bites (which might make a headline) but were counter-productive to persuading those who had the final vote on the issue. NZUSA seemed oblivious to the fact that to retain two students on Council, the majority of Council's support was needed, some of whom are Ministerial appointments. NZUSA's public statements inferred ministerial appointments (who are Dunedin professionals, not government workers) could not think independently of the minister. It's not a wise strategy to antagonise people who will vote on an issue you're seeking support for. On top of this, on a graduation day, we had to apologise to Council members for NZUSA's bizarre comments in the ODT regarding the Sunday program where they perpetuated the idea that Otago students were

all drunken layabouts. At a time we were arguing student representatives were valuable to Council, this was not helpful. Again, this is not the reason for the unsuccessful vote, but illustrates how meddling by NZUSA had a detrimental effect.

What is the way forward for student representation?

Influencing government requires a long-term strategy, with rigorous research (which NZUSA has some of) and professional lobbying skill (which NZUSA has little of). We could support a federation model where association presidents met semi-regularly, and contributed funds on a project by project basis. Experts could carry out some work with clear expectations set, and the federation members could engage with students on their campuses. Of course this is only an idea. We would need to hear what other institutions are interested in. The key will be to find an arrangement which is affordable enough to get all institutions around the table, but has enough resource to achieve the agreed priorities.

This situation around NZUSA has dragged on for some years now. The problem is the discussion becomes centred on a false dichotomy between NZUSA and no national representation. This just prolongs the problem and blocks out the deeper and more complex discussion about how to organise national student representation in the current environment. Hopefully the fractured state of national representation means a serious rethink will occur sooner rather than later.



Paul Hunt

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