



Critic Est. 1925

ISSUE 04

2016 HYDE

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DUNEDIN**
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NAKEY)**
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FROM BEHIND
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COUNTER**
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ARE YOU THAT SOMEONE?

Test yourself in these situations:

What would you do if you saw someone at a party, in a bar, at a concert or in a crowd being hassled or touched by someone, and you can see they don't like what's happening?

How do you react when your gut is telling you a situation is dodgy?

Do you call out your friends if they make rape jokes, cat-call women, slut shame or victim-blame?

Would you intervene if you saw or heard something that you knew wasn't right?

Are you that someone?

When we don't step up we are sending a message that this sort of behaviour is OK.

We can all do and say things to prevent sexual violence: we can step in during an incident, or we can challenge ideas and behaviours that support sexual violence – whether we know the person or not.

WHY BYSTANDERS DON'T ACT

1. They're worried about what others think
2. They fear retaliation
3. They doubt themselves
4. They think someone else will do it

We can all be that someone - but will you?

If you or someone you know has been the victim of a sexual assault check out the Toah-Nnest website for a full list of services around the country: <http://toah-nnest.org.nz/>

To learn more about healthy sexuality check out the website www.familyplanning.org.nz or for more tips on bystander interventions check out:



Are You That Someone?

<https://www.facebook.com/AreYouThatSome1>

Sounds dodgy, looks dodgy?

DON'T HORSE AROUND CALL IT AS YOU SEE IT



four steps to bystander action:

Here are our four steps to taking action and being that someone.

1 CHECK IN – ask the person if they're OK with what's going on

2 CALL IT AS YOU SEE IT – tell them what they're doing is not OK

3 GET INVOLVED – if you can do it safely, cause a distraction or split them up

4 GET HELP – grab your mates or others to join you in speaking up

If a situation is escalating and it's not safe, find someone in charge like an RA or bouncer. Call the Police on 111.

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- ✓ **FREE OF MEDICAL CONDITIONS?**

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FLAG CHAT COMES TO AN END

DISAPPOINTINGLY THIS WEEK THE SECOND flag referendum will finally come to an end. Personally I'm rather impartial to either flag, but for the past few months I've been increasingly amused by some of the antics and peculiar arguments surrounding the flag change project.

Take for example the story that hit the headlines just last week. One individual, who had an eye for making a quick buck, had become so disgruntled at the flag referendum process that he decided to have a crack at selling his vote on Trade Me to the highest bidder. Sadly though, after topping \$97 the page was detected and subsequently pulled by website administrators.

Days later I read that Police are investigating multiple cases in which individuals have decided to steal referendum papers out of mailboxes and used them to cast votes. One intelligent human, to my amusement, even decided he would take to Facebook to declare proudly the fact that he had stolen over 300 voting papers, something that if he was to be convicted of carries a maximum sentence of two years jail or a \$40,000 fine.

I am however a little bewildered by those who oppose any idea of changing the flag solely on the basis that John Key has championed it. Basing your decision on whether or not we as a country should change the flag because of your loathing for an individual and their opinion is petty and an exercise in futility. I would have

thought that the decision would be governed solely on the basis of whether or not you believed it is time for a new flag and if so, whether or not the proposed design is something that you think represents all New Zealanders.

The argument that some people choose not to vote in this referendum as a protest against the costs involved is also bizarre in my opinion. Regardless of your protest, the project is going ahead and the money is being spent. I know and understand the argument that the money involved could be used in different fields and for better purposes, but the same could be said for a lot of things that are funded with taxpayers' money.

And then there are the conspiracy theories, which I'm sure that if you've read the comments section on any of the national news agencies lately you'll understand what I'm on about.

The United States have theories such as the faked moon landing, 9/11 or who shot JFK for example. Now New Zealand has its own. Some believe that changing the flag is simply the first step in removing our constitutional rights and creating a smokescreen, making it easier to usher in the TPPA.

Whatever the outcome I hope that those from both sides will be able to respect the democratic process and get on board, be it a new flag or the original.

HUGH BAIRD
critic editor

NEW ZEALAND'S CONTRIBUTION TO REFUGEE CRISIS PATHETIC

by JOE HIGHAM

TUESDAY LAST WEEK MARKED THE FIFTH anniversary of the on going Syrian Civil War that has seen approximately seven million civilians displaced within Syria, just over four million emigrate from their homeland in search of relative safety abroad, involvement of the U.S.A, Britain, and Russia to destroy the opportunistic Syrian involvement of ISIS through military airstrikes, and a partial ceasefire that is, for now, just about holding.

THE SCALE OF THE REFUGEE CRISIS

Countries around the world have pledged to help resettle or rehome a huge number of refugees, although an enormous number remain. Germany, for example, has taken in over one million refugees, and Chancellor Angela Merkel is now paying the political price as Germany's right wing political parties look to opportunistically seize upon growing anti-refugee sentiment and make gains in regional, and then potentially national, elections (see Jess Thompson's article in the current issue of Critic). Also, neighbouring countries, such as Turkey (2.7 million), Lebanon (1 million), Jordan (650,000), Iraq (250,000), and Egypt (120,000) (all figures taken from the UN Refugee Agency) also have had to deal with a huge amount of the displaced Syrian population fleeing their countries, although due to the difficulty obtaining employment in Syria's neighbouring countries the goal for many refugees has been an arduous journey to Europe.

NEW ZEALAND'S HELP SO FAR

New Zealand will allow refugee status to 750 refugees over the next three years, a number that has not increased since 1987, although a

further 600 emergency places have been given specifically to Syrian refugees as a response to the situation, which is the worst refugee crisis since World War II. When asked why the quota hasn't increased in that period, (from 1987-2016 New Zealand's population has increased 42%) Minister for Immigration, Michael Woodhouse, said: "Well, that is factually correct, [although] when we compare ourselves to other nations taking quota refugees, we rank very high, seventh in fact on a per capita basis." Murdoch Stevens, founder of the Doing Our Bit campaign, which advocates doubling the refugee quota, said that is a common argument from politicians, and though technically that is true, "only countries that are geographically far away from crisis zones use the quota system. It's them saying we do more than Germany, and they still say it."

The Doing Our Bit campaign highlights that Canada and Australia have refugee quotas 25 times and 9.6 times higher than New Zealand's when adjusted for population differences. According to Murdoch Stevens, we "ultimately need peace; that's the way to stop these [refugee] crises" but as that has been attempted since the beginning of the civil war, we need something more immediate to ease the situation. Many of those who have fled will eventually want to return to their homeland, but are unable to due to homes being bombed, lack of adequate food for their families, employment losses, and poor access to education since the crisis began. As the New Zealand refugee quota hasn't increased since 1987 and with our "population up 42% in that time, it's probably time to do some more," says Stevens.

Immigration New Zealand is currently reviewing the refugee quota, which will be sent to Cabinet by the end of February. The Doing Our Bit Campaign is prepared for the review

announcement to be released as late as June or even July, some five months later than it might have been released. In that time, ten of thousands, if not more will have died.

DO NEW ZEALANDERS WANT TO DO MORE?

On the whole, New Zealanders support an increase in the refugee quota, with a poll from Research New Zealand in October 2015 showing 61% of the respondents agree that New Zealand should increase their refugee quota by over 600, with just 28% saying we should take in less, and 11% admitting they simply don't know. These results concern a permanent increase to the quota, not the 200 a year increase for three years before returning to the 1987 amount.

THE PROCESS OF OBTAINING A REFUGEE PLACE

On average, the international waiting time to be granted refugee status is approximately 17 years, a staggeringly long time. One of the questions most often asked when this topic rears its head is: 'What if some of the refugees are terrorists?' Stevens often encounters this issue, and stated, "If you come to NZ as a quota refugee, you are subject to the most interrogation. Not only does Immigration New Zealand extensively interview you, but you also submit your biometric data to the Five Eyes network." On top of that, most people who come here through the quota system are "part of a family group... so if you're a terrorist wanting to commit atrocities, you're going to avoid the quota."

Furthermore, while it seems crass to discuss the economic costs of resettlement while Syrian families drown crossing the Mediterranean or

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freeze while trying to reach Europe in the bitter winter, it has to be assessed. According to Michael Woodhouse, the extra 600 Syrian refugees New Zealand is allowing refugee status to is "an investment of around \$24 million" and the refugee programme costs "about \$60 million a year alone."

Immigration researcher Professor Paul Spoonley contends that refugees are an economic asset to New Zealand, although this only becomes apparent in the long term. Woodhouse questions this: "Why should it be the case that we wait a whole generation, sometimes more, for them to make a meaningful contribution to New Zealand?" The predecessor to Michael Woodhouse as Minister of Immigration, Nathan Guy, when in office, "found that fewer than 38% of quota refugees were in paid employment ten years after they got here. Many of them are disconnected with their communities,



they struggle with language, their children were not connecting well in schools and they were socially isolated."

According to Woodhouse himself, "allowing them to come into New Zealand and then just

leaving them to their own devices, exacerbating the social isolation that they experience is not humanitarian. The humanitarian thing to do is to support them; that's humanitarian."

ousa EXECRABLE

BREAKING NEWS: OUSA DOES ITS JOB

by HENRY NAPIER

THE OUSA EXECUTIVE ARE STARTING A sub-committee to tackle growing fears around student safety. The new working group will comprise of Executive members and will produce a report for Vice Chancellor Harlene Hayne.

During last week's OUSA Executive meeting President Laura Harris raised concern around student safety in North Dunedin, saying she had recently been approached by a number of students concerned with the issue.

"A large number of our students are feeling unsafe in the North Dunedin area. The University has requested that we have an impact

discussion, where we can talk about what kind of things we would like to see implemented," says Ms Harris.

While the Executive was in agreement about the proposal to form the sub-committee, Administrative Vice President Jarred Griffiths raised concerns about the purview of the working group seeking to draft "terms of reference".

"Can we draft the terms of reference for [the working group]?"

"It would be helpful to have a firm view of the termination date of the committee, how long it will run for and what it's expected to present," said Griffiths.

However, Ms Harris was seemingly unwilling to implement any guidelines to the sub-committee responding that it was "just a working group".

"It's just a working group, the Executive will just come up with a few ideas and stuff. No official decisions will get made within the working group."

Eventually Griffiths conceded "so long as there's some indication of what's required of the group."

The Executive also unanimously agreed to decline the University of Otago Touch team's \$18,000 funding request for overseas flights in order to attend international games. OUSA declined as the amount was a "substantial" portion of the grants fund according to Administrative Vice President Jarred Griffiths.

"We just declined it. From my understanding in terms of the discussion we had, their requested flights were outrageous and their costing was just way off base, and we checked [flights] in the meeting. It was just a bit excessive," said Griffiths speaking for the OUSA Grants sub-committee.



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THE ROOF COLLAPSE THAT CHANGED HYDE'S HISTORY

by JOE HIGHAM

THE ANNUAL HYDE STREET KEG PARTY HAS BECOME INFAMOUS, not just in Dunedin, but much, much further afield as well. The demand for tickets this year has been unprecedented. After the servers crashed, the first batch of 1,000 tickets were sold out in 45 seconds, and OUSA were experiencing over 11,000 page loads per second during the 12.30pm backup sale period. While a huge amount of students will be rueing their luck after missing out on the biggest party of the year, mainstream media and the community of Dunedin and even further afield will be waiting to leap on the many incidents Hyde Street inevitably provides.

The event has come a long way over the last five years, yet alone since it began. Although a consensus hasn't been reached on the date the party actually began, OUSA President, Laura Harris, said, "rumour has it, it started the same year as Otago University opened [1869]", although this claim seems to be highly unlikely. Nevertheless, the rules and regulations synonymous with the modern day party were not always so stringent, although only a handful of current students can attest to having attended the pre-regulated Hyde Street Keg Party.

A major turning point in Hyde Street history was the 2012 event, where 80 people were hospitalized and ten arrests were made (although, unlike the *ODT*, *Critic* must mention that only one of those arrested was actually a student). The event was largely marred by a roof collapse, which gained nationwide attention, and occurred while someone was drinking on the roof of a flat. Otago Vice-Chancellor, Harlene Hayne attended the keg party that year, and later said she witnessed "carnage literally spreading from Hyde Street to the Botanical Gardens." It was the backlash of this event that caused the party to become regulated, a move that some say was the death of Scarfie culture as we know it. Hayne also said following the event that, "as vice chancellor, I can make more rules and hand out more punishments in an attempt to stem the tide, but I would prefer to work with students to find a more workable solution. Indeed, OUSA President at the time, Logan Edgar, stated, "all we need is for someone to step up and have the balls to take responsibility. OUSA's in a position to do that." And OUSA did just that.

All eyes shifted to OUSA as first-time organisers of the party come 2013. Students were largely keen to see as few changes as possible and police, the University, and the Dunedin community in general were looking for a safer, organised and seamless event that would be enjoyed but not exploited by those attending. Harlene Hayne stated she was confident that



"OUSA's involvement will go a long way to maximizing the fun while at the same time minimizing the harm." Moreover, the Proctor told *Critic* that OUSA "can only assist" and pointed out that it is more effective for students to be corralled by OUSA than by a line of police. Overall, it proved a "big success," according to former Admin Vice President, Ryan Edgar, who noted, "the rain helped control it." Twenty-one people were arrested in 2013's party.

OUSA experienced what it was like to organise a party for 3,500 people and presumably, with this experience, the event could only become a better-organised one. In 2014, the 1118 general admission tickets sold in just two minutes (slow in comparison to the 2016 record-breaking year), showing the popularity of the event hadn't waned at all since OUSA got involved. All in all, twenty people were taken to the emergency department, nine of those due to alcohol overconsumption. Figures provided by OUSA show there were one third fewer arrests than 2013 and 45% fewer casualties treated by St Johns Ambulance service.



In 2015, there were just twelve arrests, fifty treated for injuries, with six sent to hospital and one ambulance out of action for a week after it was shouldered by a drunk partygoer. Mayor Dave Cull was quoted in the *ODT* before the event revealing "the public resource that goes into that one day is about \$125,000", while the discourse from politicians continued, with David Benson-Pope saying "I am embarrassed as a Dunedin resident to have a slum like that in the middle of town" although he also mentioned, however, "I'm not against people having a good time, and if they want to do it in the street that is fine, provided it's safe."

The figure of \$125,000 is a ballpark amount, and was given by a Southland District Health Board member during a tertiary sector group meeting, and therefore cannot be verified. Paul Hunt, speaking while he was OUSA President last year, said, "The cost to the taxpayer would be the cost of having the police at Hyde Street, but it's not uncommon for the police to be at events. Other taxpayer costs would be Dunedin Hospital and healthcare facilities." Hunt noted last year that OUSA

spent \$22,000 on the 2015 event, with 45% of that on security, 27% on traffic management, infrastructure and fencing, 30% on the St. John Ambulance Service, and 8% on food.

Ideas have been proposed to control the economic cost to the taxpayer, with Michael Woodhouse recommending "adding a \$35 tariff to the ticket price to cover the price of emergency services," before adding, "can we have events like this without booze-filled disorder and negative health effects?" Condescendingly ending his column, "over to you [students]." Dunedin North MP David Clark said a solution that could work is that "those costs be sheeted back to those who generate them, and often that sorts out problems." Benson-Pope agreed, suggesting, "The people who should be paying for [the clean up] are the people who are making the mess, not ratepayers."

RESERVE BANK CUTS OCR AMID DAIRY CRISIS

by HUGH BAIRD

THE RESERVE BANK HAS CUT THE OFFICIAL Cash Rate to 2.25 percent, the lowest it has ever been with predictions it could drop a further 25 basis points to 2 percent later this year.

Reserve Bank Governor, Mr Graeme Wheeler justified his decision for cutting rates by

explaining that threats such as weaker dairy prices, low inflation, and slowing global growth, particularly in China and Europe had become too great not to act upon.

The cuts in interest rates come as a welcome relief to those in the dairy industry after Fonterra slashed its forecasted milk price once again this month to \$3.90 per kg of milk solids. The latest fall in dairy prices have some analysts predicting that 25 percent of dairy farms could fail if the milk prices don't rise soon.

However, as lower interest rates look set to try and aid dairy farmers and other exporters, those looking to get into the Auckland housing market will be discouraged due to cashed up

investors in the nations largest city having access to greater funds if banks lower interest rates once more.

However, Wheeler also warned that if the low OCR led to a resumption of rapid house price appreciation, rates would need to rise again. Last year the Reserve Bank cut the Official Cash Rate four times, beginning at 3.5 percent at the start of 2015 and ending the year at 2.5 percent.

The Reserve Bank also expects to see GDP grow largely at the same pace for the near future with low interest rates, strong tourism and large construction works taking place.

ZERO HOUR CONTRACTS RUN OUT OF TIME

by HENRY NAPIER

A GOVERNMENT BILL HAS RECENTLY PASSED its Third Reading ending zero hour contracts and extending paid parental leave. The Employment Standards Legislation Bill received bi-partisan support in Parliament gaining the votes of both National and Labour.

The original draft of the government bill made no mention of banning zero hour contracts, however Labour has attributed the Governments change of heart to a lobbying campaign led by opposition parties.

Labour is hailing the amendment to the legislation as a victory for workers with Party leader Andrew Little saying the Government was "forced" to seek bi-partisan support from the opposition.

"National was forced to seek Labour's support after United Future and the Maori Party echoed our concern that the Employment Standards Legislation Bill in its original form would entrench, not stop the exploitative practise of zero hour contracts.

"Today is a great day for all workers and the 56,500 New Zealanders who joined our campaign to scrap zero hour contracts," Andrew Little says.

Minister of Work Place Safety Michael Woodhouse has said that the bill has made a number of changes to the current legislation, one of which was getting rid of zero hour contracts. Mr Woodhouse stressed that zero hour

contracts was only one of the ways in which the Government were strengthening employment standards.

"The passing of this Bill delivers on the Government's commitment to improve New Zealand's employment law framework to encourage fair and productive workplaces without imposing unnecessary compliance costs on employers in general.

"The Bill eliminates zero hour contracts by getting rid of unfair employment practices where employers do not commit any hours of work, but expect employees to be available when required without compensation," says Mr Woodhouse

Green Party co-leader James Shaw said the Party was "delighted" the Government was forced to "change its tune" on zero hour contracts.

"The Green Party is supporting the rest of the legislation, we think that there are a number of things in there that are improvements on the status quo and we managed to get a number of other changes through in the bill as well so on the whole we're happy to support it.

"We weren't going to support it because of the Zero Hour Contracts component and so we're really pleased that the Government's been forced to change its tune," says Mr Shaw.

THANK FUCK THE FLAG DEBATE IS COMING TO AN END

by HUGH BAIRD

THIS THURSDAY WILL SEE VOTING IN THE second flag referendum come to a close, with results to be revealed on March 30. So far in the second referendum over 1.2 million votes have been returned, a substantially larger number in comparison to the first referendum

"The poll showed... That 56 percent of people wanted to keep the current flag"

when at the same stage only 800,000 votes had been sent back in. In total 1,546,734 people voted during the first referendum, 49 percent of the voting population.

Latest polls also indicate that almost two thirds of those surveyed are in favour of keeping the current flag. The poll, which was undertaken during the last week of February showed that 56 percent of people wanted to keep the current flag with 32 percent wanting change whilst 9 percent were unsure.

The flag referendum has been the subject of heated debate over the last year and just last week saw one individual protest the flag referendum by trying to sell his vote on Trade Me. The bidding reached \$96 before finally being pulled by Trade Me staff.

OUSA FUCKS OFF STUDENTS ONCE MORE

by HENRY NAPIER

Last Tuesday students expressed their frustration following the crash of the OUSA server during the Hyde Street party ticket sales which were due to start at 9 am. OUSA have reported that they received over 7000 page reload requests per second during the initial ticket offering at 9am which shut down the server.

During last week's OUSA Executive meeting, Administrative Vice President Jarred Griffiths expressed concern over the incident asking to know "how the error happened, what was done to fix it later in the day".

According to OUSA the server failed to manage the number of requests to the website which resulted in a shutdown of the service. The failure was attributed to a change in configuration of the server set for this year's ticketing services. The new design of the website was planned to allow anyone who had got through the online form 10 minutes before the ticket expired. During the 10 minute window people would be able to read the terms and conditions and enter in their details without fear of losing their ticket. The system was a new design for 2016 which altered from previous years where those vying for entry to the party would have to enter in their details as fast as possible in order to receive a ticket.



OUSA reported that during both the 9am and rescheduled 12.30 sale the new system design failed to process the immense volume of those seeking tickets. The server saw up to 7000 page reloads per second during the 9am sale and over 11,000 during the 12.30 reschedule.

The 9am sale allowed 16 to 19 students to purchase tickets within the first few seconds after coming online, however many who were in the process of filling out forms were unable to complete them after the server shutdown.

A back-up plan was put in place by OUSA to switch to a Google Form, which was ultimately used when the system was unable to cope a second time at 12.30. According to OUSA the 1000 tickets offered sold out within 45 seconds after the service went online just after 12.30pm. 28 lucky students were able to register tickets past the 1000 that were intended to be offered as the server was unable to shut down fast enough once the limit was reached.

During both sales students were left wondering what was happening, many of which took to

Facebook to express their frustration. One student commented on the Hyde Street Party Facebook page saying "this release is more poorly managed than Kanye's release of Pablo."

CEO of OUSA Debbie Downs said that while it was unfortunate the ticketing service didn't work as planned ultimately no one was adversely affected.

"Nobody was adversely affected is the first thing, people are just pissed they didn't get a ticket. At 9am this morning we were experiencing over 7000 page loads per second. [OUSA] had tested [the server] to make sure we could do it. So all the testing had been done, but as everyone knows with this sort of thing, you don't know until you know."

Ms Downs went on to say that a new plan would be considered for 2017.

"[It took] 45 seconds for the 1000 tickets to sell once it was operational. We don't have the infrastructure to deal with those sorts of numbers, we're not Ticket Master. We will rethink again for next year" said Ms Downs.

BOMB BLAST KILLS 37 IN TURKISH CAPITAL

by HUGH BAIRD

TURKISH WARPLANES HAVE struck Kurdish militant camps in Northern Iraq a day after a car bomb exploded in Ankara, an attack in which officials believe two fighters from the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) are responsible.

The bomb blasts, which killed 37 and injured a further 135 when it exploded in a major transport area,

was the third major bomb blast to hit Ankara in the last five months.

Eyewitnesses claimed that a car, which was believed to have been a BMW, sped towards a bus stop before the driver detonated the bomb, creating a fireball of glass shrapnel and debris.

A police source said that there appeared to have been two attackers, one male and one female,

whose severed hand was discovered hundreds of metres from the site of the bomb blast.

Although no group has come forward and claimed responsibility Turkish Prime Minister Ahmet Davutoglu claimed that evidence "almost certainly" pointed toward the Kurdish separatist group.

In response eleven warplanes carried out targeted airstrikes on 18 Kurdish targets in Northern Iraq including ammunition dumps and shelters.

The latest in hostilities offers little hope of a resumption in peace talks following a two-year cease fire that fell apart during the middle

of last year, reviving decades long fighting which has laid claim to more than 30,000 lives.

Last October, a double suicide bombing killed over 100 people who were attending a Kurdish peace rally in Ankara, whilst just last month 28 people were killed and dozens more were wounded during a military convoy in Ankara.

Strict 24-hour curfews were imposed in a number of Kurdish-dominated towns and cities to allow the military and police to pursue the fight against fighters who dug trenches and put up barricades.



NEWS IN BRIEFS



1 Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

One hundred statues on the streets of Rio de Janeiro have had their eyes covered in red blindfolds. The mass blinding of statues was an artistic protest at the deepening political crisis in Brazil. The anonymous artist said he wanted to protect national figures from Brazil's history from seeing the shameful state of the nation

2 London, United Kingdom

A man jumped off 'The Shard', a 95 storey skyscraper, in London and landed with a parachute on a south London street. The building stands at 310m tall, but the base jumper landed on his feet without injury. Another man reportedly bundled up the parachute within seconds of landing and the men left the scene without any police presence

3 Delhi, India

Authorities at Delhi's largest airport say stray dogs roaming operational areas could be used in a terrorist attack, but are having difficulty removing them due to animal welfare laws. The law stipulates that councils can only remove the dogs for neutering and must then release them at the same place they were captured. The best they can do is remove the dogs from the terminal building and relocate them to parking lots.

4 Sydney, Australia

A chainsaw-wielding man who allegedly threw petrol at police caught fire when he was shot with a Taser. The man's clothes caught fire when the officers attempted to subdue him using a Taser and pepper spray. After police extinguished the fire, the man ran to his house and barricaded himself inside. About one hour later he came out of the house and surrendered to police

5 Hong Kong

Hong Kong's chief executive has suggested that workers should be able to swim or fish in the harbour during lunch breaks. Leung Chun-ying suggested that swimming platforms and fishing areas be set up on the Central Waterfront. The idea has been met with ridicule as the Harbour's waters are so polluted it could take up to 20 years to make them safe for swimming

6 Ivory Coast

Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb has claimed responsibility for an attack on three Ivory Coast resorts that killed at least 16 people. The stretch of beach in Grand Bassam running along the front of several luxury resorts is a popular weekend destination for African and Western tourists. The shooting lasted around half an hour with some witnesses claiming cries of "Allahu Akbar" were heard throughout

FACTS and figures



7 Germany

Germany's far-right nationalist and anti-immigrant group, "Alternative for Germany", won seats in three states holding regional elections. Meanwhile Chancellor Angela Merkel's party suffered losses in all three states. The elections were said to be a moment of truth for the public perception of Merkel and her pro-immigration, pro-refugee stance; with the "Alternative for Germany" exploiting public frustration at Europe's refugee situation

8 Cricova, Moldova

Runners have taken part in a 10km race around one of the country's largest wine cellars. About 200 people limbered up for the underground Wine Run event in the town of Cricova. Participants wore head torches to help them navigate the darker sections of the tunnels. The organisers also deployed a person dressed as the Grim Reaper to "hunt" participants around the tunnels. The tunnels cover about 120km in total and are described as an "underground city"

Every second **3** people in India experience the internet for the first time

A shrimp's heart is in their head

Wearing headphones for an hour will increase the bacteria in your ear by **700** times

During your lifetime you will produce enough saliva to fill **two swimming pools**

Polar bears can eat as many as **86** penguins in a single sitting

'**Penis Fencing**' is a scientific term for the mating ritual between flatworms. It involves two flatworms attempting to stab the other flatworm with their penis

You cannot snore **and** dream at the same time

Pirates wore earrings because they believed it improved their eyesight

It snowed in the Sahara desert for **30 MINUTES** on the 18th February 1979

Ithyphallophobia is the fear of erections

THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

1995 In Japan, terrorists release nerve gas on Tokyo's subway, killing 12 and poisoning hundreds

1966 Footballs world cup is stolen from a display in London. A week later a dog finds it under a hedge

1990 East Germany's first ever democratic elections pave the way for reunification with the West

ACTING LIKE DOPES

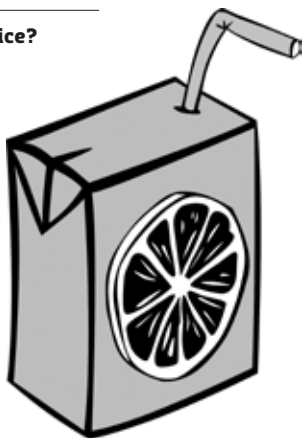
In wake of Maria Sharapova's admission to taking a banned substance before this year's Australian Open, I thought it would be a good time to look back on similar doping scandals that shook the world. So, in no particular order, here's my top five all-time doping scandals:

by SEAN NUGENT

EAST GERMAN WOMEN'S SWIM TEAM

The rise of East Germany as a sporting powerhouse was rampant in the 1970s. Still divided by the Berlin Wall and under the cloud of the USSR, life was miserable for the Eastern Bloc state. Ignored and forgotten by the rest of the world, it turned to sport in order to gain attention and recognition. The women's swim team had struggled in the 1964, '68, and '72 Olympics, only winning a combined 11 medals. Yet in the 1976 Montreal Olympics that all changed, as they won 18 medals, including 11 gold. This shocked the sporting world, especially the Americans, who had expected to dominate the pool once again, but ended up second best. This East German dominance continued right up until the reunification of Germany in the early 1990s, where documents were then released that showed East German athletes had been given hormones and steroids in a government program to improve performance at the Olympics. This scandal is one of the key reasons why drug testing in sport was introduced.

On the juice?



THE DIRTIEST RACE IN HISTORY — BEN JOHNSON VS CARL LEWIS

Another Olympic fiasco, this time in the 1988 Seoul Olympics. The mens 100m final was the pinnacle of the Olympics (much like it still is today) and there was great excitement leading into the race at Seoul. Hyped as the greatest race in history, eyes were focused on the best all-around athlete since Jesse Owens in Carl Lewis, up against his muscular, fierce-eyed Canadian arch rival Ben Johnson. The race didn't disappoint. Johnson exploded out of the blocks with Lewis close behind. Even as Lewis tried to fight back in the latter half of the race, Johnson held him off, breaking the world record in the process, running a then-rapid 9.79 seconds. But the world crashed all around him three days later when he failed the subsequent drug test. Johnson admitted to taking steroids for most of his career, although argued that he was not alone. His pleas fell on deaf ears and Lewis was handed the gold. The tale doesn't end there however. In 2003, it was discovered that Lewis failed a drugs test at the US Olympic Trials and should never have been in the infamous race in the first place.

THE MLB STEROID ERA

During the early 1990s interest in Major League Baseball was waning. Two shortened seasons in 1994 and 1995 due to strikes saw attendance numbers drop 10 percent across the league. Many believed that this was the beginning of the end for the MLB and that it was only a matter of time before it was disbanded altogether. During this decline there was one trend that begun seemingly from out of nowhere, as more and more hitters began to hit over forty home runs in a single season. This led to what is commonly known as the greatest ever season in MLB history in 1998 as hitters Mark McGwire and Sammy Sosa raced to the 37-year-old 61 home run record held by Roger Paris. McGwire would win the race, finishing with 70 home runs to Sosa's 66. This season alone saw revenue jump rapidly from \$1.4 billion in 1995 to \$2.5 billion in 1998. Three years later Barry Bonds of the San Francisco Giants broke McGwire's record, clocking up a remarkable 73 home runs. However, allegations of steroid abuse ensued including the BALCO scandal and the Mitchell Report, while former player Jose Canseco said that around 80 percent of the league were using steroids during this period including himself. Mandatory drug testing was implemented in 2003 following these allegations. McGwire has since admitted his steroid use during his record breaking 1998 season, while Bonds remained under suspicion for the remainder of his career. This period in MLB history is now forever known as the 'Steroid Era'.

LANCE ARMSTRONG

For years seven-time Tour de France winner Lance Armstrong denied allegations of substance abuse, until he finally came clean (no pun intended) in a 2013 interview with Oprah Winfrey. This admission followed an intense investigation by the United States Anti-Doping Agency (USADA) which banned Armstrong from the sport of cycling and saw all seven of his Tour de France medals stripped from him. After USADA's report came out, the International Cycling Union president Pat McQuaid stated "Armstrong has no place in cycling. He deserves to be forgotten." In his interview with Oprah, Armstrong admitted to have started getting blood transfusions and abusing the substance EPO and steroids since 1996. Armstrong was not alone in substance abuse, as several of Armstrong's teammates had either failed drug tests (such as Floyd Landis following his 2006 Tour de France win) or admitted substance abuse post-retirement. In fact, the majority of cyclists have used some kind of performance enhancing drug, with 14 of the last 25 Tour de France winners either testing positive or confessing to doping.

MARION JONES

The female equivalent of Carl Lewis became an overnight sensation at the 2000 Sydney Olympics, where she became the first woman to win five medals (including three gold) at a single games. While Jones was embracing her success, her husband C.J. Hunter, an Olympic shot-putter, had failed numerous drug tests in the lead up to the Sydney Olympics and was banned from the games. Their two differing paths saw their divorce in 2002, and Jones started dating sprinter Tim Montgomery, together having a son in 2003. Less than a year later the infamous BALCO scandal took place, linking both Jones and Montgomery to performance-enhancing drugs. Montgomery was found guilty and banned for four years, while Jones continuously denied any involvement when brought to a federal court. Despite her claims, more and more evidence of her PED use began to emerge until eventually in 2007 she admitted to taking steroids before and after the Sydney Olympics. All of her results during and after the games were disqualified, while she also served a six month prison sentence for lying to US investigators.

So there you have it, the five doping scandals that shook the sporting world. As these cases show, it can often take years for the full story to completely unravel. Maria Sharapova's announcement last week is most likely going to be the first step to something much larger. Is there consistent doping within tennis? Did Sharapova actually have any health problems related to the banned meldonium? Or is this just an honest mistake? We will only find out in time, but if the past has any lesson to teach, an "honest mistake" is usually not entirely true.

LEICESTER CITY FIVE POINTS CLEAR

by SEAN NUGENT

LEICESTER CITY HAVE GONE FIVE points clear at the top of the Premier League after a 1-0 victory over Newcastle United. Shinji Okazaki's superb first half strike increased the pressure on both Tottenham and Arsenal as the season nears its conclusion.

With eight games to go, Leicester have inched closer to a remarkable title, and would no doubt be the most surprising winners in Premier League history.

Meanwhile, Newcastle missed out on valuable points as they continue to hover in the relegation zone. This game was their first under new manager Rafa Benitez,

his first appointment since being sacked by Spanish giants Real Madrid earlier this season.

The Champions League winning coach will turn his attention towards Newcastle's next fixture against bitter rivals Sunderland. The outcome will most likely decide the fate of both relegation-threatened sides.

North London rivals Arsenal and Tottenham have their work cut out for them as the season starts to wind down and their title hopes continue to fade. Although only five points behind, Tottenham have a tough draw, needing to collect valuable points on trips to Chelsea,

Liverpool and Stoke, while also defending home turf against Manchester United.

It's a similar story for the Gunners who still have to travel to Manchester City in a game that could crush their title hopes altogether. Having threatened to overtake Leicester and run away with the title, Arsenal have won just two of their last nine games.

For leaders Leicester, only a major capitulation could halt their golden run. Led by former factory worker turned goal-scoring machine Jamie Vardy and Algerian magician Riyad Mahrez, the Foxes have had a sensational turnaround. At the same time last year, it seemed almost certain that their stay in the Premier League would last only a single season, as they found themselves on the bottom of the table.

Much of this turnaround could be attributed to Leicester's Italian manager Claudio Ranieri, who took over the side at the conclusion of last season and has steered the side to within reach of the league title. Yet Ranieri refuses to get carried away and continues to state that both Tottenham and Arsenal remain favourites to finish champions.

The next round of fixtures begins this weekend. Leicester and Arsenal will travel to Crystal Palace and Everton respectively, while Tottenham hosts Bournemouth. Meanwhile, a battle for a Champions League place will be underway in Manchester as cross-town rivals Manchester United and Manchester City square off on Monday morning.

INTERVIEW WITH GRANT ROBERTSON

by JOEL MACMANUS

LABOUT PARTY FINANCE SPOKESPERSON GRANT ROBERTSON bounds into the Critic office on a sunny O-Week Tuesday. While some of the staff may have been a bit dusty from the night before, Robertson is positively vibing. The source of that enthusiasm could be the natural rush of non-stop meetings with constituents, supporters and special interest groups, but the smart money would suggest it was something more chemical – despite already holding a takeaway coffee cup in his hand, he eagerly suggests heading down to Good Earth café for another.

As we walk there, he paints the perfect profile of the high-powered politician: black suit, rapid gait, glancing at his phone every few seconds as if following up on some crucial breaking news. In reality, he's checking the cricket scores, desperately hoping for a Blackcaps revival in the second Test against Australia. He puts a lot of trust in Matt Henry to make something miraculous happen, and we speculate about the chances that BJ Watling could save the day with a rare Test century (Spoiler Alert: He doesn't).

If it weren't for the fact that I eventually had to move the topic of conversation on to politics, he probably would have been happy

...in reality, he's checking the cricket scores, desperately hoping for a Blackcaps revival in the second Test against Australia

to keep talking sports for the entire interview. He spoke about meeting his husband while playing for the Krazy Knights, a gay mens rugby club, his attempts to get back in shape to play for the Parliamentary rugby team, and getting recruited into a 3 on 3 basketball tournament by fellow Labour MP Rino Tirikatene.

■ But as much as his passion for sport shines through, it's the discussion of political activism that really makes his eyes light up. Robertson's history here is expansive. At age 17, he attended his first protest march in response to the Fourth Labour government's decision to introduce tuition fees for all university students, a move Robertson says he "Was not supportive of at all". 26 years later, his first major move in his new Finance portfolio re-committed his party to the idea of free tertiary education.

There's something poetic about his journey from angry young activist to political power broker, it represents the idea that everyone, no matter how insignificant they may feel at the time, has the ability to influence change. A generation that once yelled into the wind while baby boomers ignored them has finally taken control of the wheel.





OUSA, ACTIVISM & ARRESTS

GRANT ROBERTSON'S CAREER IN POLITICS started with more of a whimper than a bang. He first ran unsuccessfully in the OUSA elections at the end of 1991 for the position of Publicity and Information officer (equivalent to the Campaigns Officer today).

"I ran for that but actually didn't get on. I was the next polling candidate" he said, but, proving that overwhelming apathy to OUSA by-elections is not unique to the current crop of students, "A person who had been elected resigned before the year started and there was a by-election, so I threw my name in but I didn't campaign at all, but I got on, so that was cool."

After a year on the executive, he rose to the presidency for 1993. His term in office would come to be defined by one moment in particular: a raucous protest on Union Lawn resulting in riot police, a catalogue of injuries, and no less than 13 students arrested, including himself.

The issue at hand was a proposal by the University Council to hike up course fees by 15 percent. Robertson, as a student representative on the council, had managed to convince them to reconsider it. He admits he "kind of knew we couldn't stop the fee increase" but was "trying to get the university to introduce a hardship fund for students who couldn't pay."

A protest rally at the union building drew a crowd of over 1000, whom Robertson led in a

march toward the registry building, at which point he and the other student representatives went inside to attend the meeting. "People were really fed up, and people went around to different parts of the building and some people tried to get in". That led to those inside barricading the doors to protect themselves from the would-be intruders "There was a lot of tension outside, door handles being broken and all sorts of shit".

Eventually the meeting finished, and the council had finalised the fee increases. However, the crowds remained, barring the council members from exiting. That led to what Robertson describes as "a really stupid decision" to call the police and have them forcefully clear a path. Within minutes, an army of police had descended on the building, forcefully clearing students away and unleashing blows with their batons. One photographer captured an officer dragging two defiant girls away by their ponytails. Robertson and the rest of the Executive maintained that it was "so unnecessary" for what they considered a "legitimate" and "passionate but ultimately peaceful protest".

Fast forward a couple weeks and, Robertson explains "There was a knock on my door, and it was the police arresting me for 'Incitement to Riot'." There were 13 people arrested that day, although he believes "The truth is it was more them trying to make a point to be honest, so I

That led to what Robertson describes as "a really stupid decision" to call the police and have them forcefully clear a path...one photographer captured an officer dragging two defiant girls away by their ponytails.

was arrested but never charged." Of those 13 only 4 faced charges, and just one, a non-student, was convicted. According to Judge David Carruthers, the police has used "gratuitous and unnecessary force", which Robertson says was "a real vindication". Incitement to Riot has a maximum sentence of 10 years imprisonment, so he says he is "kind of glad it didn't go through."

LABOUR, LEARNING, & CAREER POLITICIANS

FOLLOWING HIS TENURE AT OUSA, GRANT WON the position of NZUSA co-president in 1996, worked for MFAT in Samoa, the UN in New York, and eventually made his way home where he worked his way up to the position of Special Advisor to Helen Clark.

During his two unsuccessful runs for the party leadership in 2013 and 2014, there were questions

"I think the concept of a career politician is not something that I really get, I don't really know what that means. But I've pushed trolleys in a supermarket, I've worked for OUSA, I've been a diplomat, and I've worked in Helen's office"

raised about whether he was 'too beltway' – suggesting that he was too much of a political insider who lacked real world experience. Robertson adamantly rejects this argument, saying "I think people come to politics with all sorts of backgrounds, so I don't think there's any trouble with somebody who has worked in a Minister's office becoming a politician, it's about who you are as a person, and the skills you bring to the job. I think the concept of a career politician is not something that I really get, I don't really know what that means. But I've pushed trolleys in a supermarket, I've worked for OUSA, I've been a diplomat, and I've worked in Helen's office. But I don't think the phrase 'career politician' means very much."

When I asked about his impressions of Helen Clark while working for her, he could barely hold back his praise, unleashing a tsunami of positive adjectives – "fantastic leader", "incredibly sharp", "very, very good instincts", "extraordinary work ethic", "incredibly hard fighter" – and that's barely half of it. But in the midst of that praise, he snuck in an inherent defence of current leader Andrew Little's dismal poll ratings, pointing out that "at one point she had a 2 percent approval rating, lost an election in '96, carried on through to '99 and won".

UNSUCCESSFUL ELECTIONS

FOLLOWING THE LABOUR PARTY'S performance in the 2014 election, which Grant describes as "disastrous", he put his name forward as a candidate for leader. Having finished a close second to David Cunliffe in the previous leadership election, he was an immediate frontrunner. Picking Jacinda Ardern as his running mate and campaigning under the slogan 'New Generation To Win', he put up a strong performance, rallying support within Young Labour and winning a majority of support from both party members and caucus. However, due to Andrew Little receiving near unanimous backing from affiliated unions, he lost the final vote by a mere 1 percent.

While it can sometimes be difficult to draw a contrast between candidates competing for positions within the same party, here there were two clear platforms to choose from. While both candidates agreed that the party needed drastic change, Andrew Little ran on major policy reform – dropping anything that wasn't winning over the voters, particularly the Capital Gains Tax and raising the age of Superannuation. Robertson shied away from ditching policies that remained popular with the party base (if not the general public), focusing more on improving the party's performance among the more superficial aspects of politics: messaging, marketing, and producing less annoyingly cheesy TV ads.

In hindsight, he admits that Andrew's ideas were needed – "I think it's fair to say that we did need to go back and have a look at those. I mean, Andrew won, so we're doing it, but I've accepted the fact that we certainly didn't present those promises well... in regards to the Super age, we came to that policy from the wrong place. We took it to two elections, and at some point you've got to look at yourself and say we've got to look at that"

When he unsuccessfully ran for leader against David Cunliffe in 2013, not only was he shunted down the list in the aftermath, but so were a number of his closest supporters, including Dunedin MPs David Clark and Clare Curran. Little took the opposite approach. Rather than trying to assert his authority over his vanquished opponents, he brought them into the huddle, offering Grant the number 3 spot on the list and the sought-after Finance portfolio.

That move seems to have soothed the discontent within the party, drastically lowering the level of public infighting and internal leaking that was happening during Cunliffe's term. While

Robertson dismisses the idea of an "Anyone But Cunliffe" movement within the caucus as media narrative, he does offer some harsh reflection on his own party's actions – "What was really disturbing about that period was the amount of leaking of stuff, internal discussions and things. That had to stop, because the number of times

Robertson shied away from ditching policies focusing more on improving the party's performance among the more superficial aspects of politics: messaging, marketing, and producing less annoyingly cheesy TV ads

as a candidate I had people say to me 'If you can't organise yourselves, how can you organise the country?', and that's completely legitimate criticism, that if you're internally scrapping you're not up for the job."

The first meeting between himself and Little following the leadership election was "remarkably amicable." Robertson says, "That's not to say it didn't take me a while personally to get over the loss, I think you've got to be realistic and human about it, you want to think you can say OK and get back on the horse straight away, but actually it takes a bit of time, and it did"

MOVING FORWARD & THE FUTURE OF WORK

THE FUTURE OF WORK COMMISSION IS A Labour Party project aimed at identifying how technological changes are going to change the workforce as we know it, and introducing policies to counter them. In the same way that many blue collar manufacturing jobs were lost to automation in the 20th century, many academics fear that white collar desk jobs may soon also be at risk as software becomes more and more advanced.



After a year of fact-finding, researching, and consulting with everyone from academics, to unions, business people, and even foreign Ministers, the first policy to come from the Commission was a bold scheme to provide three years free tertiary education to every New Zealander. "The pace and speed of the technology means we've got to do a better job of preparing ourselves" Robertson says "And yeah, one way of approaching it is to say it will work itself out, but I just don't believe that. You've got the responsibility to make sure people are getting the education, getting the training to prepare themselves."

Minister for Tertiary Education Steven Joyce has called the proposal "failed policy", pointing out that Internet-Mana ran on the same promise in the last election to little success. When challenged on this, Robertson replied that "With all due respect to a party like Internet-Mana, they can promise whatever the hell they want. We're a serious party of government, we have to think very carefully about how we make investments. This policy is phased in over a decent period of time, and also we're offering it as a clear alternative to National's tax cuts".

Offering an alternative to tax cuts is a strategy which has worked well for Labour in the past – In 2005 their policy of zero-interest student loans struck a chord with voters and propelled

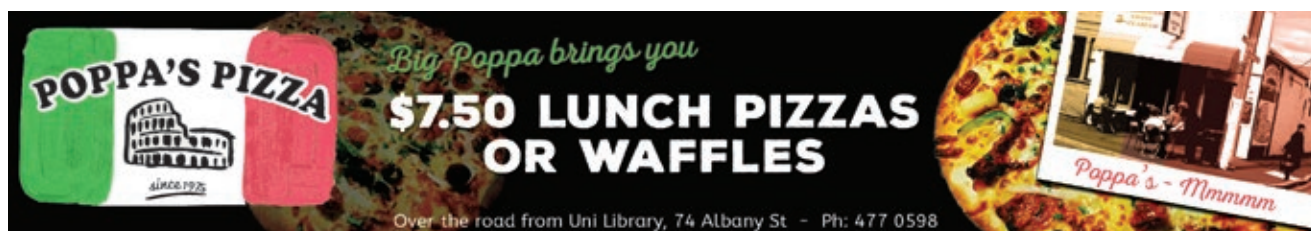
"the idea that you can just finish school and you never have to re-train in your life is gone"

them back into government for a third term. Robertson is eager to point out that this policy goes above and beyond what they have offered in the past, "The link to the Future of Work is really important, because this is not just about managing the debts that people take on from study, because while that is an important by-product of this policy, the primary motivation is the future of work, which is essentially the idea that you can just finish school and you never have to re-train in your life is gone, people need re-training and upskilling"

MORE TO COME

WHILE CURRENT STUDENTS WILL BE UNLIKELY TO BENEFIT FROM THE POLICY, simply due to the fact that Labour is still in opposition – "If we're elected 2017, it's too late to change things for 2018, so realistically 2019 is as early as we could start it." Robertson promises there is more to come in the Tertiary department, "We can't put everything out at once, for various reasons political and non-political. We understand that the living costs, the accommodation costs are really tough going for people. We get that, we know the amount of money available for the student loan scheme and living costs is really tight, and we want to address that."

Grant Robertson's journey in politics has always been about big ideas and generating enthusiasm. Whether he can take those lofty goals to an election, win, and put them into action? I guess we'll just have to wait and see.



THE HUMAN GARBAGE RECEPTACLE:

What Working in a Fast Food Restaurant Taught Me About the World

BY ANTHONY GORDON

You haven't seen the nasty side of human nature until you've worked a job dealing with hungry people who do not give a fuck about who you are. The little social niceties that stop people from succumbing to their momentary anger and verbally abusing their mate's girlfriend who's taken their seat in the library, for example, don't exist in the world of fast food service. Workers in this industry have the ugly, toxic side of customer's personalities spewed over them on a daily basis. It wasn't until I stuck myself behind a counter, put on an ill fitting cap and a name tag that read "Hi! My name is.... Nice to meet you!" that I realised how nasty people can be.

I CAN'T LET
GLUTEN ENTER
MY BODY

CAN I GET
A KAISER
SALAD?



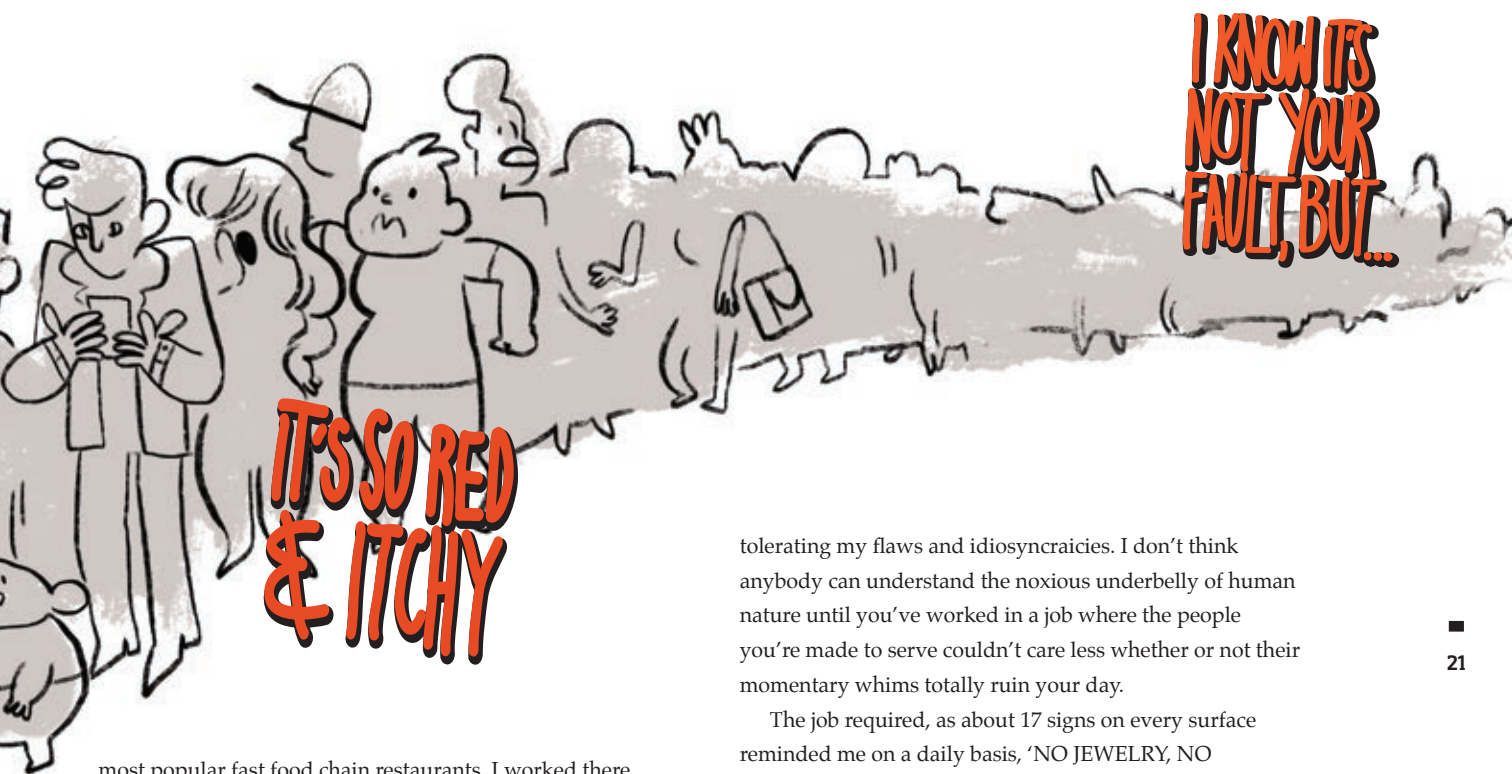
Until about a two years ago I had never felt the need to find myself a part-time job. I had been getting enough money from my parents and never bought anything too extravagant so that my parents might suspect I'd been spending their cash on things that weren't textbooks, thermals and fresh vegetables. That changed in mid-2014 when I can only assume Mum got CC-ed in an email from Dawn in Human Resources with a link to a BuzzFeed article titled '17 Suprising Reasons Why Cutting Your Children Off Financially Will Improve Their Lives'. My parents stopped giving me money, which coincided with the exact time I decided to develop a four-packs-a-week smoking habit. In order to fund my healthy and also cool new hobby I decided the time was ripe to find myself a job.

After a few weeks of thrusting my meagre CV into unimpressed bar managers' faces (my 'hospo experience' consisted of a one-time gig carrying around a plate of mini-sausage rolls at Mum's friend's 55th birthday bash), I somehow managed to wrangle a job at one of Dunedin's

clean!" if I spent a minute of downtime doing anything that wasn't wiping a surface.

It wasn't a dream job by any stretch, but whinging too much about the meniality of an entry-level service role is hugely patronising coming from somebody in my privileged position. I was earning pocket money. If I got fired nothing that bad would happen. My parents would help me out if I really needed it. Thousands of people work twice the amount of shifts at similar jobs in order to feed and clothe their children, so I can't really moan about unclogging a few toilets.

Rather, it was the interpersonal nature of the job that I'm going to moan about. Well, not moan; more illustrate how dealing with the general public on a 20-hours-a-week basis altered how I engage with and perceive every new person I meet. Hanging with friends, family and flatmates is one thing. They have an interest in being nice to me and



most popular fast food chain restaurants. I worked there for five months.

The physical aspect of the job was tolerable. Making the same meal over and over again wasn't exactly stimulating work and the pay was measly considering how hard I worked. The managers boasted no talents other than watching me do their jobs on the office security cameras and shouting "if you've got time to lean, you've got time to

tolerating my flaws and idiosyncracies. I don't think anybody can understand the noxious underbelly of human nature until you've worked in a job where the people you're made to serve couldn't care less whether or not their momentary whims totally ruin your day.

The job required, as about 17 signs on every surface reminded me on a daily basis, 'NO JEWELRY, NO PIERCINGS, NO HAIR TO BE SHOWING'. This was annoying because I'm not all that cute without my shiny distractions. Wearing the uniform stripped away any sense of personal identity from my outward appearance. It was shocking how much looking conspicuously like a fast-food worker changed the way people spoke to and acted around me. When placing their order, customers would talk slow and emphasise key words, like they were teaching their

half-deaf grandma how to switch on her first cell-phone. They'd talk loudly about stuff right in front of me in a way that showed they either didn't care about me hearing, or they thought their conversation would go over my dumb little head. From customers' sexual frustrations to their bowel irregularities, I overheard it all. Customers weren't seeing me through the expensively dressed and groomed lens I usually benefit from, and the resulting switch in their behaviour was very obvious.

One reason people give for showing at least some respect towards servers is avoiding the awkwardness of running into the McDonald's worker they screamed at for over salting their fries at university. "Don't be so snappy with the staff", I've heard a daughter whisper to her lizard of a mother. "Everyone has part-time jobs now; you don't know who's son could be serving you!" When friends proudly let me know that the reason they didn't lose the plot when they were overcharged by twenty cents is because they "don't judge a book by its cover", it's a little like being proud of the fact you'd date a disabled person. The implication is that they see their choice as heroic and worthy of praise, not something that any normal, well-adjusted person would do without hesitation. They are basically only being respectful because they want to avoid an embarrassing future run-in, not because they possess a decent level of respect for all people, regardless of their life choices.

Don't get me wrong; I wasn't expecting each and every customer I served to be as friendly as I was being paid to be. They could have just lost a family member, or run over a cat, or have anxiety issues, or whatever. People didn't have smile, or say thank you or even make eye contact; all the respect I could hope for was that if there was a delay or a mishap, that they'd calmly – even begrudgingly – accept that their food was a couple of extra minutes away and to their credit, most people were.

However, there were a small but significant slice of customers who would take great delight in treating me like trash given half the chance. The thing is, when you're an employee at a food outlet, ninety nine percent of the stuff that goes wrong is not your fault. Out of tomatoes? No more Red Bull in the Fridge? Unsurprisingly me and my \$14.75 an hour salary are not even deemed senior enough to know where the key for the staff toilet is hidden, let alone be given the responsibility of determining tomato supply.

This memo failed to reach a swarth of Dunedin's population, who took great pleasure in letting me know in no uncertain terms what they thought of me and my perceived ambivalence to their misfortune. Apparently nothing short of falling to my knees, sobbing, and begging for forgiveness when a customer's cheese-of-choice has run out will do. The statement "I know it's not your fault,

but..." is almost always followed by something that implies the fault for the culinary injustice they were facing indeed lay squarely on my shoulders.

This treatment didn't even come close to the times when it was actually me who screwed up. I'd squirt the full fat

BY THE REACTIONS I'D SOMETIMES
RECEIVE YOU'D THINK I'D
WHIPPED OUT MY COCK &
DRAGGED IT ALONG THE
LENGTH OF THE SANDWICH BAR

mayo of their meal when they'd specifically requested 'lite', or return them 20 cents less change than they were owed. Annoying mistakes sure, but by the reactions I'd sometimes receive you'd think I'd whipped out my cock and dragged it along the length of the sandwich bar. The fast-food worker standing in front of them becomes the receptacle for all the untreated-sewage of their misearable lives. "Finally!", they thought to themselves, "a chance to let off all that steam!" Being sworn and cursed at is one thing, but being talked down by a stranger, like they're teaching you a lesson for your bad behaviour is the most patronising and frustrating thing, especially when the verbal-tirade spews from the mouth of a person who grew-up in an era where university was free and they'd never had to resort to working a low-paid service job. What the hell made them think they had the right?

Worst of all, the occasional person was awful for no reason at all. One asked me if I could have another staff member prepare his food. When I asked why, he said "no offense mate, but I don't want you poofta hands touching anything my family are eating". How the hell am I meant to respond to that? It could've been worse though. Even though people could tell I was gay (and my hands have indeed been in some very un-family-friendly places), at least I ticked all the other Aryan boxes. On busy Friday and Saturday nights when the boozed up men started to stumble in, my female and non-white co-workers were treated far worse than I ever was.

Given the high standard I was held to, it was remarkable the low-standards of intelligence customers displayed. I had this conversation at least once a week.

Customer: I'm doing the paleo diet so I can't let gluten enter my body, ok?

Me: Sure.

Customer: Yeah so that lettuce you just used, can you double-check that it's actually gluten-free?

People surely couldn't be this stupid when it came to their day-to-day lives; I saw them park a car outside and that required at least some brain-activity. No, it was more like stepping through the doors of a fast-food joint gave them a sort of momentary-lobotomy where they didn't feel the usual rules of the world applied. It was a place where it wasn't at all embarrassing to mispronounce the word "caesar" (seriously though, the amount of times I got it as "kaiser" aka the leader of WWI Germany), or to and sit down after I'd calmly explained they needed to stand by the counter and pick the filling themselves. "It's like subway!" I'd yell across at them, and they'd still just nod and smile at me, docile and unmoving. I learned to treat each new customer with an equal level of disrespect for their intellectual capabilities. I picked up this monotonous tone that sounded like Microsoft Sam, that Windows 98 program you'd type naughty words into for the thrill of hearing a computerised voice say 'blow job'. After a few weeks I'd nailed this spiel so even the most determined customer who'd decided to change their mind mid-order and claim I'd misheard them couldn't wriggle around my water-tight ordering system.

However, for every stupid, exhausting, or mean customer, there were lots who were really nice. Many people exuded warmth and understanding, and made it clear they respected and valued the small food-making (well more assembling) role I was playing in their lives. When I messed up a customer's order, often they'd go to great pains to stress that they didn't mind, that I could take my time, and that I was doing a great job; it's like they were horrified about the idea that something they had done had made me stress out.

What does this contrast say about humanity? That some customers were so understanding while others were just about ready to bite off my head off if I placed a toe (or a unwanted condiment) out of line. I think that once people reach a certain degree of separation from an undesirable position, it's easier and more comfortable to stereotype people occupying that position into oblivion rather than engage with them on a person-to-person basis. Older, wealthier people were much more awful to me than their younger counterparts. It had been long since they'd been in a position similar to that of myself or my co-workers; perhaps they'd never found themselves in such a place. Our lives were so at odds that it's not surprising they'd be unable to comprehend that I saw any reason to exist on this

earth other than to make their breakfast. It's little wonder why they were so awful; they didn't see me as the same class of human as they were.

This is what inequality does; it drives a massive wedge between swaths of the population so that the old and

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upwardly mobile, who are more often those with political power, become completely clueless about what drives the average person, who luck out big-time because the decisions being made on their behalf are drafted by people who wouldn't flinch over spending \$400 on a bottle of merlot. I think exposure to at-the-time unacceptable facets of society is what leads to understanding and acceptance. Just like those who've never met an openly gay person are more likely to be big old homophobes, people who've lost any connection with those hanging off the lower rungs of society might not be inclined to care about their welfare.

I quit this job after 5 months without a promotion, payrise, or even a compliment from the management; "you look less sunburnt than last week" was, I think, the kindest thing the owner ever said to be. However, I don't think it was a waste of time. I didn't learn the value of hard work as mum had hoped. In fact, I think I developed a severe allergy to elbow-grease standing behind that counter. I spent most of the money I earned on long-ago stepped-on sunglasses and tickets to a music festival I don't remember being at. However, what I can tell mum is that maybe I discovered the reason why bad things happen out there in the world. From wars and genocide, down to the small injustices that plague every society, everything can be neatly explained by the fact most people are, at their core, rotten from selfishness. Whether they're invading a neighbouring country or angrily demanding a refund for a sandwich they finished eating without complaint ten minutes ago, if people can see a way to further their own self interest at another's expense without making themselves look bad, they will almost always do it.



Reiki'n It In

What happened when I became a non-believing Reiki practitioner

by Lucy Hunter

I wanted to try my hand at Reiki: the Japanese magical healing technique. Though I didn't believe it could have a positive effect on health, I thought it would be fun to do a thoroughly unscientific experiment to see if I could help my friends with the power of a universal life force.

Reiki is a Japanese technique for stress reduction and relaxation that adherents believe also promotes healing. Reiki (rhymes with naked) was developed in 1922 by Japanese Buddhist Mikao Usui. It uses a technique often called "palm healing" or "hands-on-healing". Practitioners believe that they are transferring "universal energy" through their palms into the patient's body, which they believe can benefit the healing of all ailments: physical, mental, emotional, or spiritual.

Clinical research has not shown Reiki to be effective as a treatment for any medical condition. The American Cancer Society, Cancer Research UK, and the National Center for Complementary and Integrative Health state that Reiki should not be a replacement for conventional treatment of diseases such as cancer, though some physicians believe it could be beneficial to a person's sense of general well-being.

To do Reiki, you need to get Reiki from someone. It has supposedly been passed down to every practitioner from Mikao Usui himself. I was worried the Reiki wouldn't work for me, but according to ICRT, "Reiki is not dependent on belief at all and will work whether you believe in it or not."

Another thing I couldn't believe is how profitable Reiki can be. The average price for a one-hour Reiki session in New Zealand is \$60. You only need to do a five to seven day course to get the qualification you need to charge this much money. The course will set you back \$1500-\$2000. That may seem heinously expensive, but once you've done it, you are not only able to set up as a Reiki practitioner, you are qualified to teach Reiki to other people. For money. After five days of training.

I wanted to become a Reiki healer but I didn't want to pay anything. Most people said you can only get your Reiki from another person, but some people claim that can be from a distance, or online. I went online and found a YouTube video called "Learn Reiki in Ten Minutes," posted by Dr Randolph Shipon. I watched his video, summoned the Reiki into my upturned palms, and voila! I had the Reiki!

Having become a Reiki practitioner I set out to start healing people.

Session 1: Tahu

My first patient was my good friend Tahu. I went to her house and we set up in her triangular "White temple room" with Bjork's "Vespertine" on the stereo. Tahu had had Reiki in the past from a couple of different people. She said she didn't know if she believed in it or not.

Before I began the session I asked Tahu how she was feeling and what we should work on. She said she was feeling "really good," but she had ongoing issues with a kidney infection she had had for some time, as well as a urinary tract infection. She had pain in her back, around her sacral chakra and solar plexus. She had also had some emotional dramas and felt like her "heart chakra had been through the wars." We said we would focus on the heart and the root chakra, or, as Tahu put it, "the Root! The ROOOOOOT CHAKRAAAA! The rooty tooty fruity tooty chakra."

The basic session of beginner Reiki I had worked out was to get my patient relaxed and comfortable lying on their back, then to do The Power Symbol in the air with my hand. It looks like this:



“the Root!

The ROOOOOOT CHAKRAAAA!

**The rooty tooty fruity
tooty chakra.”**

Session #2: Miriam

It is the first symbol you learn when you practice Reiki. Reiki Energy will flow without it, but when you use it, it is believed that the energy increases significantly.

Next I stood away from the bed facing my patient. With palms up I visualised energy (I thought of it as blue for some reason) rushing into the palms of my hands. I calmed my mind and began the session.

All you do is stand with your hands over different “chakras” on the body, working from the head downwards. If you feel prickling, stiffness, or pain in your hands, you stop and either shake or dust off the “bad energy.”

After the session, Tahu said she felt very relaxed, and “definitely energized by the sweeping and the consolidating.” She felt her kidneys “responding” to the treatment, but her heart not so much. The strongest response was in the throat chakra, where Tahu said she “saw a blue light and a green light as well, which was from the heart chakra, potentially.” She felt her heart “starting to tingle” and a forward, circular movement in her throat. Her favourite part was the sweeping away of energy at the end, which she said was “energizing.” Tahu said it was the best Reiki she had ever had.

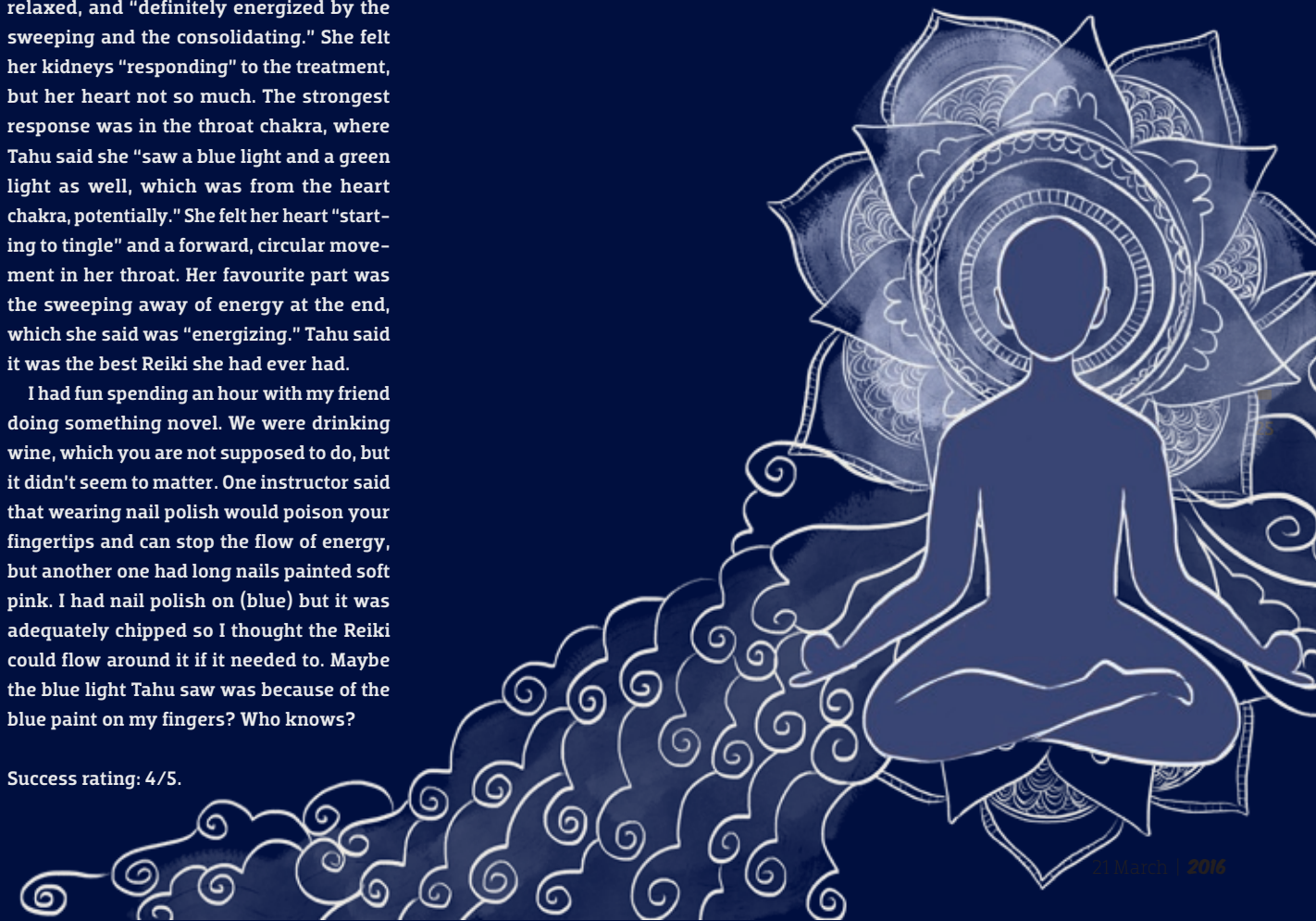
I had fun spending an hour with my friend doing something novel. We were drinking wine, which you are not supposed to do, but it didn't seem to matter. One instructor said that wearing nail polish would poison your fingertips and can stop the flow of energy, but another one had long nails painted soft pink. I had nail polish on (blue) but it was adequately chipped so I thought the Reiki could flow around it if it needed to. Maybe the blue light Tahu saw was because of the blue paint on my fingers? Who knows?

The “sweeping” Tahu had liked was the final stage of my healing session. Having treated the chakras on both sides, I “consolidated” the energy by standing back to beam Reiki at full intensity at the patient. This is meant to push good energy into the body and force the bad energy upwards. You can then go to the person and sweep the air above them from head to toe using your hands. You can claw it off if it's particularly strong. Then I opened the door and shoed the bad energy outside. It's terribly fun.

One thing is for sure – if I had charged \$60 for the Reiki session, it would have been the easiest \$60 I had ever made.

My next patient was Miriam, an old friend. Miriam had pain in the right-hand side of her neck and shoulder to the point where she was having trouble turning her head, as well as a sore pelvis. She had had Reiki in the past for “psychological things.” Miriam said she couldn't tell if it was helpful or not, but she liked having someone paying attention to her for an hour. She said she was a “little bit sceptical” but was happy to drop all doubt while I treated her.

After the treatment Miriam told me she had an “improved range of motion” in her neck. She said her neck had been quite painful after her physio session, but now she felt



Success rating: 4/5.



slightly less restricted. Her pelvis and spine were still "really sore." She said she felt "some strange stuff" round her chest. At one point she felt a weight on her chest then realised I was standing across the room, doing something with my hands. She liked the sweeping at the end, saying it was "good fun" and "felt very effective." She said it felt like I knew what I was doing and she would recommend me to other clients. Miriam was hoping the Reiki would affect her "on a much more deep and spiritual level" than just her physical body.

The next morning Miriam wasn't feeling better. She was in too much pain for me to visit but said she didn't blame the Reiki. She must have slept badly.

I was delighted by how much better I could make my friend feel, even for a little while. It was disheartening that she felt so bad the next day.

Success rating: 3/5.

I was feeling a bit like I was making it up as I was going along, but, according to Reiki practitioners, Reiki is so powerful you literally can't do anything wrong when you are treating someone. The Reiki knows what to do. The man on the course I took insisted that he has seen five-year-old children who are wonderful Reiki practitioners. Nothing against children, but if a toddler can do this thing, why do you need to pay \$2000 to learn to do it?

Session 3: Isaac

My flatmate Isaac agreed to be my next patient. He said he would like Reiki because he was feeling tired a lot, had itchy eyes, and "sort of bad skin – dermatitis and shit."

One lady I watch online feels so much energy when she does Reiki she has to huff it out in a kind of high-pitched cough. I tried this on Isaac and it made us laugh.

After I had finished Isaac joked: "all the bad energy is gone, replaced with good energy!" I asked if he really meant that and he said: "I don't know. I guess I do feel more positive energy. Cos I found the whole experience kind of funny, and I laughed a bunch which is always good for giving good energy." He said he liked it better when I did the front half of his body and see where my hands were, so he could "kind of imagine the energy being sucked out." On the back half of his body he couldn't see what was happening, so couldn't make the same kind of psychological connection.

A couple of days later I asked Isaac if he was feeling any long-term effects from the Reiki, and he said he didn't know. He said his skin had gotten worse and then a bit better.

Success rating: 2/5.

One YouTuber claimed that Reiki could keep you alive and healthy for 120 years. Only one verified person has lived to be over 120, and she didn't do Reiki. She was French, a smoker, ate a kilogram of chocolate a week, and attributed her longevity to eating masses of olive oil. She did, however, say that her mental calmness helped her live a long life. Perhaps there could be something in Reiki's calming effect. Mikao Usui died on 9 March 1926 of a stroke, aged 60 and just four years after discovering the supposed healing life force. In that time he is said to have taught his technique to around 2000 people.

Session #4: Tess

When I had finished Isaac's session, his friend Tess turned up at our house. She also agreed to get some Reiki. She said she was feeling tense because she "left home in a bit of a huff." Tess is a caregiver, so always has aches in her back from lifting and moving people. She also loves to walk, so had quite tense legs.

I re-powered my palms and got to work.

Tess was the first person I did Reiki on who wasn't a close friend, and I was aware how strange it was to be getting close to someone I didn't know well. She enjoyed it and said it "definitely worked." She felt more relaxed. "It could have been maybe your presence and knowing that you were trying to make me feel relaxed, or maybe there was some magic in there and it did work." Tess said even when she wasn't looking she could sense my hands over her body. She felt some "weird vibrations" round her head, like "magic powers," and could sense my presence with a kind of "sixth sense." She said: "Before I was feeling a lot more tense and a little bit anxious cos I just sort of popped into the room, but after lying down and relaxing, it seemed to help."

Since Tess was a near stranger I was pretty chuffed at how well the session had gone. She seemed noticeably happier after the Reiki and genuinely grateful for it.

Success rating: 4/5.



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Session #5: Tom

My last patient was my boyfriend Tom. Of all the people I had tried my new skill on, Tom was the only one who was an outright non-believer and not that keen for me to Reiki him. He was recovering from a cold and said he was feeling "5/10," quite congested and low on energy. He also had a broken tooth, back pain, and knee trouble. I asked if he thought any of them could be fixed with Reiki, and he said "No."

Despite his scepticism, Tom said he did feel something when my hands were over his eyes. He found the sensation of having someone nearly touching his face strange and relaxing. When I shifted to his neck he said: "Now I've got the anticipation of being strangled." He said if a stranger were doing that to him he would feel "quite terrified."

Further into the treatment Tom said: "I have to admit that there's a change. It forces you to relax. You have to lie really still, so that makes you feel different. The feeling when someone's almost touching you – it unsettles you a little bit. Things like your breathing and stuff, you start to notice. Weird things like that. The whole experience – it does make you feel in a slightly different headspace or something. But, you know. You still have exactly the same fucking problems. I'm still full of snot."

I made Tom turn onto his front so I could Reiki his back. He commented on the feeling of mucus draining differently. When I was done he needed to blow his nose before I did the consolidation. He said, "I couldn't blow out all that snot before!" Maybe it was because he turned over, but why did he turn over? Because of the Reiki!

I asked Tom later if he was feeling any long-term effects of the Reiki session. He said "No." But I was surprised at how effective it seemed to be at the time, despite Tom not believing in it even a bit.

Success rating: 4/5.

In 2011 a controlled study of Reiki's effectiveness was carried out at Sonoma State University. 189 patients receiving chemotherapy were randomly selected to receive actual Reiki, a sham Reiki placebo (where the "practitioner" had no training), or standard care. The result of the study was that the Reiki really was effective at making patients feel better compared to the control group, but so was the fakey-Reiki. The placebo was as effective as the real thing.

My experience as a Reiki healer made me believe that there actually is something beneficial going on. As long as it isn't used to exploit people out of their money or give people false hope in recovering from serious illness, I think Reiki is a good thing. As Tom said, "People don't take time to lie down and do nothing. You're always doing something. Just to stop what you're doing in life and lie there. Chill the fuck out." It is nice to have someone giving you their attention for an hour, and taking the time to relax. But then, you could do all that and get a massage too. Reiki is fun, but it's not worth \$60 an hour.

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breaking news: *The News* *is broken*

Admit it. You know you regularly choose to read entertaining trash over reminders of how the world is turning to shit. Amber Allott investigates if we are entirely in control of our ignorant habits, or if they are the result of capitalism and political manipulation within the media.

by Amber Allott

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'How Penny says no to Rod during 'that time of the month,' 'The Smart Money's on a Bay Wedding for Richie McCaw and Gemma Flynn,' 'Baked beans and sausages leave Marlborough man wanting more,' and, 'Pregnant Kiwi woman twerks through her contractions. You only have to glance at the headlines of any of our major news publications to determine what is really important to New Zealanders. Crammed down the bottom of the web-page, or into the skinny columns down the side of the newspaper are climate change, disease epidemics, the war-torn middle east, the ever-increasing child poverty rate, and countless other stories about how our world is broken. Perhaps not in a way that affects you or me in the immediate future, but in ways that are hurting millions of others all the time, and will eventually hurt us too.

Maybe you are one of the many who skim vacantly over these articles, or hits like and keeps scrolling when they pop up in your Facebook feed, but don't feel too bad; you're certainly not the only one. It's possible that the fault isn't even yours. After all, the media outlets are the ones choosing how to display and address these stories. Is this how the media have always done things? To what extent does our behaviour dictate what news we see? Are New Zealanders, as a culture, becoming apathetic to global issues? And, of course, does the responsibility to educate and to be an agent of positive change lie with the media, or with the individual?

The newspaper, in its current form, began to come into existence in the early 17th century. It has been the primary medium of journalists until very recently, when circulation began to drop in

When it becomes okay for one person not to care, it becomes okay for others, and apathy spreads like swine flu through a pigpen.



response to news being made accessible via television and the Internet. The first English-language newspaper ever printed was the Oxford Gazette, later renamed the London Gazette. Its first edition came off the press on the 7th of November, 1665, was a mere two pages long, and can be purchased online for about \$250,000 US. At the time, London was overrun with cases of the Bubonic Plague, and thus the papers' content included a 'Bill of Mortality,' a report on the number of Londoners who had died of the plague that week. Other stories involved military and naval news, debates in the House of Commons, overseas dispatches, and the possible impeachments of several MPs for treason. The front page featured a story about the Reverend Dr Walter Blandford's election as Lord Bishop of Oxon.

Perhaps it was because of the difficulty and expense of using a printing press at the time, but reporting in the Gazette seemed only to feature news of political, military, and religious importance, as well as health-related news that was of great significance to London's public at the time. Leaping forwards a couple of centuries, and over the ditch to the United States, we can examine a 1957 issue of The New York Times. The New York Times has won 117 Pulitzer Prizes, more than any other newspaper in the world, and is regarded as a 'newspaper of record,' a title awarded to newspapers with a large circulation, who are commonly viewed as being authoritative and of a high professional standard. Furthermore, the paper boasts the motto, "all the news that's fit to print," which is printed in the top left-hand corner of every edition. In the years following World War II, American entertainment reached an all time high. With

"The more that a person feels dependent, powerless and vulnerable, at the mercy of a system over which they have no control, the more terrifying it is to think that the system is deeply flawed."

musicians like Elvis in the spotlight, rock and roll was on the rise, and cinema was entering the golden age of science fiction. If the media of any era had good reason to shift their focus to celebrity news, it was the media of the 1950s. And yet – when an issue of the New York Times from March the 26th, 1957, is examined, there is no such shift. Front-page news consisted of news of the senate, the U.N., a deadly blizzard, political news, and international intelligence. The only story remotely addressing entertainment is approval by the city commissioner to present Broadway musicals under the stars in Central Park.

So, how and why do the modern media choose what they report on? Do news editors have exclusive control over what gets reported? In reality, there are many factors that influence this process, the most significant being political pressure, and maximising profits. News editors may be forced to succumb to pressure placed on



News editors may be forced to succumb to pressure placed on them by police, government, or other entities, to include or exclude certain stories, alter facts, and mislead their readership others, and apathy spreads like swine flu through a pigpen.

them by police, government, or other entities, to include or exclude certain stories, alter facts, and mislead their readership. Even when a news source is entirely free of governmental restraints, they are likely still operating as a business. This means that in order to outperform their competition and maximize profits, what they publish has to catch and hold the attention of a wide variety of consumers. In critically-acclaimed 2014 film, *Nightcrawler*, a news editor describes to a freelance worker what her station looks to buy; "We find our viewers are more interested in urban crime creeping into the suburbs. What that means is a victim or victims, preferably well-off and/or white, injured at the hands of the poor, or a minority." When her boss, at one stage, complains about some of the footage she intends to show, saying that people will be eating breakfast, she responds, "and they'll talk about it at work." What this implies about the news industry is that the headline stories are the ones with the most shock value – those that will grab the attention of the public; the news that will keep them talking, and keep them watching, whether that involves the private lives of beloved public icons or gruesome crimes. These stories

keep the money rolling in.

With the world so rife with war and conflicts, with enormous environmental problems to which there is no easy solution, and with diseases tearing across entire countries, it's only natural for newsreaders to become jaded and apathetic to such things. Is apathy really the culprit, however? To investigate, a survey was conducted about public awareness of significant issues, with questions regarding climate change and related health issues, events in the Middle East, global health and education, and New Zealand politics. All questions were based on headlines from the *New Zealand Herald* that had been published in the last week. Of the respondents, 46.67% claimed that they watched or read news stories daily, with 40% claiming to read them once to several times per week. Only a single respondent admitted to reading them less frequently than monthly, or never. One hundred percent of those who answered were aware that it is health problems related to air pollution that is killing more people annually than malaria and HIV combined, a fantastic start. Accuracy dwindled on the second question; 64.29% believed that the deadly weapon New Zealand

soldiers have recently started training Iraqi troops to use was the frag grenade, rather than the correct answer, the bayonet. 71.43% of participants believed that it was Andrew Little who has voiced his concerns about the failings of the current electronic bail system, rather than Winston Peters, and the numbers of correct responses only got more dismal from there on out, with questions regarding criticisms of the recently-released US health guidelines, the CEO of Netflix announcing a \$100 million dollar fund for education, and the effects of Tropical Cyclone Chapala.

Despite the lack of awareness of the articles used in the survey, those who completed it indicated that they are quite concerned about the issues that these articles address. On a scale from one to five, with one being 'Not at all interested,' and five being 'incredibly invested and concerned,' the average result was four, with no answers whatsoever below three.

In *New Matilda*, an Australian independent news digest, Dr Lissa Johnson published a recent article on the science behind why people are not more concerned about, as she phrases it, "the death of our planet and democracy," or rather, polls showing that an overwhelming number of Australians would re-elect their government, despite disagreeing with them on a large number of policies regarding environmentalism. She proposes that a psychological theory known as 'system justification,' may come into play. System justification is, essentially, when people view the systems on which they depend, such as the government or media, in a favourable light, just as they view themselves and their social groups.

This theory, which is supported by hundreds of studies, meets the needs of the public in three



System justification is, essentially, when people view the systems on which they depend, such as the government or media, in a favourable light, just as they view themselves and their social groups

major ways: existentially; belief in social, economic and political order makes people feel safe and secure, epistemologically; there is an order and meaning to life, and relationally; everybody is connected as a community through a shared reality. As Johnson puts it, "The more that a person feels dependent, powerless and vulnerable, at the mercy of a system over which they have no control, the more terrifying it is to think that the system is deeply flawed. Put simply, if you are relying on the system to survive, believing that it is good and just helps to keep your fear, insecurity, futility, alienation and meaninglessness at bay."

When this is considered, a great number of us are engaging in self-deception. Because if the systems we rely on are flawed, then we are left without the security they provide. So, when people come along attempting to point out these flaws, they are often seen as attacking the security and peace-of-mind of everyone else. Is it any wonder, then, that so many people would

just prefer not to know? To be able to skim over stories of how climate change could drive us to extinction, how international trade deals could leave us unable to protect our environment, and how the documented number of civilian deaths in Iraq since the war began in 2003 is believed to be over 170,000? Nobody could really blame you if you preferred to read light-hearted fluff about celebrities, or watch gruesome crimes unfold on the daily news, knowing that they will most likely be resolved by police. No need to worry, right?

Wrong. We need to care. If the past can teach us anything, it's that social movements work. When ordinary people band together and take action, they create meaningful change in the world. This is the only world we have so far, and we have a responsibility to it, and to everyone else here to care, even when it feels hard, or seems boring. Because when it becomes okay for one person not to care, it becomes okay for others, and apathy spreads like swine flu through a pigpen. The media are not absolved of responsibility here either; the blame can never be placed entirely on the individual. They also have an obligation, especially the mainstream media outlets, like the New Zealand Herald, The Press, One News, and Stuff.com. They get to decide what they put in the spotlight, what we see the most of, and they need to make a change. Because they ARE the news, and what they are bringing to us should be newsworthy, all the news that's fit to print.



FRESHER FLU AM I SICK?

by ISA ALCHEMIST

AM I SICK ?

We're all back in Dunedin and should be ready to take on the world. But at this time of year, a lot of us aren't feeling too well at all. The problem is that at this time of year 20,000-odd people gather together from all over the globe and breathe on one another in the hot-house incubators called "lecture theatres". Bacteria and viruses have a party as they find new hosts. You've probably heard of the "fresher flu", and if you're sick your healthy friends will be gleefully telling you that's what you've got.

DO I HAVE THE FLU?

That's actually quite unlikely. Influenza tends to peak around the winter months, although there have been a few early cases this year. Flu symptoms are more severe than those of a regular cold. When you have the flu, you will have a high fever, aching joints, and sometimes even delirium.

Flu Vaccinations will be available during the second weekend in March. Everyone should get

one. If you have existing health conditions, particularly asthma, get yourself along to Student Health for a free vaccination. Most pharmacies will give one without an appointment. This year's vaccination protects against three viral strains, including the infamous H1N1 known as "bird flu".

SORE THROAT

The most common complaint two weeks into the term! The cause of a sore throat could be bacterial or viral. Generally, a viral infection will cause a higher rise in body temperature. A thermometer is a very handy flat tool for gauging degrees of illness. You'll be able to tell when your flatties are really sick (39 degrees and up) or if they just don't want to go to class (normal temperature is 37.5 degrees.)

Sore throats, viral or bacterial, can be treated with an iodine based gargle, some soothing lozenges, and maybe pain medicine if needed. Most will go away after three to four days, and won't need an antibiotic.

COUGHING

Coughs are split into two types. A "productive" cough refers to when you are coughing stuff up. You can tell a lot from your sputum. If it is clear, you are getting better. If it's yellow, you should rest up. If it is green, it could be a sign of bacterial growth and you should see a doctor.

Non-productive coughs are more annoying. They are the dry, itchy coughs that don't produce sputum trophies, and could indicate an allergy or irritation. Non-productive coughs are annoying to other people, and can disturb your sleep. If you have a dry cough at night you could have a touch of asthma, especially in older houses. Many of us are allergic to the house mites which live in carpet. A good vacuum will help.

"Fresher flu" can be one or all of the above. If the symptoms last more than a week, you should get it checked out.



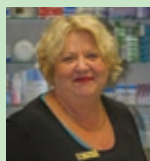
Mandy Ma

Graduate of Otago Pharmacy School, speaks Cantonese, and has been with the pharmacy for four years



Greg Andrews

Graduate of Otago Pharmacy School, had a previous life as a programmer



Debbie Young

Graduate of Otago Pharmacy School, owner of the pharmacy which she opened in 1996



Nicky Hewson

Graduate of Otago Pharmacy School, now also a part-time lecturer at the University



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THE WEEKLY DOUBT

PALM READING

by **WEE DOUBT**

When I was 14 my uncle read my palm. He told me that I would live a long life, but with a lot of misery. I would have many partners before I found one to settle down with, if I ever managed to keep a relationship going at all. I would have two children. I wouldn't find a career until I was in my 30s, and it would be in a field of "creative fantasy." I would have some terrible injury or sickness at some point that would affect the lower half of my body, but I shouldn't worry about it because I couldn't avoid it and I would eventually recover. My heart is stronger than my head.

Fortunes and personality traits have been read in people's physical attributes since pre-history. Phrenology was based on the 18th century idea that the brain was composed of a set of 27 organs and that each organ was associated with a mental ability or personality trait. Franz Joseph Gall, a German neuroanatomist, believed that the growth and development of these organs could be felt in the lumps and bulges of the skull. He mapped the characteristics of what he believed to be, for example, a criminal skull. Scientists had mostly discredited phrenology by the 1840s, but in the meantime, countless people had been

judged according to the shape of their heads.

Thinking back on the reading I find it obscene. I don't believe in palm reading anymore, but at the time I believed in it completely. As a result I didn't take my first long-term relationship seriously, "knowing" it would end and there would be a few more to get through before I found the right person. I could flip-flop through my 20s with no direction, because I wouldn't work out what I wanted to do till I was 30 anyway. I didn't know if I wanted kids, but it looked like I was having them. I found it difficult not to worry about the terrible thing that was going to happen to my lower body.

Palm-reading is not all that different to phrenology. The appearance of my palm became a self-fulfilling prophecy. I felt trapped by my own hands, which told me about a future I didn't want, but felt I had no choice in. Pseudoscience can seem harmless, but it can under some circumstances dictate the lives of those who truly believe it.



PLANNED OBSOLESCENCE

by **VIBHUTI PATEL**

Remember the old days, before smartphones were a thing and Nokia reigned supreme? Sure, the cellphones of the early millennium were thick slabs with little more function than to call people and play the odd game of Snake. But they had a battery life that lasted forever and were also extremely resilient – such that there was no real need to replace them until they stopped working. Take a look at your phone now. Chances are that it's a smartphone, and it's relatively new. Think about how many people, like you, have a smartphone. (hint: it's a huge number). Now think about the likes of corporate giants Apple and Samsung: how they introduce new models every few years (with only minor changes

in hardware) and how many people throw away their perfectly working phones just for the privilege of owning the latest and greatest. In fact, average consumers use a phone for only 18 months – well below their average lifespan.

Planned obsolescence – the intentional design of a product to become obsolete and/or unfashionable after a certain period of time – is one of the main weapons in the arsenal of large-scale electronics companies, who are locked in an unceasing arms race to have the "best" product out in the market. Often what constitutes "best" is arbitrary – a product of trends set by popular culture: functions which elevate personal status rather than contribute anything

actually useful to ourselves or society. There's a pretty steep price to these products, but even this doesn't match the true, ecological cost. Cellphones are incredibly resource intensive to make. Raw materials are mined from the earth and transported to polluting factories, where they are then manufactured into the 500-1000 components that go into a single unit.

During their lifetimes, cellphones use copious amounts of energy and emit equally copious amounts of radiation. Once they've been discarded, they leach hazardous elements like lead, cadmium, and mercury, which can end up in soil and waterways, causing major health problems for wildlife and people alike.

Nowadays it's almost impossible to live without a phone. While I give my own phone the shifty eyes as it sits next to me on charge, I won't be getting rid of it any time soon. But it's good to keep this information in your mind. Use your phones for longer. Replace them less often. And dispose of them responsibly.

MATTERS OF DEBATE

This column is written by the Otago University Debating Society, which meets for social debating every Tuesday at 6pm in the Commerce Building.

"A COMMITMENT TO FREE SPEECH ENTAILS A COMMITMENT TO THE RIGHT TO GIVE OFFENCE"

AFFIRMATIVE

by **BY OLD MAJOR**

It's easy to listen to your racist uncle and think "this can't be what our forefathers meant when they declared the right to free speech!" After casting off the yolk of tyrannical rulers and ushering in an age of freedom and enlightenment the end product can't possibly be Uncle Mervin holding court at Christmas dinner about how some of his best friends are Muslim but really deep down they're all terrorists. But it is. And that's a good thing. Why is that?

It's easiest to illustrate the importance of the freedom of speech by looking at the flipside. In saying we have freedom of speech we acknowledge that everyone's opinion is of equal worth. By saying that some ideas are offensive and some aren't, we can only make an arbitrary distinction between the two. It's the same as a dictator announcing that some ideas are good and some are bad. Nothing makes those ideas good or bad objectively so we can't be outraged at the actions of a dictator and then at the same time say that some things shouldn't be said because they might lead to offence. Because people get offended for a whole bunch of reasons and that doesn't mean that what offends them is necessarily a bad thing. I guess what I'm saying is that we need to make a distinction between what offends people and what are actually bad ideas.

But then why would I say that causing offence is a good thing? Because, to put it simply, it's better that we discuss offensive things than pretend they don't exist. The way that freedom of speech works at the moment is that there is a free market of ideas that anyone can contribute to. It can be seen in miniature in any social media network. Anyone can add their ten cents worth but only things that are interesting or funny or insightful are able to become popular, but at the same time posts that are offensive are ignored or quickly shut down. So it's the fact that some ideas do cause offence that means that when we discuss those ideas people react to them and shut them down. You have the right to cause offence just as you have the right to freedom of speech, but if you cause offence then people's reaction will be 'that's a fucking terrible idea'.

At the end of the day I have the right to offend a racist. That also means a racist has the right to offend me because we don't apportion rights based on viewpoint. The fact that some people are dicks doesn't mean we should censor discussion.

NEGATIVE

by **SQUEALER THE PIG**

Why do we have a right to freedom of speech? We as a society respect that we should be allowed to speak our mind. No matter your political opinion, if you want to get anything done in this country, you need to get people on side. Now, if people disagree with you, you're just not going to get much done unless you've got the opportunity to talk them around. And that's precisely what the freedom of speech guarantee's you, or any other freedom we have set down in law for that matter; an opportunity.

Shockingly however, you don't have a right to being a dick.

So why don't you necessarily have the right to cause offence? Surely you should be able to change minds however you choose? No, and here's why: free speech means you are free from the government preventing you changing minds, it does not allow you to change minds however you want.

In the immortal words of Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes, you do not have the right to shout "fire!" In a crowded theatre when there is none. Why? What if you did it to protest fire safety standards? Because you have chosen to exercise your right to speak in a way that has caused harm, when an alternative existed. You are allowed to say as much as you want, but when you say something that causes offence, when there was another way, then you have no "right".

But let's get to a more practical point; if you can't convince people without being a bastard, then you don't have a very strong argument to begin with. Equally, there is no person on this earth who is so timid that they are caused harm from disagreeing with them, only in the way you disagree with them. No right needs to exist to causing offence as it isn't necessary to protect your opportunity to change society.

Now don't take what I'm saying as a reason to censor yourself because you fear that you might cause offence. We have laws around when a discussion crosses the line, see the recent Harmful Digital Communications Act, for example, but your right to freedom of speech is still a right; genuine attempts at discussing issues aren't going to land you in trouble.





Hi Sexcellent,

I had sex with a couple of different guys during O Week and some of the girls in my hall are calling me a dirty slut. I'm really upset about it because I thought we were in 2016 and it was not a big deal for women to enjoy a bit of promiscuous sex, but now because of this I feel like I've done something wrong. What should I do?

- Anonymous

Dear Anon,

This is an example of one of the horrible double standards our society has toward men and women. If a man was getting as much action as you are, his friends would probably be high-fiving him.

The only thing you've done wrong is to let the words of those girls get to you. The only person you ever need to answer to is yourself, and at this age one of the things we develop is a personal moral compass. You are the sole owner of

your body and, provided you are not harming anyone or yourself, it's completely your right to choose how you operate the equipment!

If you're truly questioning your behaviour, look first to the motive and reason rather than the action itself, because that's where you'll find the clarity to decide what to do moving forward.

As always, stay safe and enjoy yourself!

- Love S



DEAR ETHEL

Dear Ethel,

I don't really own that much stuff so do you think I should bother getting insurance? One of my flatmates was talking about it and I don't know whether I need to or not. Is it worth it?

- Uncovered

Hell yeah! You might not want to part with your little student funds but insurance is worth it. If you've signed a joint (and severally liable) lease, you can be held financially responsible even if one of your flatties damages the house while you're on holiday with your girlfriend in Gore.

For example, your flatmate leaves a candle burning, there's a fire, and half of the house is gutted (but thankfully you're all OK). Your flatmate has scarpered back home to Quebec and left you to face the owner of what is now only half a house. If you don't have personal liability insurance, you could be

asked to pay part or all of the costs of repairs. We're not talking lunch money - we're talking six figures - hundreds of thousands!

Not all insurance companies are equal. You'll have to get busy on the interweb or ring around to ask some questions. Firstly, work out how much the stuff you own is worth. Let's say you own \$5,000 worth of stuff. Some insurance companies say that you have to take out insurance for a minimum of \$20,000 worth of stuff. So, shop around and find someone who gets closer to \$5,000 because their premiums will be cheaper.

Next, you need to find out what excess you have to pay. Ask what happens if things are stolen? Does the excess go up? Is theft always covered? Does the insurance company replace old for new...so your two year old surfboard gets replaced with a shiny new model and not a piece of Trade Me junk? Do



they cover bikes? Glasses (from the optometrist, not beer)? How much is covered for personal liability (you want no less than 1 million)? What is the cost of premiums? If you don't have much gear, you should be able to get cover for about six bucks a week. \$6! Totally worth it when you think of getting a bill for \$500 000

after your flatmate scarpers and you realise that you should have taken out insurance after all.

Feel free to drop into 5 Ethel B or email help@ousa.org.nz if you want any more info or need a hand with working out what's best for you.

Whole lotta love,
-Ethel



LETTER OF THE WEEK

The letter of the week wins a
\$30 BOOK VOUCHER
from the University Book Shop

Dear Critic,

I was saddened but not the least bit surprised to see posters around the university area defending the 'right' to wear oppressive costumes to this year's Hyde Street Keg Party. I was not surprised because the prevailing culture at Otago University is one that supports behavior like this and it's upsetting to think that this is the first year in recent memory that there has been significant attention drawn to the fact that wearing costumes that prop up systemic oppression is harmful. It was only a few years ago that OUSA's own president attended the same event in black-face.

The consistent backlash against efforts to make Hyde Street a safer event over the years is indicative of the need for a cultural shift at Otago University. It would be great to see those with the power and money at this institution making safety and social education a priority not only in the wake of disasters like roof collapses and media embarrassments; but as a core part of the University's practice. I know the 'Student Code' exists, but I'm talking about taking ethics beyond the mission statement.

The key lies not in targeting Hyde Street, but in creating a University where students are empowered to understand how their actions effect others and interact with the systems of oppression we all live under and feed into. I would hope that instilling empathy and analytical understanding into it's students would be core goals for any educational institution.

Workshops in Residential Colleges, media campaigns, lectures; the avenues for education at the university's disposal are myriad. Do those at the top have the empathy and understanding required to use them?

Expecting the worst,
Eliana Gray

DAVID CLARK

zero hours contracting



Sometimes good things can be achieved from the parliamentary opposition benches. The fight to end zero hour contracts is a prime example.

Students, employers, in fact everyone I've spoken to is appalled that zero-hours contracting was ever a thing. But, where laws are weak, there is opportunity for exploitation by unscrupulous bosses.

Under the current government, laws to protect working people from exploitation have generally become weaker. Unfortunately in some industries with vulnerable workers, the practice of zero-hours contracting was starting to affect more and more people.

New Zealanders could see this was unfair. Labour stepped in and negotiated with the Government to make employment easier, fairer and more secure.

The campaign to end zero hour contracts involved tens of thousands of New Zealanders: signing petitions and writing letters and emails to the Minister. This was on top of industrial action by union members, and our parliamentary negotiations.

It took a year and a half, 56,500 signatures and a whole lot of campaigning, but we did it; we put an end to zero hour contracts.

This victory is a real win for students and thousands of other ordinary Kiwis previously required to be available for work but with no hours guaranteed.

Previously, the National Government had promised to get rid of zero hour contracts. But it didn't. Instead, it attempted to entrench them in law by making new rules for how to use them.

Interestingly, it wasn't only Labour and the unions raising concerns – criticism came from business sector representatives with Michael Barnett from the Auckland Chamber of Commerce saying the Government's proposal ignored work-life balance, the needs of the family and protection for the most vulnerable.

United Future and the Maori Party were also convinced by our argument. The Government had no alternative but to back down. Eventually it agreed to the changes we've demanded.

Those changes mean employers can no longer demand that you be available all the time for work without providing guaranteed hours in your agreement. In addition, your employer must have a good reason for requiring you to be available for work and reasonable compensation must be paid.

Employers will no longer be able to cancel shifts at the last minute without providing reasonable compensation. The notice period for cancellation of shifts must be reasonable and included in the employment agreement.

It is now much clearer in the law that having agreed hours in your employment agreement is expected.

I'm proud of the part Labour played in leading this positive change. But it wouldn't have happened without a public outcry. Special thanks must go to the tens of thousands of New Zealanders whose efforts helped to make zero hour contracts history.

THE CHIMES

Author: ANNA SMAILL

by HAYLEIGH CLARKSON

I had high hopes for this novel. Anna Smail's *The Chimes* was long listed for the Man Booker Prize in 2015 and the New Zealand media went crazy for it, touting Anna as the next Eleanor Catton. Despite everyone else loving this novel, I found it to be dull and tedious with a shallow plot.

The novel plays with memory loss. Set in London, it follows a young man named Simon who is living in a world of *The Chimes*. *The Chimes* is a daily event where an instrument called the Carillion plays music across the country that wipes the day's memories from the listeners. This leaves the citizens living the

While they are supposed to be setting the novel and moving it forward, they felt as dull as a friend telling you what they dreamed about the night before

same day over and over. But before *The Chimes* happens, people can transfer a memory into a memory object and keep these objects with them as a way to know that their lives are changing. Simon, with the help of his friend Lucien, who soon becomes his lover, discovers that he can touch these memory objects and hear the memories within. They piece together the terrible past of *The Order* who operate the Carillion and set out to invade the Citadel and destroy the instrument.

The pace of the novel is glacial and I would read a few pages before bed just to fall asleep quicker. There is no action, no high point or low point that gives the story momentum. Throughout the novel are the memories of others that Simon is able to hear. While they are supposed to be setting the novel and moving it forward, they felt as dull as a friend telling you what they dreamed about the night before. The characters are shallow due to a lack of backstory and the novel spends more time explaining what is going on rather than the journey Simon and Lucien are taking.



Lisa Genova's brilliant novel *Still Alice* deals with memory loss due to early-onset Alzheimer's. I expected that when a memory is wiped, the characters would forget people and places just like Alice did. However, that is not the case in this novel. Characters still somehow know each other's names, they know places, they know of *The Order* and the Citadel, which makes me wonder how this is possible. There is a quote toward the end where one member of *The Order* says, "Take him back to London and leave him. He will soon forget what has happened here," making the point that he should be forgetting that *The Order* even exists.

On a good note (pun intended), if you are a music enthusiast or a classically trained musician, you may enjoy the prose in this novel. She uses terms such as "lento" or "presto" to describe speed or sound as well as multiple references to instruments, music, and notes. I'm not a classically trained anything so I'm sure this novel has more to offer to those who are.

For me, this novel was a disappointment. It isn't long, which is a plus, but it is dull. Perhaps it is worth reading just to say you have – at least you'll get admiration from fellow book lovers for reading a long listed Man Booker novel.



THE LADY IN THE VAN

Directed by Nicholas Hytner

Rating: A

by LUCY HUNTER

When *Lady in the Van* opened with Maggie Smith driving a van in the '70s in England, I was clawing at my seat with the claggy white smugness of it. It seems like every year Maggie Smith does a twee, baby-boomer-bait comedy piece to drag a group of people to the cinema who will only pay to see her and/or Judi Dench on screen. While I had resigned myself to a bit of a fluff-piece, it turns out I was wrong and the boomers were right.

The opening scene consists of Smith dodging the police after committing a hit-and-run, then the screen goes dark, and Smith reappears in the future as a homeless woman living in her van with the

windscreen still shattered from the accident.

The film is based on a true story by Alan Bennett, who begrudgingly allowed "the lady in the van" to park her vehicle in his driveway for 15 years. He slowly grows fond of her despite the intrusion on his personal space, and the turds he occasionally steps on in his driveway. Maggie Smith perfected her role in two stage productions of the play prior to the film, and because of this, she manages to be charming through a barrage of rudeness, delusion, and stench. She is the star, outshining Alex Jennings' portrayal of Bennett.

Alan has an imaginary doppelganger in his living room who is



his writer-self, with his presence highlighting the split personality of writers. While Alan has to live his life, do menial chores, and get along with people, he resents his writer self who occupies his alterior motive – to ask the tasteless questions and nose into people's lives. The writer tells the meek Alan that his life is too boring, the boring Alan tells the writer he is a creep.

The film is essentially about everyday guilt and tolerance. Alan

harbours a homeless woman against his will, while his own mother is in a nursing home. I gave the film an A and not an A+ because I didn't like the ending, or the way a storyline seemed confined by essentially a portrait of two characters. Otherwise, I found the film funny, insightful, and sad without being cheesy. Overall, I would highly recommend it.

PEGGY GUGGENHEIM: ART ADDICT

Directed by Lisa Immordino Vreeland

Rating: A



by ANDREW KWIATKOWSKI

I'll be up front – I loathed the character that is the subject of this documentary. However, it must be said that the film itself is very, very well made. If, like me you had never

heard of Peggy Guggenheim, the short version is that she was the real-deal rock'n'roll playgirl of the 1920s Parisian modern art scene. She inherited a lot of money from

her family and set out on a mission of collecting avant-garde artwork that at the time was viewed as not worth preserving. She saved a bunch of it from the Second World War by shipping it to America; fast forward to the present and her collection is held to be the greatest collection of modern art in existence.

The film gives you all the saucy details about various love affairs and insane rich uncles that you want, while also maintaining a pace that helps you take the journey to Paris, London, New York, and Venice with her. Along the way you meet all the capital-B Big names in modern art that she befriended over the years, the only two with which I was familiar were Pablo Picasso and Jackson Pollock. I gather she was married to many of them at various times too, while giving up her son? Oh, and there's a section on those four days she spent in bed with Samuel Beckett, and

something or other about finding James Joyce to be a dullard (despite the fact that he wrote some pretty great postmodernist fiction).

Suffice it to say she was a stupefyingly rich Manhattan socialite, with a bourgeois Gatsby accent and a lot of opportunity to hob-nob. She's the very embodiment of the capitalistic mantra that accumulating wealth leads to artistic patronage and the betterment of all humanity. The interview tapes dug up and featured in this doco reveal that she openly admits to loving her art collection more than anything else, and that she's pleased it will help her become immortalised. Super materialistic, not very Zen.

If you are into art I think you will probably get a lot out of this film, for one thing because you might know which artists are Big Deals, in the Ron Burgundy sense. Without that info, I just found her quite gross, and sad.



MAHANA

Directed by Lee Tamahori
Rating: C+

by LISA BLAKIE

Mahana is the New Zealand film adapted from Witi Ihimaera's novel *Bulibasha: King of the Gypsies*. Successful New Zealand actor Temuera Morrison plays Tamihana aka. the World's Grumpiest Grandpa, who is the patriarch controlling literally every aspect of the Mahana family's life. Young Simeon, played by the fresh-faced Akuhata Keefe, is a teenager who questions everything about his situation, and the reasoning behind his Grandfather's sometimes extreme actions and authoritative stance.

The premise of the film was great, beginning with a family



rivalry between the Mahanas and the Poatas established by a thrilling and pretty funny 1960s style drag race to a funeral. A small Romeo and Juliet sub plot between Simeon and Poppy (one of the Poata daughters) is developed, as well as random romances between other family members. On top of that, there is a shearing competition that

is really important for some reason. Unfortunately, a seriously bad CGI younger version of Temuera Morrison really distracted from the harrowing story it was trying to tell, and ultimately let this film down. Beautiful shots of the Poverty Bay area and a wide range of age demographics did feel refreshing against the more clunky aspects of the film.

The film touches upon multiple issues between Maori and Pakeha relations during the 1960s, which remain embedded in society today. However, these themes did not resonate throughout the entire film and were added in as a sort of afterthought in random scenes that did not add to the over arching plot and thus were easily forgotten.



HAIL CAESAR

Directed by Joel and Ethan Coen
Rating: A-

by NITA SULLIVAN

The latest goofy flick by the Coen Brothers provides multitudes of spazzy plotlines, weird humour and wtf moments. Following a day in the life of 'Hollywood fixer' Eddie Mannix (played superbly by Josh

Brolin), *Hail Caesar's* ramshackle plot serves up random portions of lead actors gone missing, pregnant stars wedding in-house lawyers, and renowned British directors dealing with outrageously bad casting mismatches.

Set in 1951, almost exclusively at the sprawling Capitol studios in Hollywood, the film industry is busy responding to the advent of television with over-the-top film making. Cinematographer Roger Deakins and Jess Gonchor's production design combine to create a pretty impressive homage to 1950s film. The awesome effects of these extravagant sets and vivid colours charmed and effectively sidetracked me from the plot holes that began appearing about half-way through the movie.

But despite the wayward and diverging plotlines, the Coen Brothers still managed to create a number of strong and enjoyable characters. From Clooney's reprisal of his goofy and numskull character (think *O Brother, Where Art Thou?*) playing the lead actor who is kidnapped by Hollywood Communists, to Alden Ehrenreich's "game and gamey" Hobie Doyle, the film introduces us to a vast range of personalities and problems.

The film's hilarity is boosted by a handful of fantastic scenes, as Baird Whitlock attempts to figure exactly what his captors are up to (the advent of American Communism as it turns out), Channing Tatum exhibits pretty impressive tap dancing skills, and *Mannix* appeals to priests representing every religious affiliation you could dream of. What truly steals the show though, is the scene involving Ralph Fiennes' Mr Laurentz and his dramatically inadequate male lead, as they wrangle with Hobie's opening line "would that it were so simple", and ultimately create pure comedy gold out of problematic pronunciation. Unfortunately, Hobie "barely knows how to talk".

While *Hail Caesar* does suffer periodic lapses of depth and punch, the film stays true to its aim of creating a visual homage to period cinema. For a light night at the cinema, I would 100 percent recommend.



WHY DO WE NEED... MOOCs?

Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) are free online university based courses that allow anybody with a decent internet connection and an interest in knowledge to learn about something new.

by **ANTHONY MARRIS**

Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) are free online university based courses that allow anybody with a decent internet connection and an interest in knowledge to learn about something new. The courses are structured and typically range from 4 weeks to 3 months, some with fixed start dates and others with a learn as you go approach.

MOOCs allow the learner to study when it suits and are the evolution of distance learning like correspondence school. Courses vary, from Dante's Divine Comedy to astrobiology, genome sequencing, to the Galios theory. MOOCs expose the learner to a variety of different lecturers from different universities, including ones that some of us dream of going to, like MIT and Stanford.

Class Central is a website that regularly updates the names and start dates of courses hosted through sites like Edx, Coursera, and Future Learn. Edx (a non-profit MOOC) and Arizona State University have recently created the Global Freshman Academy which allows students to gain undergraduate credit for the courses they take. This is awesome, as usually all you can get is an e-certificate for participation in completing the course, which essentially holds no weight in the real world (pun intended). I never paid for a special certificate as I treated the knowledge gained as if I had obtained it from a book through my own private ad hoc studies.

There are assignments. Often they involve

researching an article or clip about the topic and commenting on it. The MOOC Guide have cited one criticism of MOOCs: the abundance of user generated commentary and supplementary material can be overwhelming, as well as the time and effort needed to understand it all. From personal experience, many more hours than necessary were exhausted trying to stay on top and absorb the additional information.

Other issues that the MOOC Guide highlighted is that MOOCs are reliant on a digital literate demographic, that the direction of the course could be changed, and the limited scope of the topics discussed. We (NZ) do not really need to worry about digital literacy. While MOOCs are offered in a variety of languages, it is assumed that because you are taking place in a MOOC that you are competent at navigating the web. This is the difference from finding and using an article found through Google Scholar or The Onion. As to the courses going off topic, if the course organisers are on to it (they usually are), then they acknowledge points raised in the discussions and then continue with their course plan.

I struck the limited scope of a course when I looked at the global response to Ebola. While the facts and myths about Ebola were explained, the information regarding governmental and humanitarian response was limited to the US local, state, and federal bodies. They did suggest looking at your own country's response to

This is awesome... usually all you can get is an e-certificate for participation in completing the course, which essentially holds no weight in the real world (pun intended)

outbreaks (interesting reading), but any focus questions and tests favoured the US.

MOOCs will never replace brick and mortar universities. They are long established and value their reputations too much to allow some new upstart to muscle in on their turf. Not to mention that for obvious reasons, studies in law and medicine require a hands on approach. MOOCs allow the wider sharing of information in short structured bursts. There are no costs, sources and resources are readily found online, and the student sets the pace of their own learning. This is ideal for those who want to learn but feel threatened by universities, cannot afford to study, or have spent a lifetime doing one thing and now seeking a change.

TL; DR – Education is a right that should be cheap (or free), and knowledge is to be shared. MOOC's are a forward step in that direction.



FIREWATCH

PC | Developed by Campo Santo,

Published by Panic

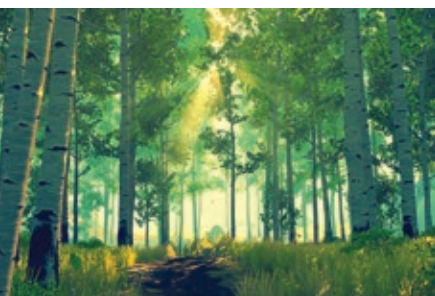
RATING: A+

by **JAMES TREGONNING**

Here's a quick history of popular video games. It starts with the arcade, with players putting quarters into machines over and over, beating high scores and paying for the privilege. These arcade games developed out into what is now arguably the largest entertainment industry in the world. For comparison, James Cameron's *Avatar* made history by earning a billion dollars within nineteen days of release; it took Activision's *Modern Warfare 3* sixteen days. With that kind of money flying around, it's no wonder there's a strong culture of games like *Call of Duty: Warzone* 3. Hype is the name of the game, and boy, the industry knows how to play it.

The next step in the history of video games is pretty unsurprising. Some players got tired of hype and grenades and shitty twelve-year-olds with microphones, and they went looking for a more 'genuine' experience – something with real feeling. There was a growth in the number of games investigating narrative, character and emotion. Unsurprisingly, some of them were saccharine. *Unravel* is the latest release to come under fire for being grossly gauche – which, for me, is more of an observation about the state of the industry than an attack on the game itself.

I'm not going to tell you anything about the story, because it's a good story, and it's worth going in blind.



In the midst of this counter-movement towards emotion and narrative, one that's already losing its utopian sheen, we have *Firewatch*. It's a good, confident, sure-footed, and very quiet game. It's utterly indifferent to both the hype surrounding *Call of Duty: Warzone* 3 and the hype around 'emotional' games. The plot revolves around Henry, a guy who takes up a job as a volunteer fire lookout to get away from the world for a bit. It's set in the wilderness of Wyoming in the wake of the 1988 Yellowstone Park fires, and it tells a story about solace, companionship, and responsibility. I'm not going to tell you anything about the story, because it's a good story, and it's worth going in blind.

It's debatable whether *Firewatch* can be classified as a game. Most would probably include it in the walking simulator genre, in the same vein as *Dear Esther* or *Gone Home*. I've got nothing against these titles, but they aren't technically 'games', because there's no competition. That lack of competition changes how you think about what you're doing. There's no point complaining that *Firewatch* isn't challenging enough in terms of gameplay, for instance, because it's not competitive in the first place.

Yes, it's a walking simulator, but it also avoids many of the genre's shortcomings. I'm dissatisfied by only getting to explore in a game. I want a purpose and a goal, and *Firewatch* gives me that in the form of straightforward day-to-day tasks in the Wyoming wilderness. It also avoids

completely isolating the player, which is exciting. It's common knowledge in theatre that one-person shows are difficult to pull off, because there's no dynamic on the stage. When two people are interacting, there's negotiation, relationship, development – all these lovely things that go into making up a story. Most video games haven't really figured this out yet. One of the main features of *Firewatch* is your handheld radio: if you spot something interesting while doing your chores around the forest, you can chat to another fire lookout about it. These opportunities for conversation punctuate the solace of the wilderness. At points I found myself hoping to stumble across something conversation-worthy, just to hear a bit more humanity.

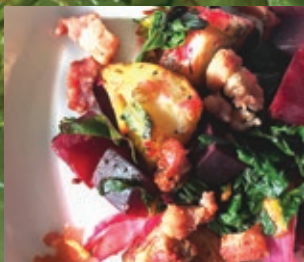
In some ways, there's not a lot to say about *Firewatch*. When you talk about a game's virtues, there's often an unspoken qualifier: 'for a game'. It's got a good story – for a game. It's got great character development – for a game. *Firewatch* is nice because I don't feel like it needs any of those qualifiers. It's a well-paced, well-constructed story with solid characters. I don't think I've ever seriously said that about a video game before – at least, not in the same way I'd say it about a movie or a book. It's a miracle to find all of that in a video game. At the same time, *Firewatch* is not a game that wants to be hyped. It's good, it knows it's good, and it's happy being what it is without any gushy bullshit.





WHAT TO DO WITH BEETROOT AND RAINBOW CHARD

FEEDS 4



WELCOME TO AUTUMN EVERYONE! IN HONOUR OF THIS COLD and colourful time of the year let's make something warm and vibrant with some veggies from our local farmer's market.

I confess I haven't really cooked with either of these ingredients fresh before. I think of rainbow chard as one of those hipster Instagram superfoods. Hence why I had to try it. It's just the coloured version of silver beet to be honest. This recipe was a trial run and a challenge to myself to use these ingredients (if I can do it, you can too). Hence why I kept it simple. My attempt had some room for improvement which I've adjusted for in this recipe.

So here it is, beetroot and rainbow chard tossed together with some potatoes and bacon. They had something similar at the Saturday Market Kitchen (the little truck with local chefs and free tasters) a few weeks back. The chef then also recommended making the whole beetroot plant stretch further by using the leaves. In my research I discovered you can also eat the beetroot stems by sautéing them.

#zerowaste #foodefficiency

INGREDIENTS:
3 BEETROOT
6 SMALL-MEDIUM POTATOES
1 BUNCH OF RAINBOW CHARD
250G BACON, DICED

1 TABLESPOON OF BALSAMIC VINEGAR
DRIED THYME
SALT AND PEPPER
2 TABLESPOONS OF WATER

2 TABLESPOONS OF BUTTER
2 CLOVES OF GARLIC

1. Preheat oven to 180C.
2. Cut stems off beetroot (leave tops on) and scrub clean, and then cut the tops off. Put stems and leaves aside to use later.
3. Line an oven tray with foil and place water and balsamic vinegar on top.
4. Place beetroot, cut side facing up, on foil. Season with salt, pepper and thyme. Place cut side facing down on foil.
5. Cover with more foil and roast in oven for 40 minutes.
6. Dice potatoes to around 1 inch. Line another baking tray with foil to put potatoes on, place potatoes in, salt potatoes (no need to oil), cover with more foil and roast for 30-40mins.
7. Meanwhile, dice rainbow chard stems into half an inch and the leaves into thick strips. Strip beetroot leaves from stems.
8. Sauté rainbow chard in butter and garlic, then add beetroot leaves. Take off from heat when soft.
9. Place frying pan over medium heat and cook bacon until crispy.
10. Take bacon pieces off the pan. When potatoes are cooked through from the oven, fry them in the rest of the bacon fat.
11. Dice beetroot into chunks when cooked. Toss the chard, beetroot leaves, beetroot, potatoes, and bacon all together. You can use some of the liquid from roasting the beetroot as a dressing.



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CHARLOTTE PARALLEL ECOLOGIES OF TRANSDUCTION

The Anteroom, Port Chalmers

12-20 MARCH, 2016

Free entry

by **TED WHITAKER**

A low rumble of a freight train or the colliding of steel on a container ship occurs in a layered reality at The Anteroom, an artist-run space in Port Chalmers. Three recent works by Charlotte Parallel make up *Ecologies of Transduction* that aptly culminate a careful trajectory of geo-specific sound maps from Venice, The Auckland Volcanic Plateau and Koputai/Port Chalmers.

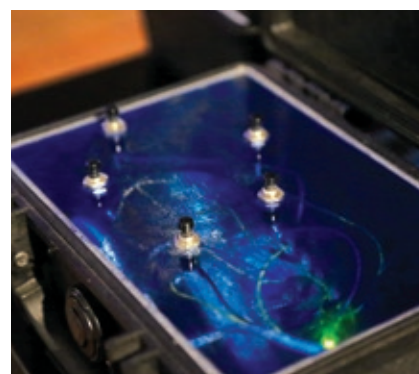
Entering the dimmed space of The Anteroom, the high gabled ceiling, tiered wooden floors and iconic blue window bring its own architectural atmosphere to the exhibition. The former Masonic Lodge commands its own idea of an art space, one that differs to a traditional white cube gallery. The Anteroom caters for a diverse exhibition practice such as performance, sound and cinema works. Parallel's work is no different. A precise selection of spotlights illuminates three works each displayed to custom matte black metal trolleys. The works are not shown in a line or a triptych but as a conversational series of three creating their own narrative.

Parallel's work *Data Processing System: A Sonic Cartography of Venice* (2015) was first shown as a collateral event with *Nine Dragon Heads* at the 2015 Venice Biennale and created specifically for the exhibition *Jump into the*



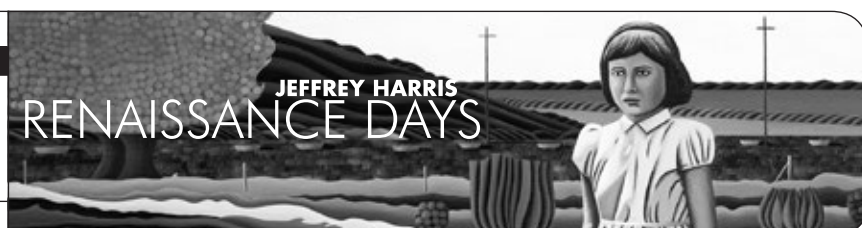
Unknown. The work features four black tool cases, lying flat with lids open, facing back to back. Each case is fitted with a cartographic map printed to a clear plastic surface. Black buttons are placed like geo-markers and when pressed activate an audio recording from the said location. Each autonomous sound map plays together as the viewer activates their own endless composition that collide and harmonize. Each sound layer presents an unknown or forgotten moment, many recorded underwater with a hydrophone in the canals of Venice or transduced from a solar panel to an audible format.

Monogenetic Field: The Auckland Volcanic Plateau (2016) is a work based on Geo Net seismographic data again transduced to an audio format. The electronic components to this work are encased in a black tool case similar to *A Sonic Cartography of Venice*, both these works speak a mobile art practice, one that could board a plane, although at severe risk of causing a bomb scare. These works expose careful electronic wiring from servos to speakers and buttons



offering a "finer attunement to a given place" yet also appear questionable to a home-made bomb. Parallel's field-recording process attracts attention that differs from day to night, both of intrigue or unease. Recording with either an underwater hydrophone, solar panel on a pole, complete with a backpack of recording devices and battery packs, attention comes and a spectacle of interest or caution.

Koputai/Port Chalmers (2016) maps the artist's local sounds. From the railway lines in earshot from the gallery, fish feeding in Carey's Bay, the depths of the harbour where boats dredge the sea floor to a soft flickering ornament, in the wind on a grave stone. Parallel brings to the surface the foreign, familiar and unseeable, each presenting an intimate experience with location, data and delivery.





A SIT DOWN WITH RAIZA BIZA

by SAM FRASER-BAXTER

The illustrious Raiza Biza is a rapper spearheading a promising renaissance of hip hop music in our country. Following a prolific string of releases since 2012 and the success of his last album 'The Imperfectionist', Raiza has slowly risen from the underground and become a well-respected figure in the New Zealand music scene. The Rwandan turned Kiwi is well known for his silky flows, intellectual lyricism and soulful, jazz influenced beats. Sam Fraser-Baxter caught up with Raiza after his headline performance at Melocasa Promotion's 'Octopus Alley' last Friday at Refuel.



So Raiza, tell us a little bit about your personal background. Where do you come from?

I am originally from Rwanda, but I spent my childhood in South Africa. Then myself and my family moved to NZ when I was about 13 or so.

How did you find it adjusting to life in New Zealand as a Rwandan immigrant and how does it influence your music?

It was a tough adjustment. There was a culture shock, but it wasn't the first time I had moved to a new country, it was in fact the fourth time. So I think the biggest impact it had on my music was giving me the perspective of an observer. Someone always on the outside looking in. Someone who had not stayed anywhere long enough for any place to be home, which made me a better storyteller as I almost have a bird's eye view and some objectivity when I write.

How did you get into writing music?

I started when I was about 10 or 11. Myself and my friends would write little battle raps and say them to each other. As I grew older, I started writing my own verses about things that were on my mind and naturally that crossed over onto beats.

What kind of artists first influenced and inspired you to make music?

Tupac Shakur, Nas, Talib Kweli, Mos Def and artists of that nature played a big role in my inspiration as a teenager.

■ **On your last album *The Imperfectionist*, that was really dope by the way, you write on the song 'Bizas Way':**

*Funny how them same ones who criticized,
Get surprised when I look at them with
different eyes*

Can you shed a bit of light on these lines?

Earlier in my career, I had people in my life who advised me to be realistic about my chances of getting my music out and there were many times when things weren't going well, when I thought they were right. But I was persistent, and eventually my work started to pay off. A lot of those people from my past, which I had cut out from my circle, would then pop up when things were going well and tell me they always knew I would make something happen. I always resented that, and the line was a reference to that short-term memory loss that seemed to be circulating among my former naysayers.

You're well known for introspective and intellectual rhymes. I'd even go as far to calling you New Zealand's Talib Kweli. Can you give us a couple of bars rhyming with the un-rhymeable word 'orange'?

Laughs When it comes to rhyming, sometimes you have to mould your pronunciation to make it work so let me see...

'He did 5 years confined in a jumpsuit that was orange/
Forced to forage/ thru the foliage in his mind like a forest/
The cell walls resembled the grey shade of porridge/
He was haunted every hour by his futures broken promise/
Kind of rhymes *laughs*

What's on the horizons for Raiza Biza?

I am working on a new album and also have some shows lined up in Australia and Europe so will be new territory for myself, but my main focus is completing a high quality project in the next couple of months.





NEW TRACK: "YOUR BEST AMERICAN GIRL"-MITSKI

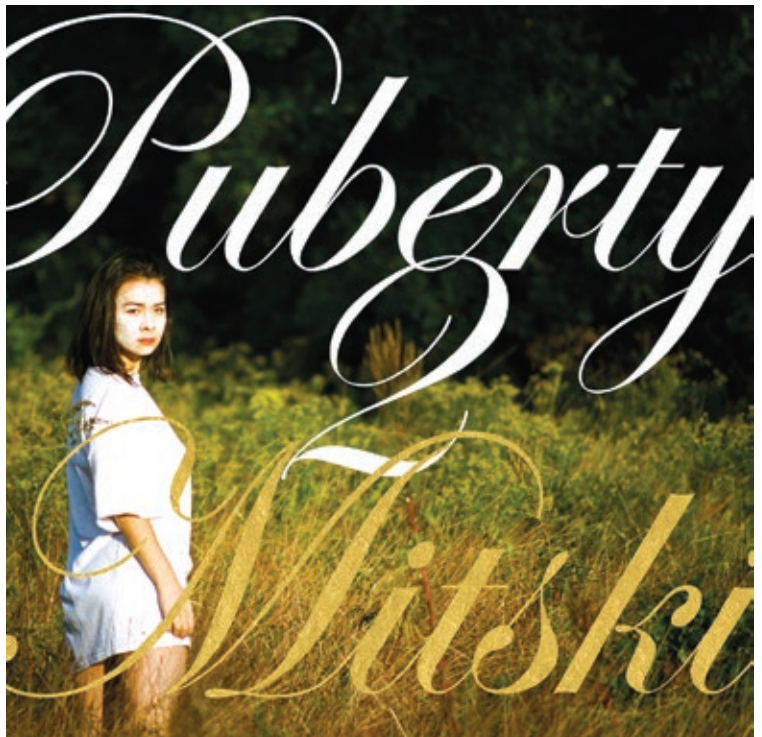
by **MILLCENT LOVELOCK**

I've come to know Mitski as the princess of propulsive sadness, and her new track, "Your Best American Girl" doesn't disappoint. Like most of her songs, it's a slow burn running into a scorching, explosive chorus. Mitski slips us into the body of the song with a soft, unsettling hum before she starts singing in earnest. It's as though she's tossing up whether singing the song is a good idea at all, she's far away,

It's difficult to describe how the guitars sound at this moment, because you don't hear them as much as you feel them

buried in her thoughts. Her voice is at first a cool, lucid trickle, telling us "if I could, I'd be a little spoon and kiss your fingers forever more", and while on paper the meaning in this line is abstract, in the context of the song the words come close to being tactile, you can sense, if not feel, the intimacy of the line.

The climactic chorus does what Mitski songs do best, combining soaring melodies and chiming instrumentation with hissing, static distortion. It's difficult to describe how the guitars sound at this moment, because you don't hear them as much as you feel them. The easiest way is to think of how full your head feels in the calm after everything has gone wrong; they're jarring and constant, a horrifying and numbing drone. Unusually for Mitski, this is the point in the song where her vocals are the most buried. I had to look up the lyrics to work out what she was singing when normally her voice rings out crystal clear. At first I found this a little frustrating, but after I had listened a few times it started to make sense. This is a song about being hidden, so far in the dark that you can hardly think to find your own way out. It's an image of agonizing love, a love that is just out of reach. Singing, "you're the sun, you've never seen



the night [...] but I'm not the moon, I'm not even a star" Mitski shows the simultaneous and incongruent desire to be seen and yet remain invisible. This makes her muffled vocals all the more heart wrenching.

With 2014's "Bury Me at Makeout Creek" Mitski set up house in my mind as an expert musical seamstress. Her songs are flawlessly strung together, they move effortlessly, and they are always devastatingly beautiful. And, if "Your Best American Girl" is anything to go by, her next album is going to resonate with me in much the same way.

WHAT I'M LISTENING TO:

Zayn- "iT's YoU": In spite of how stupid the title is, this is actually quite a touching piece from ex-boy-band-er Zayn Malik. I was initially unmoved when he performed the song on the Tonight Show because it seemed like he was singing too far up his register and couldn't get enough force behind his vocals. But, upon further consideration, this song is actually pretty good for when you're feeling a little fragile and you need a touch of mournful crooning.



Critic's infamous blind-date column brings you weekly shutdowns, hilariously mis-matched pairs, and the occasional hookup.

Each week, we lure two singletons to Dog With Two Tails, 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.

His

After gaining much amusement from reading the catastrophic blind dates which have occurred over the years, I figured it was only fair to throw myself into the breach. Turning up on time and sufficiently under liquored I looked around for my potential date. For a split second I thought that due to some massive error the guy next to me, also looking around awkwardly, was the date. But then in she walked, I have to say that she was well worth the wait.

Any awkwardness that I felt as a British man evaporated pretty quickly when she mentioned that she was obsessed with England. Since the *Critic* was footing the bill (thanks by the way) we picked up some fancy drinks and food and got on with the date. She was by no means a basic bitch or “beige” and at moments I was really struggling to keep up my end of the conversation and sound like anything other than a moron.

We skipped most of the basics and delved into politics and economic theory (Thank you for the education West Wing) but it was some of the most enjoyable conversations I've had in a very long time.

As the evening went on the bar tab dried out but the company didn't. We carried on chatting away for hours until she was starting to look a little worse off in the alcohol department.

So in good spirits we left and I escorted her home. However, for all of you that read these columns for this last bit I leave you disappointed as I grabbed her number and bid her farewell, anticipating the next date. So thanks *Critic* for a surprisingly enjoyable evening.

Hers

Like most students from generation Y, I came to university to please my parents. Unfortunately, it's not good grades that my mother wants but grandchildren and lots of them. I've tried everything, Tinder, Yik Yak, Sugardaddy.com but alas, to no avail. My mother's disappointment keeps me up on the long, lonely Dunedin nights. So, with my biological clock ticking and at least five standard drinks down I set off to make my mother proud.

I arrived fashionably late to find a well-dressed and nicely mannered British gentleman (I do love a bit of culture). After finding out he studies medicine, I felt like he could support at least 5 children. Very soon, the Sangria was poured and the conversation was flowing. The chat was interesting, talking about politics, travel, the meaning of life and I think a cheeky ex girlfriend came up at some point...

His IQ seemed higher than his sperm count, and I was scoping out the potential. Suddenly, almost too good to be true he brought up having kids! No way I thought, 'are you the one my mother dreams of?' I whispered into my drink. However, he didn't seem too keen to name the children after the legendary UK TV presenter Jeremy Kyle, but I can work with this.

The food and atmosphere was fantastic and I was having a blast with the bar tab. At one point I made friends with the table of ladies sitting beside us and woke up to a Facebook friend request from one of them. After the tab dried up, my date brought another bottle of wine and eventually we decided to leave.

This is where things start to get blurry. The worst part is, I don't think my date was that drunk but I was gone. It's safe to say that no grandchildren were made that night but I did wake up with a splitting hangover. All in all, I had a great night; my date was fabulous and slightly sassy. I'll invite the *Critic* to the wedding and of course, the baby shower(s).

Cheers to the good night *Critic*!



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President's Column

The Hyde Street Party will have been and gone by the time you read this, but as I am typing the planning is well underway, and the heat is on. OUSA first became involved in Hyde Street back in 2012 after it recognised the event as one important to scarfie culture, but had a reputation that was getting out of hand.

The unintended side effect of the local popularity of this event and our scarfie culture was the notoriety it gained nationally. This led to Hyde Street becoming an out of control event which resulted in it becoming unsafe to attend. The calls for Hyde Street to be culled came in thick and fast, but seeing the event as part of our culture here in Dunedin, 2012 OUSA president Logan Edgar lead OUSA in stepping up to help residents of the street manage the event logistically, as well as implementing safety measures. The following year in 2013, we implemented further changes, including limited ticketing of the event.

The collaboration between OUSA and Hyde Street residents has seen the Hyde Street party change significantly, into an event with the comprehensive safety and security measures it has now come to be known for. It's no longer in the same league as other pop up parties that happen in Dunedin. Months of preparation, and consultation with a multitude of Dunedin stakeholders go into the organisation of safety measures at the party. Through trial and error we continue to learn how to make improvements each year. This includes the residents spending the days leading up to the party cleaning their street and properties, removing glass and other potential hazards. There is heavy involvement of safety teams, emergency services and residents in planning. The Police, Fire Service, St Johns, Are you OK?, Red Frogs, private security, and Campus Watch all attend the party. And come Sunday, Hyde is the cleanest street in all of North Dunedin.

There are many people who come together to make this event as safe as it can be for you. Hyde has a rich history, and many of those involved remember how bad it used to be. We can't afford to have situation like that happen in our student community. I hope those of you who did attend enjoyed yourself, and had a safe experience.

I'd love to hear your feedback on the event, please drop me a line and let me know if you love it, hate it or have any ideas.

Laura Harris

Laura Harris - president@ousa.org.nz

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