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Critic

ISSUE 16 24 JULY 2017

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NEWS & OPINION

Letters	04
Editorial	05
News	06
News in Briefs	14
Politics	16
Sport	19

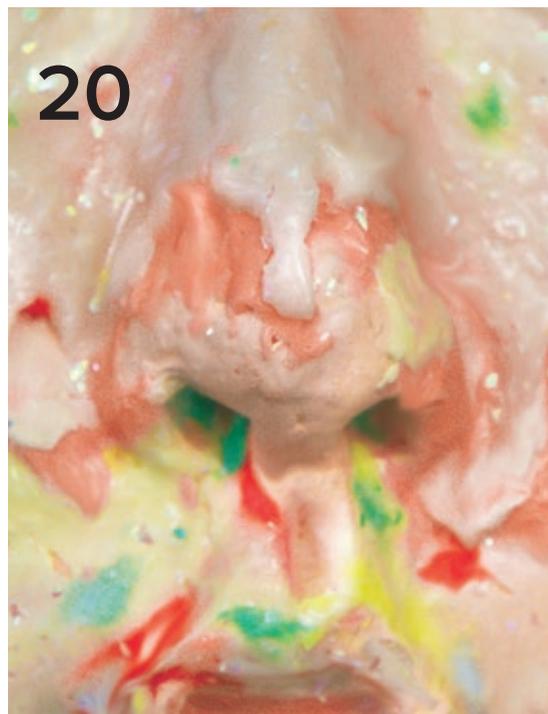
CULTURE

Games	34
Music	35
Film	36
Food	37
Art	38
Books	39
Interview with Rhys Darby	40

COLUMNS

David Clark	16
Hunt for the Mystery Object	32
Day of the Day	32
C****WORD	33
Merry Quizmas	33
Inventions Out of Time	33
Sage Advice	42
Ethel & Hyde	43
The Hell Hole	43
Lucky in Love	44
Critic Booze Reviews	45
Poetry Corner	45
Science Tank	46

FEATURES



Immune to the Truth

If you've ever taken a vitamin C tablet thinking it will stop you getting a cold, you've bought into the myth of immune boosters, by Lucy Hunter, page 20

Diesel or Die

A deadly infection is wiping humans off the Earth, but the Dunedin student population is strangely unaffected. by Joe Higham & Lucy Hunter, page 24

The Winter Blues (SAD)

If winter makes you feel worse than a rainy day, you could have Seasonal Affective Disorder, by Kenzie Reeves, page 29

University Book Shop



LETTER OF THE WEEK

OPEN LETTER ON CCTV AND STAFF CUTS

Dear President,

I'd like to state my opposition to the University's CCTV proposal. I'm opposed because I think it is a top-down approach that disempowers students and centralises control in an unaccountable bureaucracy. I see it as part of the neoliberal managerial approach of VC Harlene Hayne that has been facilitated by laws such as the Voluntary Student Membership Act. VSM has resulted in higher, compulsory student services fees while stripping student associations of their independent power and eroding the social contract between students.

Harlene Hayne's administration has no sense of social obligation to university staff. She pockets millions in pay (\$590,000 per year) and spends millions on paving stones while disorganising and disempowering staff through constant rounds of redundancy. This toxic environment poisons student life. We are kept in fear of redundancy and herded into "marketable" degrees regardless of our interests. But it is our interests, our free engagement with the intellectual world that will create value in the future, not competing mindlessly jumping through hoops to follow the latest market trend.

If there must be CCTV cameras, let them shine a light on the VC's office, on the hidden decisions of the University management and, yes, on the VC's mansion. And let's make this footage available freely online. Petty theft and anti-social behaviour is a problem we should deal with by being good neighbours and looking out for one another (including telling your mates to pull their heads in when they are being dickheads). Major theft – of the livelihood of staff members, of student association fees (no taxation without representation), and of education as a right not a privilege – this is the real problem.

Cheers

Andrew Tait

International Socialist Organisation

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

SHAME ON YOU, SWILLIAM

Dear Mr Shakesbeer

It was 1:40am, statistics was kicking my ass and I was due a break. I consider YouTube or Netflix but decide both will take me to 4am without achieving shit. Then I remember what lay in my bag. The latest issue of the Critic. The perfect break. I open it and head straight for my favourite column, your column.

You reviewed Burn McKenzie, it sounded shitty and made me smile. After reading the review I had an idea. What if I could get my homebrew reviewed by the alcoholic that I looked up to most? Fuck stats. I wrote to Critic. It was 1:57am when I hit send, motivated again. I got back to stats and passed the paper thanks to the plussage I earned that night.

The next afternoon I'm told that "Swilliam says he would love to review your cider." I won't lie, I felt tears of joy welling up in my peepers. I'd just been acknowledged by one of my heroes and it wasn't even my dad. I practically ran down to the Critic offices to drop off a bottle of my cider after using a post-it note and some electrical tape to make a label for it. At dinner I told my friends what was happening and they thought I was cool!

My life only got better when I was awarded letter of the week, I even won the approval of my parents. The review for Wild Buck was a let-down but I told myself my cider would be in the next issue.

Little did I know, it was all a sick game to you. I returned to Dunedin for semester 2 and a review of Southern Gold featuring a typo. My friends asked where my review was. I told them next week, sure that I hadn't been forgotten. And here I am, having just read a review for El Diablo Super Strong Brew and feeling empty. My friends think I led them on but the truth is that you led me on. I'd been looking forward to seeing what Dunedin's authority on alcohol thought of my cider but you only saw me as a groupie. I was 500mls of grog that could free up cash for Maccas and nothing more. It hurt. Now my friends think I'm a joke and I've learnt the hard way that your heroes disappoint you if you give them the chance.

From your former biggest fan,
Antonin Chekhops

P.S. WebMD said the stab wound in my back should heal fine so long as it doesn't get infected, thanks for asking.

[Response from Swilliam Shakesbeer](#)

Antonin Chekhops. First of all, many apologies. If I'm honest I got very drunk and thought I drank it, but it turns out I just lost it under my bed. But let's give you the review you deserve.

For starters, ChekHOPS? With a surname like that, why are you wasting your time with cider, you have the perfect name to brand your own beer.

The cider was pretty shit, but that's what you get with homebrew. I picked up a lot of vinegary notes, probably too much lime. Also you may have forgotten to add priming sugar, because there was no fizz. That being said, it's got a fucking kick to it and enough booze to put you on your ass halfway to 10 bar. If I had polished off a 15 box and had no other alcohol to keep the night going, I would happily knock back a few bottles of this once my tastebuds were numb enough.

Tasting notes: honey, elderflower, hints of shame
Pairs well with: stomach acid coming back up, mouthwash

Yours drunkenly,
Swilliam

[Response to the letter published two weeks ago titled "more on animal testing"](#)

Dear editor

This year has been a lot of talk on campuses (and in the critic) about animal testing. There has been an assumption that in vitro methods can replace animal testing completely. This is incorrect. Just like whole animal models these methods are fundamental flawed and cannot replicate the complex conditions of the human body. These methods are not innately a replacement for animal testing. At best, these can be used to reduce the requirement for (but not eliminating) animal testing. The use of animal testing is still a critical stage in research because to ensure we need to have a stage between in vitro testing and human trials.

Finally, I just wish to mention the website that has been the crutch of the anti-animal testing movement (nzavs.org.nz/bad-science/). This website has more assertions and less references than an anti-vax documentary. If you wish to argue that animal testing is bad science you need to start by referring to published papers in legitimate journals.

Yours

A frustrated science PhD student

NOTICES:

READING FOR POET JOHN DICKSON

John Dickson, who died of cancer earlier this year, was a long-time well-loved local poet. Despite living in Dunedin for three decades, in recent years John resided in Christchurch, regularly travelling south to see friends. John was a former Burns Fellow, and published a number of books of poetry with Auckland University Press, most recently *Mr Hamilton* (2016).

Reading for poet John Dickson
(1944-2017)
Crown Hotel, Thursday 27 July 2017
8:00 pm start, all welcome

[Finally, a little gem from the ODT
brought in by a reader:](#)



[AND Congratulations to:](#)

Dora Ex Plora who won the extra double pass from the Otago Museum with this response the Mystery Object Hunt:

*The Mystery Object for this week is "Sweet As" by Madeleine Child.
Please give me a prize.
I like space
From
Dora Ex Plora*

EDITORIAL

Don't Blame Society's Problems on Individuals—Help The Homeless

As winter continues to hit Dunedin with everything it has, the reality of New Zealand's housing issue is magnified. Many of us are very fortunate in that we are not constantly plagued by the same chill that others are exposed to on a daily basis, but with that position comes with an obligation: to speak out and force action for those that are.

Far too often one hears that this country is too developed and prosperous to have people living in substandard housing that makes them sick, or even without a ceiling over their head altogether. Despite this, we still have more than 41,000 people living a life on the streets, a figure that has risen 25 percent between 2006 and 2013, as the population only increased by 4.8 percent.

The correlation between homelessness and mental health disorders are stark, as is homelessness with criminality and substance abuse. These factors provide even more problems on top of the existing issues keeping these people pinned into their predicament. In fact, 50 percent of organisations or groups providing homes for homeless people also provide services that help prevent criminal offending, 42 percent for mental health problems, and 40 percent for substance abuse and addiction issues.

If what you have read hasn't shocked you, then this might: more than half of the 41,000 homeless people are under 25 years old. People like you and me, suffering on streets up and down the bitterly cold islands we call home. It's easy to ignore this demographic, thinking of them only as being impaired by alcoholism and drug addiction, with just a blanket and a piece of cardboard telling disinterested passers-by how needy they are. In reality, we are the ones who have failed them, and we're continuing to seek any justification we possibly can to allow ourselves to ignore their plight by placing blame for society's shortcomings on their individual shoulders.

Joe Higham
CO-EDITOR

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Uni News

University Murders Thousands; Critic Runs Inflammatory Headline

by Sam McChesney

Over 70,000 animals have died in research at the university over the past five years.

Figures released to Critic under the Official Information Act show that between 2012 and 2016 the University used 89,680 live animals for research purposes. 71,496 of those (80 per cent) were euthanised after the research was complete.

Mice accounted for 43 percent of all animals used, followed by fish (21 percent) and rats (20 percent). Others on board the Noah's Ark of death included pigeons, octopuses, pigs, and the proverbial guinea pigs.

The figures, required by the Ministry for Primary Industries, only include live animals used in research. The university also conducts research on dead tissue, but it is not legally required to report statistics on the number of animals killed for this purpose.

Decline in animals used

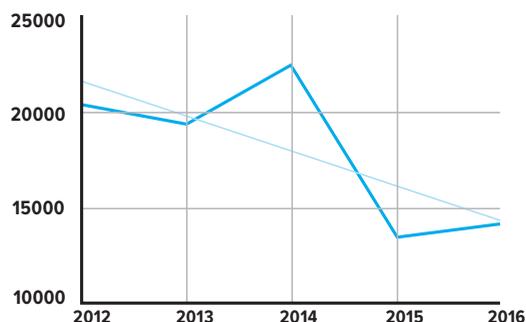
The figures show an overall decline in the number of animals used in research. 14,104 animals were used in 2016, compared to 20,354 in 2012. Although there was a spike in 2014 (22,440), that figure was inflated by a much higher than average number of mice.

The last time the university released equivalent data was in 2012. Those figures showed that more than 50,000 animals were used over the two-year period of 2009-10 - almost double the volume of 2015-16 and further evidence of an overall decline in animal research.

Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) Professor Richard Blaikie would not be drawn on the reasons for the apparent decline, but reiterated the university's commitment to the "three Rs" of animal research (reduction, refinement, replacement).

Oska Rego, the President of the Otago Student Animal Legal Defence Fund, welcomed the decline but doubted it reflected any conscious effort by the university to reduce, refine and replace animal-based research.

Rego said that the university's decision to build a new \$50 million animal research centre on Great King Street showed it has "committed to investing large sums of money in animal-based research," which he said "shows a lack of foresight".



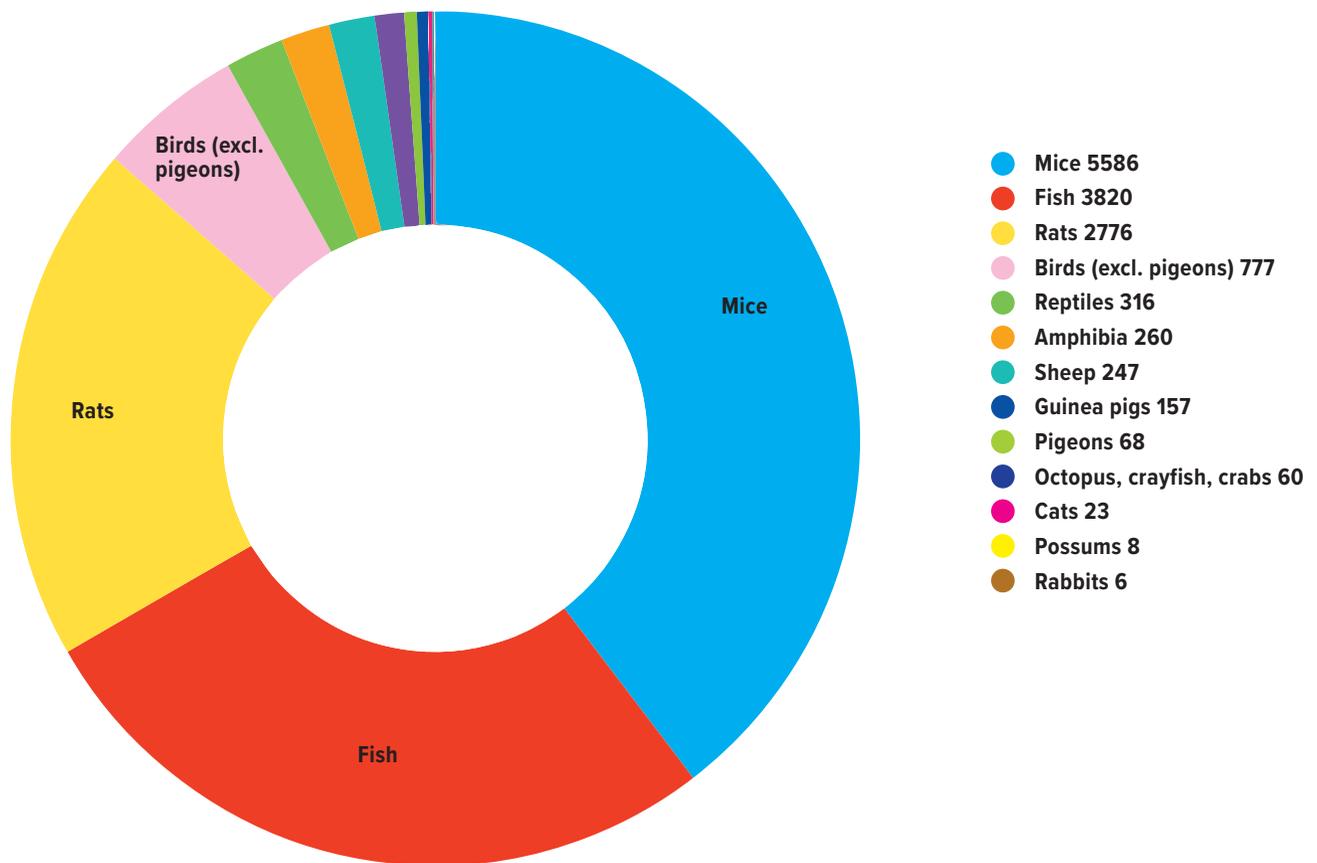
A waste of money?

The university has said that a new animal research centre is required as existing facilities are wearing out and will soon need replacing.

However, if animal-based research continues to decline it is unclear whether the centre will be used to capacity, potentially raising the prospect of a \$50 million boondoggle.

Blaikie told Critic that the university had not projected what volume of animal-based research was likely to be undertaken at the centre, but that the university does "not anticipate an increase in the number of animals that we will involve in our research projects".

He added that the centre "has been carefully designed to be a multipurpose facility with space that can be reconfigured or repurposed in coming years and decades, should changing circumstances dictate such needs."



A “culture of secrecy”

The university has come under consistent fire for a lack of student consultation on the centre, with Rego slamming the university for “fostering a culture of secrecy”.

The plans were announced last May as a *fait accompli*, and the university has not formally consulted the student body nor has it sought to canvass student opinion on the issue.

Blaikie told Critic that the facility was announced at the “earliest stage in the full knowledge that such openness would likely lead to vigorous debate,” and that the university has met with individual students who oppose the centre. Blaikie also

noted that the centre was approved by the University Council, which has a student representative.

An OUSA referendum calling on the university to halt construction on the facility until it has consulted with students passed in May by a tiny margin (50.7 per cent to 49.3 per cent).

As indicated by the result, many Otago students support the new facility. ATOM, the association for science students, told Critic that it had discussed the facility with its members, and found they were “excited for the opportunities the upgraded facility will provide for students and researchers alike”.

OUSA President Hugh Baird said that, while he is personally in favour of the new centre, he believes it is “important that people who have pretty strong views on this are heard”.

In the wake of the referendum, Rego and Baird will meet with the university together to share their concerns.

Although construction on the centre will go ahead regardless, other concessions may be on the table. Baird and the university have recently discussed the possibility of a student seat on the Animal Ethics Committee, which oversees all ethical approval decisions for animal-based research.

Uni News

IS \$200/WEEK ENOUGH TO BUY THE UNDER 23 VOTE IN THE ELECTION?

by Joe Higham

The Opportunities Party (TOP) last week extended its Universal Basic Income (UBI) policy to all New Zealanders aged between 18-23.

Set at \$200 per week (after tax), the youth UBI is “designed to give all young New Zealanders a safety net of income to allow them to pursue their dreams,” according to a TOP press release.

Originally planned to be only for over 65s and families with children under 3, government budget surpluses have allowed an extension to what TOP considers to be “one of the most needy and neglected groups in society possible”.

The press release states that the National Party’s ‘across the

board’ tax cuts, “must be abandoned in the interests of supporting a group who struggle with the highest suicide rate in the OECD and the pressures of ongoing intergenerational inequity”.

The New Zealand Union of Students’ Associations (NZUSA) President Jonathan Gee said that it is a policy that the association has long called for, considering it to be a “step in the right direction”.

He continued: “In this important election year, politicians need to speak to the lived realities of young people, and allow for their issues to be brought up into the political system.”

The policy would not require means-testing or any level of employment or drug-testing to qualify for the handout, and NZUSA welcomes such policies that look toward universality.

Gee was clear that, though this policy is a start, political parties, “must acknowledge the rising living costs faced by students and young people and also speak to their lived experiences.”

The party has been faring well in the polls recently, coming in above all of the government’s support partners and leading amongst all minor parties too, with 0.8 percent.

The Maori Party polled 0.7 percent, while ACT and United Feature split TOP’s total, with 0.4 percent between them. Considering they formed less than eight months ago, the position they find themselves in is both impressive and surprising.

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Uni News

How Healthy Is Our Democracy? Otago Academics Make Their Arguments

by Joel MacManus

We are entering an age of radical politics, where extremism on the left and right will become mainstream and authenticity of personality will trump good policies in the hearts of voters, according to a panel of political experts which spoke at the University of Otago public lecture “How Healthy is our Democracy?”.

The panel was made up of former University of Otago Politics Professor Dr Bryce Edwards, ODT Political Editor Dene MacKenzie, Tree La Rooy of the Tertiary Education Union, and UN Youth Otago President Esme Hall.

Dr Edwards was bold in his assertions and not afraid of making predictions. He spoke of a “zeitgeist of radicalism” which he believed our culture was experiencing, pointing not only to the election of Donald Trump but also the relative successes of Jeremy Corbyn and Bernie Sanders. “We’re

seeing policies which until very recently wouldn’t have been touched by mainstream parties getting real support.” He didn’t think there had been any major swing to the left or the right, but rather against the safe, PR-driven conservatism of the past couple of decades. He was particularly impressed by Meteria Turei’s admission that she had misled WINZ over her living situation while on the benefit, saying that even though it was essentially admitting to an illegal act, voters had started to show positive response to authenticity and honesty, anything that doesn’t sound overtly ‘political’. “It’s the most interesting thing I’ve seen the Green Party do, maybe ever”. He said, “I wouldn’t be surprised if she gets a very good response from it”. He was also bullish about Winston Peters and New Zealand First’s outsider appeal and racial populism. In a recently leaked Labour Party poll, NZ First registered

at 14 percent. Dr Edwards says he “wouldn’t be surprised if they end up even higher than that by the end”.

Dene MacKenzie, ODT, spoke about the rise of ‘fake news’ and ‘alternative facts’, two common attacks coming from the Trump camp. He said that, in terms of genuine fake news made up by fake online organisations, New Zealand was not at much risk. “We’re just not a big enough market to make it a worthwhile industry.” But he was concerned about the frequency with which politicians, namely Winston Peters, were personally attacking reporters (something Critic has experienced in recent weeks), as well as the control parties were seeking to have over journalists. “Media organisations are getting smaller, meanwhile the PR industry is growing. It’s making it harder for reporters.” He then proceeded to get in an argument with an audience member who was convinced that the “neoliberal agenda was slowly destroying the future of this country,” which he refuted by repeatedly (and falsely) claiming that New Zealand had the lowest unemployment in the OECD (latest data from Q1 2017 has us 10th).

The lecture concluded with a discussion driven by Esme Hall and Tree La Rooy about the concerning lack of political awareness among young people, and why high schools need a greater level of civic education to ensure the engagement of young voters.

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Global Learning leads to Global Careers

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Local News

Do Your Bloody Recycling Properly — DCC

by Joel MacManus

The DCC is cracking down on residents not chucking the right stuff in the right bins, so they have launched a new crackdown initiative to make sure you're not throwing your glass out with your plastics. The rate of incorrect rubbish being put in yellow bins has almost doubled in the last five years, from 5.7 percent to 11 percent.

Over the next 12 weeks, yellow recycling bins will be inspected to make sure that everything is in the right bin and processed correctly. Houses that fail to get it right may get a coloured tag left on their bin, and if issues persist they will get a written letter of warning.

"The majority of Dunedin residents are

keen to recycle and, for the most part, do a good job," Dunedin City Council Solid Waste Manager Catherine Irvine says. "There are a few common mistakes people make with their recycling, and this is an opportunity to give them some guidance. For example, many people don't realise that we can't accept plastic bags in the yellow-lidded recycling bins, because they get tangled in the machinery at the sorting facility."

If hazardous waste or rubbish, which should be placed in the red bins, continues to be put out with the yellow bin, flats risk having their bins removed. One of four tags will be placed on each bin: green for 'recycling correctly', orange for 'a few things

that shouldn't be there', and two red tags for 'too many non-recyclables' or 'contains hazardous materials'. Bins with red tags will not be emptied.

According to Irvine, "Hazards like needles can put collection and sorting staff at risk. We are also concerned about contamination, as it affects the quality of other people's good recycling when it gets loaded into the collection truck, and reduces the likelihood that collected materials will be recycled."

Common items to avoid putting in yellow bins include plastic bags, cardboard milk or juice cartons, polystyrene, food waste, clothing, and glass.

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Uni News

VC Reveals At Least 182 Job Cuts For General Staff

by Joe Higham

University of Otago Vice-Chancellor Harlene Hayne addressed a packed College of Education Auditorium on Friday 14 July to reveal the changes to be made in their Support Services Review.

Hayne first provided background to the review, before revealing that 182 Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) staff will lose their jobs from the university's 2,330 General Staff.

The presentation of the business case, which Hayne described as an "exciting new way to meet challenges in a sustainable way," is the result of an almost two year Support Services Review, and was live streamed to University of Otago campuses across the country.

Some of the staff who attended the meeting in Dunedin held their heads in their hands as the level of job cuts was revealed to them.

TEU Organiser Shaun Scott told Critic that the business case has caused "a palpable level of shock among staff," with the decision "really negatively impacting how the university will work in the future."

As rumours of 300 job losses circulated in the lead up to the presentation, many staff may have considered the 182 job losses to be a relatively positive result, however Scott warned that, because many of the support staff are employed on part-time contracts, the overall total is "likely to be well north of 200 ... and it could well be deeper than that".

The meeting revealed little more than the broad picture, with most impacted staff likely possibly not hearing about their individual futures until as late as March 2018.

"There is a definite sense among [TEU] members and general staff that they're not valued [by the University of Otago]," Scott also explained, especially with the unfortunate timing and "unnecessary spending of some of the beautification and also the rebranding of their logo."

The TEU have set up 'stop-work' meetings that began last Friday and they say each member should attend at least one of, so that attendance will allow them "to best represent the views of all members on the proposals".

Uni News

University Hits Roadblock In Plans to Implement CCTV Across North D

by Joe Higham

The University of Otago's planned CCTV surveillance installation took a hit last week as the university discovered they will likely need resource consent for many of their proposed camera locations.

A university spokesperson told Critic that advice from the DCC is that "consent will not be required for cameras installed within the Campus Zone, which includes some surrounding streets, but not the full extent of the proposed coverage".

The 'Campus Zone' does cover much of the area where the cameras were planned to be implemented, but with the university having "hoped to have the cameras installed sometime this year," it is a significant roadblock.

However, the Otago Daily Times reported that "many of the areas covered by the \$1.275 million project, including parts of George St, Castle St, and Dundas St, were in residential 3-zoned areas". Within this zone, resource consent is required for certain activities, CCTV camera installation among them.

On the possibility of a public hearing on the installation, OUSA President Hugh Baird told Critic that it could be the key "to hearing what those from the wider community may have to say about the issue as I don't feel this is an issue simply related to the student body. The more consultation the better and I think that's something that the university would also agree with."

He explained that the "process of consultation is going well. We've had a lot of submissions so far and we have uni representatives coming to speak to the Executive to answer any questions that we may have."

A question in the OUSA Referendum on the whether the association "should oppose the implementation of CCTV monitoring of the student residential area" resulted in an almost even split, with 51 percent voting 'yes' and 49 believing they shouldn't oppose it.

Former OUSA President (1979-1980) Paul Gourlie told Critic, "Seeing the DCC taking responsibility for the CCTV cameras proposal through the Resource Management Act must give reassurance to all of us that we will enjoy a process that delivers accountability and transparency. Previously our university appeared to be acting alone behind closed doors, the DCC announcement is much healthier, showing the strength of our much celebrated Town 'n' Gown relationship."

The university sought student consultation within issue 14 of Critic, with the final day for feedback being Friday 4 August at 5pm. Whether that date will change as a result of this setback is not clear.



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Opinion

Please OUSA, Can We Have Some More?

by Joe Higham

The Otago University Students' Association (OUSA) website states that "online referenda are one of the many ways you can have your say through OUSA ... on university policy or a wider issue, you can change OUSA's stance."

This explanation, on top of the fact that direct democracy of this type provides clear insight into the stances and actions that voters believe the association should hold or pursue, provides little wiggle room to dodge action when results show clear preference one way or another. As they chose to in the most recent referendum (held almost two months ago now), the OUSA Executive, through their Constitution, is allowed to "at any time call for a non-binding Referendum ... in order to gauge student opinion."

The reasons for the most recent referendum being a non-binding one, according to Admin VP William Guy, is that, firstly, they "believed the Executive would still be accountable to the student body irregardless of the outcome [and] secondly, we anticipated a close result (which was evidenced by a number of the results) and on these issues it was best to look at the bigger picture and make decisions at an executive level."

Several of the most important questions were very close indeed, and showed no clear mandate to pursue one over another, and

where that has happened President Hugh Baird has spoken of the need to present the concerns of each side of each argument to the relevant body, organisation or council.

For example, for the question about whether OUSA should lobby the university to cease development of a new animal research facility, 3713 votes returned a 'yes' vote of 50.69 and a 'no' vote of 49.31 percent. Because of this, OUSA has arranged meetings with the head of the Otago Animal Legal Defence Fund and Deputy Vice-Chancellor for Research and Enterprise Professor Richard Blakie to discuss how best "student input and consultation surrounding the Animal Testing Facility" can occur. Likewise, the approve/oppose question in relation to the rollout of the university's CCTV cameras to cover North Dunedin had a 51-49 percent split, and as a result the association is "currently working with the University through a period of consultation to take submissions from students on their concerns surrounding the CCTV cameras in the residential area."

However, on questions where following through on the results would show a clearly favourable ideological path, the action seems far from immediate or robust.

For example, 71 percent want to see OUSA directly ask the Tertiary Education Minister to, "Commit to wipe all student loan debt by 2025 and make University attendance free within five years". It is far-fetched to think that this would be successful in eliminating the burden of student loan debt, but we were told that it's "best to look at the bigger picture and make decisions at an Executive level" for close results, and 70 percent is far from close?

Another question, whether the association should support a change of government at the

upcoming September election, received a 55-45 percent vote in favour of the move.

What's more is that although the Executive pledged in their 13 March 2017 meeting not to support any particular political party in the election, they have said on many separate occasions that they will pledge support for particular policies of any party that are beneficial to the students they are representing.

I would argue there is an obligation on the elected Executive members to promote such policies regardless of the referendum result, but with the Brexit vote being accepted with a smaller percentage margin, it provides another push in that direction.

The New Zealand Union of Students' Associations does and will continue to provide public backing and promotion of the policies that best pursue the student interest, and until OUSA does the same you'll have to make do.

Throughout my time at the University of Otago, OUSA has transitioned from an association that wore its political heart on its sleeve (I'm thinking Francisco Hernandez's political nous, or Logan Edgar locking himself in a cage on the Union Lawn to protest the introduction of Voluntary Student Membership (VSM)) to a mute shell of its former self. Whether we're pre-VSM or post-VSM, we're being short-changed if the same association that once provided political advocacy in the student interest on a national scale is now just providing us with a few parties and free breakfasts and then twiddling its thumbs as student-debt sky-rockets, student living-costs fail to keep up with inflation, and the property ladder becomes increasingly inaccessible. It's too late for OUSA to meaningfully affect (or even attempt to affect) my current post-university days, but it's not too late for you.

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Uni News

Controversial Warehouse Work-Experience Programme Expands

by Joe Higham

The Ministry for Social Development (MOD) announced the expansion of the 'Red Shirts in Community Programme' that will now provide work experience opportunities to almost 1,000 16-24 year olds.

The programme hit the headlines recently due to the absence of pay throughout the entirety of the three week work experience period with Ministry for Social Development (MSD) partner, the Warehouse.

Northland, Whanganui and Wellington were the pilot cities for the programme, with 20 young jobseekers involved, before its first expansion earlier this year. Almost 250 participants have been through the programme since it began.

The programme is designed to support young jobseekers who have an interest in customer service roles, and boasts a 70 percent rate of employment within 91 days of the end of the programme.

According to Minister for Social Development Anne Tolley, the programme has been so successful that the "MSD and the Warehouse are now working together to develop a similar model for other large New Zealand employers so they can provide tailored programmes to help a range of jobseekers."

Professor Paul Roth of the University of Otago Faculty of Law explained that the scheme is legal because "the young people involved would be classified as 'volunteers' and not employees or contractors. If they were uni students, they would be called 'interns'. The programme lasts only 3

weeks. If the work was repeatedly rolled over, then it would look a bit dodgy, but still probably legal. But as it stands, the programme looks fine."

Despite the clear legality of the scheme, welfare group Auckland Action Against Poverty opposes it, seeing it as preparation for a lifetime of insecure, exploitative and low-paid work for New Zealand's youth.

Spokesperson Vanessa Cole explained that this "programme is about exploiting unemployed youth, not teaching them skills. The government are subsidising the Warehouse in the name of reducing benefit dependency."

"The work-focussed policies of Work and Income are forcing people into a poverty trap between low benefit rates and precarious work."

Tolley said she would "like to thank the Warehouse for taking on a leadership role to help young Kiwis get a foot on the job ladder. This is one of the largest employer-led youth employment programmes in New Zealand, and we'd like to see other businesses take up similar initiatives."

National

No Plastic Bag Ban for Countdown NZ Despite Aussie Progress

by Zahra Shahtahmasebi

Two large supermarket chains in Australia, Woolworths and Coles, plan to phase out plastic bag usage over the next 12 months.

Four states (South Australia, the Australian Capital Territory, the Northern Territory, and Tasmania) have already implemented state-wide bans. Coles supermarket is the parent company of New Zealand's Countdown chain, yet no similar policy is being initiated within New Zealand.

In June this year, the mayors of Dunedin, Wellington and Auckland issued an open letter to all other mayors in the country, calling for the instigation of a national levy on plastic shopping bags. This proposition received overwhelming support from the other leaders, with 90 percent

of mayors signing the letter that has since been used to petition the government. The letter was sent to the Associate Minister for the Environment, Scott Simpson, and also states that the majority of Kiwis and retailers also support the move.

It is clear that a reduction in plastic bag usage in New Zealand is necessary. Non-biodegradable bags have a significant impact on the environment, with millions ending up in landfill, in the oceans and natural areas, or littered throughout the cities. As well as being unsightly in our city's streets, they are incredibly dangerous for wildlife, who either mistake them for

food or get caught in them, resulting in their strangulation. They take years to decompose, meaning they can remain in landfill sites for long periods of time – reportedly for up to 1,000 years. Producing them also uses up finite natural resources; at least 100 million barrels of oil are used to make plastic bags for the whole world for one year, and yet the average length of use for a plastic bag is just 12 minutes.

In one year alone New Zealanders used 1.6 billion plastic bags. England and America showed the massive effect that a tax on plastic bags had on their usage; the UK implemented a mere 5p levy, which resulted in a 86 percent decrease in the number of plastic bags in landfills.

However, when One News questioned Mr Simpson on the 17 July about the mayors' push for a plastic bag levy, he stated that the government, "is not contemplating a plastic bag tax". Major supermarkets in New Zealand will still be continuing to hand out single-use plastic bags.

ALTERNATIVE FACTS

FACTS ARE THE SAME FORWARDS AND BACKWARDS

At night the solar system revolves around the moon

Eels are garbage snakes

Before colours are added, Coca-Cola is just a disembodied scream

Bridges are lazy walls

The rocking horse was invented before the regular horse.

Air vents are small because if they were big they'd make windows feel redundant

Hairdressing was the third most popular prehistoric occupation, after hunting and gathering

All roads lead to Gore if you're miserable enough

Jet plane lollies are exact miniatures of Boeing 737-800s. If we found a small enough pilot, they could fly.

The 'lead' in your pencil is not actually made of lead, but of the ground up and compacted bones of sinners.

The original recipe for Coca-Cola contained cocaine, heroin, browning agent, arsenic, human mucus, eye of newt and toe of frog, wool of bat and tongue of dog, adder's fork and blind-worm's sting, lizard's leg and howlet's wing, for a charm of powerful trouble, like a hell-broth boil and bubble.

WORLD WATCH



OREGON, UNITED STATES

A truck carrying 3.4 tonnes of hagfish overturned on a busy highway, causing chaos for motorists. The fish secrete slime when they become stressed, leaving the road covered not only in the slimy fish, but also a slippery residue. The creatures were set to be exported to Korea for consumption.

CHINA

Images of Winnie the Pooh have been banned on Chinese social media websites, as a response to people comparing the bear 'of very little brain' to the country's president, Xi Jinping. Users who have attempted to search or type Winnie have been met with the message "This content is illegal".

BUNCH OF FIVES



PAT H. WAYS—Commerce

- 1 These beefy legs don't slip
- 2 🙄
- 3 My brethren and I would hold our ground
- 4 Trivial
- 5 Contemplate the frail beauty of the human form



FELIX—Law & Politics

- 1 Once so far
- 2 Me (but it is close)
- 3 Mosgiel—I could easily outrun them
- 4 Five minutes?
- 5 Quarantine yourself



PHILLIP—Anthropology & Archaeology

- 1 Once
- 2 People I know—Jess Baker
- 3 Port Chalmers
- 4 Three minutes
- 5 Ginger and garlic



NITAH—Neuroscience

- 1 None yet
- 2 Dai Henwood
- 3 Out of Dunedin
- 4 Ten minutes
- 5 Keep warm



ETIENNE—ANTHROPOLOGY

- 1 Been close a few times but not yet
- 2 Rhys Darby
- 3 The harbour
- 4 Fourteen minutes
- 5 Drink lots of ginger tea

CORNWALL, ENGLAND

A horse named Creamy walked into a pub and enjoyed some salt and vinegar chips without being asked by the pub owner, "why the long face?" The owner of the horse said they usually stop by the pub on their rides, but because the pub was being blessed after a refurbishment, the owners invited the horse in too.

by Jack Trevella

Q's

- 1 How many times have you slipped over on ice so far this winter?
- 2 Who is New Zealand's funniest person?
- 3 If there was a zombie apocalypse in Dunedin tomorrow, where would you immediately flee to?
- 4 What do you think is the world record for holding your breath?
- 5 What's the best advice for when you get a cold?

ODT WATCH

by Charlie O'Mannin

This week the ODT had a stern word with their neighbours about the recent noise complaints made during one of the ODT's all night bangers.

Residents warned over fences

One ODT employee was overheard yelling, "You can't go to the media, we are the media".

Suddenly, something mysterious happened.

No warning before pole on property

We think there was a 30% chance the 'pole' was actually a particularly tangible shadow, a 10% chance that it was just someone from Poland, and a 60% chance that it was the ODT's first erection.

Next, the ODT displayed the mix of the surreal and the innocuous that we have come to love.

Not sure when the humble pea was last described as an animal, but I'm not sure when the last almond produced milk from its mammary glands either.

Also, saying you are "not sure," and then going on to say "but I'm not sure," is awful grammar.

Next, in disaster news,

Massive iceberg not coming our way

The ODT are trying to lull us into a false sense of security.

And finally, the ODT have some revolutionary new information.

'Draw is better than a loss' but it's not a win

FACTS & FIGURES

Over six seasons, 1,243 characters have been killed in Game of Thrones — an average of 21 deaths per episode

President Andrew Jackson's pet parrot was thrown out of his funeral for swearing too much

People who drink 2-3 coffees a day have an 18% lower chance of death from heart disease, cancer, stroke, diabetes, kidney, and lung disease

Traditional parsnip varieties include Arrow, Archer, Dagger, Javelin, Lancer, Gladiator, Tender & True, and The Student

The Greek philosopher Demosthenes used to try and improve his stammer by putting pebbles in his mouth and shouting at the sea

Dentistry is a very old profession. Nine adults from a 7500-9000-year-old graveyard in Pakistan were found with drilled molars

A galaxy, nearly 400 million light-years away from Earth, goes by the catchy name J143450.5+033843

by Jack Trevella

Mazagran
ESPRESSO BAR

36 Moray Place Dunedin
03 477 9959



David Clark



Opinion piece on priorities:

HEALTH & EDUCATION VS. TAX CUTS

Under the National government, things have swung too far out of balance in our country. A small group of ultra-wealthy people continue to get ahead while everyday New Zealanders are running to stand still, or are being left behind.

That deeply concerns me. No matter your background, everyone should have the opportunity to get ahead in life. This was one of the main reasons I stood for Parliament—I'm concerned about the growing gap between rich and poor. Unfortunately, I've watched that gap continue to widen under the current government.

National announced a suite of tax changes earlier this year. It was no surprise that these changes benefited those at the top and tipped the balance further in their favour. People like my Parliamentary colleagues and me will get an extra \$1000 a year. Those on the minimum wage will receive much less. That shows the deep unfairness of these measures—it fails to help those who need it most.

I'm proud that Labour voted against those changes. Like most Kiwis, we think that it's not time for tax cuts—we need to invest in strong public services like health and education.

Just a week ago, Andrew Little announced Labour's families plan that boosts the incomes of families with kids and those in need. We will boost Working for Families payments, introduce Best Start payments for families with babies and toddlers, and Winter Energy Payments for retirees and people on benefits.

Labour's carefully targeted plan delivers a bigger boost to 70% of families with kids than National's tax cuts, while costing less. This means there will be more to spend on addressing the social deficits that have built up in housing, health and education after nine years of National's neglect.

For Labour, our priority will always be people. This means making sure that everyone has access to the opportunities and services required for a decent life.

We are focused on the future. Choosing to tackle the housing crisis and get serious about climate change are priorities I've written about recently in Critic. Choosing to provide affordable access to high quality medical care means everyone is supported to live healthy lives and make their best contribution. Choosing to prioritise three years' post-secondary free education acknowledges that things are changing, and that all people will need opportunities for advanced education in a fast-changing world.

This election is about priorities. National's election bribe is not a priority for New Zealanders. We need to deal with inequality, tackle climate change, the housing crisis, and under-funding of services like health and education. This is what Labour's fresh approach will deliver.

Critic

ISSUE 23
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**JUST
FUCKING
VOTE.**

DON'T BE A SUCKER —VOTE OR GET VOTED ON

by Isaac Yu

It's that happy time that only comes around once every three years. 'It was the best of times, the most shitposty of times,' the famous proclamation tells us. A time of soap box Facebook statuses on WHY. YOU. SHOULD. VOTE. Yet, despite all the internet slacktivism about how important voting is, our demographic (ages 18-24) has the highest amount of non-voters compared to any other demographic; 37.27 percent or 126,065 non-voters in the 2014 election. Despite being the demographic that will emerge out of university saddled with enormous student loans (an average of \$21,000), we are the least invested in the political process that determines how big these fees are. Especially when we forget that our parents' generation went to university for free.

The cynics will mumble something about how one vote doesn't really make a difference and how all politicians are liars, before skulking back to their POLS104 lecture to read articles on the size of Cheeto Benito's hands or Korean Kimmy K's latest ass flash. And the cynics are right — to an extent. One vote doesn't necessarily make that much of a difference. But, while our individual vote might be inconsequential, together we form a mighty bloc — one that is large enough to potentially swing the election either way.

After all, look at 2014. National won by a margin of 500,000 votes (260,000 if you consider

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JUST
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the possibility of a Labour/Green coalition). Remember how there were 126,065 of us millennials who couldn't be bothered to vote last time around? Guess who could be bothered to vote. Your racist grandparent who rants to you sometimes about the yellow peril? She votes. The landlord who owns the poorly insulated Soviet-era shack you pay \$120 a week to get sick in. He votes. The wealthy businessmen and women who sit on the university senate and committees and decide for us that we don't need the humanities (indeed, the humanities might remind us of the political power we hold) and that what we do need are CCTV cameras. They vote. And the proof is in the pudding – both Labour and National continue to appease these voting blocs because they actually show up. The older the demographic gets, the more people show up to vote (as high as 88 percent for those between the ages of 65-69) because they have cottoned on to the simple fact that in a democracy you either vote or you get voted on.

We, the future leaders of New Zealand (when we're not smoking cones and sinking piss), are the suckers in this game because we don't seem to understand this very simple rule. Vote or get voted on. If you are part of the LGBTQ+ community, guess what — all those hateful homophobic and transphobic old people actually vote and therefore can dictate legal standards, such as workplace discrimination or marriage rights. If you like having a cheeky cone in the comfort of your own home, guess what — all those conservative fuddy duddies who think it is the devil's lettuce vote, and therefore set the standards for what is legal and illegal. If you, like the vast majority of us, are afraid of looking at your IRD letter because of your student loan passing the five figure mark then, guess what — the people who make money off you being horrifically in debt vote and they vote hard. Even if you're just a rugby playing lad who loves nothing more than sinking piss and punching darts, the people who vote are the ones who establish the tax rate for durries and diesels.

As long as you continue to abstain from the political process of the country you live in, you are being a sucker. The best kind of sucker, because you don't even know you are a sucker. You are surrendering the enormous political power you wield to those who benefit from keeping things the way they are. Otago alone has a student population of 18,547— enough people that if we were all to spend a tiny fraction of the time we spend on memes on reading policies and voting, we could form a political bloc to change the conditions we live in, instead of waiting for some stuffed shirt in Wellington to throw us a bone after they've helped their friends line their pockets.

But this goes beyond just Otago — the millennial demographics of New Zealand (ages 18-24 and 25-29) make up 583,645 voters. Given that only 2,410,857 Kiwis actually voted last time around, we hold about 25 percent of the political power of New Zealand in our hands. We hold in our ballots the power to drive the changes we all want, regardless of political identity — better housing, being able to afford a home, not graduating with crippling loans. Regardless of if we stand on the left or the right, we all want to live in a better world and we live in a society where we can achieve this change through the ballot, not the bullet. But the only way to do this is to actually take part, beyond liking edgy memes for politically frustrated teens.

The balance of power when it comes to voting is changing. In 2013, millennials comprised 25.68 percent of the demographic pie, compared to baby boomers at 30.76 percent. As more and more boomers die off and more millennials reach voting age, the scales tip in our favour. After all, we are the ones who will ultimately live with the consequences of the older generations' actions, be it climate change, a speculative housing market, or student loan increases. We are the ones who have the most at stake in the political future of New Zealand because we've got the most living left to do.

So get involved. Remember: vote or get voted on. We are the most educated and most qualified generation in New Zealand history, and yet we can't even be bothered to show up and vote. Through the internet we have access to more information than any other generation that has ever existed, yet we spend more time looking at titties and kitties than looking at the future policies of our country. So don't be a sucker. Read and get involved.

Take some time out of your day to google some of these political parties everyone is talking about, read their policies and decide which sounds best to you. Talk to your more politically savvy friends about why they hold the views that they do. Chances are, regardless of party, we all have a lot of common ground as tertiary students. Don't be a sucker. If a party or politician promised you something last time and didn't deliver, don't vote for them. Hold them to account, because if you don't there is nothing stopping them from doing it again in the future. Get your friends involved — politics involves all of us, whether we like it or not. And above all else, please remember to JUST. FUCKING. VOTE.

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2-for-1 tickets on Wednesday night performances*

GROOM ROOM

"The Tom Collins" cut for \$30. Only valid at the Dunedin Groom Room and a valid Radio One Card must be presented

HELL PIZZA

Spend \$20 or more and receive either free wedges, garlic bread, or a 1.5L drink*

HOT YOGA

5 classes for \$50*

INCH BAR

Half price Tuesdays – 50% off all food

LEGIT LTD

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LIQUID ASSETS JUICE BAR

12.5% off all juices

LONE STAR

Up to 25% off selected beverages when you book a function with us. \$20 selected Beer Pitchers. \$15 Margarita Jugs*

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\$28 per person for the best doom room available at both Nomads & Base Queenstown subject to availability. Check www.r1.co.nz for T&C's around seasonal blackout dates

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Treatment, cut & blow wave for \$69. Cut, blow wave, colour & treatment for \$150. 1/2 head foils, cut, blow wave, toner & treatment for \$164

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15% off rental, 15% off workshop, and 10% off retail (full price items only)*

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Student woman's haircut \$40, re-style \$50, mens haircut \$25

PHONE SURGEONS

Half Price pool every Monday night*

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Buy any petita size pita and get upgraded to a regular*

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Free garlic bread with any regular or large pizza*

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20% off eyelash extensions, \$25 spray tans, Student Brazilian with free eyebrow shape \$35

ROB ROY DAIRY

Free upgrade to a waffle cone ever Monday & Tuesday*

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Buy any six-inch meal deal and upgrade to a footlong meal deal for free*

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\$20 to/from the airport

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Football

“No One Man Should Have All That Power” —Football Agents & Their Dangerous Message

“And here comes Hurst! He's got...

Some people are on the pitch!
They think it's all over!

It is now, it's four!”

by Charlie Hantler

The scene is the mid-1960s, as Geoff Hurst famously scored in extra-time to put England 4-2 up against West Germany and seal their one and only World Cup. Things are simple, delightfully so. Football is merely the act of kicking a ball around with the end goal of placing it between two posts more times than the opposition. Money, for all intents and purposes, is a non-factor. Players move between clubs as they like, and players establish themselves as legends. This is how things should be, right? Sport exclusive of finance and politics.

Yet the footballing landscape rapidly changed from this point. As American sports became increasingly financially-incentivised, the British and European markets recognised just how crucial this was. Today, the agents run the show. The titans of football, names that roll off the tongue at the mention of the beautiful game, Ronaldo, Messi, Neymar... They all have men behind the scenes who set the wheels in motion for new contracts, sponsorships and every other commercial venture imaginable. These commercial behemoths can make or break a player, even a team.

This article will give a brief glimpse into the lives of the men at the peak of their powers in this field. The ‘Big Three’.

From the unexpected (Alexandre Pato to Chelsea) to the undeserved (Moussa Sissoko to Tottenham), Mondial Sports excel in driving up

their clientele's commercial value. In alchemy, simple, ordinary base metals are converted into gold. Mondial's work is the football equivalent. They have even shown their status as a frontrunner in football agency through their exploitation of the newfound Chinese market – they flogged Axel Witsell off to Tianjin Quanjian on an absurd £17 million a year contract, and Ramires to Jiangsu Suning at the peak of his powers for £25 million. The best agents excel in creating relationships with clubs, and Mondial have done just this with Chelsea (Drogba, Ramires, and Pato to name but a few), Leicester (Nampalys Mendy, Mahrez and Kanté), and Newcastle to an outrageous extent (Sissoko, Cabaye, Mitrovic, Ben Arfa, Riviere, Debuchy, Cabella, Thauvin and Saviet). They are most well-known for their work with Douglas Costa, Philippe Coutinho, Dimitri Payet, Edinson Cavani and Mahrez.

While Mondial are certainly clear of the pack, the top two are a distinct entity. Mino Raiola and Jorge Mendes have the footballing world wrapped around their collective little finger. As an ex-pizza chef, Raiola always gets his slice. The sum he pocketed from the world-record transfer of Paul Pogba to Manchester United is more than probably anyone reading this will make in his or her

lifetime, a cool £20-25 million. With 51 clients on his books, Mino flexes his strength whenever the likes of Pogba, Mkhitarjan, Balotelli, Zlatan or Lukaku seek fresh pastures. An infamously strong negotiator, Mino has reaped the rewards of the two years he spent in law school and uses this to get the best deals possible for his clients. He gets them their move by any means necessary – (in)famously throwing chairs across the boardroom of German club Borussia Dortmund in 2016 when manufacturing a move for Henrikh Mkhitaryan in 2016. Forbes puts the total value of his contracts at £274 million, and the Italian mastermind fittingly resides in his recently purchased Miami mansion, which he recently purchased from Al Capone.

While Cristiano Ronaldo emanates excellence both on and off the pitch, he has high praise for his agent Jorge Mendes who he sees as “the Cristiano Ronaldo of football agents”. When England won the World Cup in 1966, football was a simple sport, with little indication that it would change anytime soon. Little did the world know that a boy had been conceived in Lisbon that January who would permanently change the footballing landscape. Half a century later, after doing his time as a DJ and nightclub owner, Mendes introduced the notorious Jose Mourinho to English football. The Special One. With Mourinho, Mendes had his buy-in to the English market, and from there he filled it with his clients from Deco and Quaresma to Diego Costa and Radamel Falcao.

Falcao's career may be the best example of just how powerful Mendes is. A €60 million move from Atletico Madrid to the tax haven of Monaco was followed by an injury plagued time at Stade Louis II and, in turn, failed loan moves to Manchester United and Chelsea. Essentially, Mendes's influence is such that the top clubs make terrible signings due to his control and power over them.

Jorge Mendes isn't just football's most influential agent. He's arguably football's most important figure. Is that a good or a bad thing? It's up to you to decide.



IMMUNE TO THE TRUTH

Lucy Hunter

If you've ever taken a vitamin C tablet thinking it will stop you getting a cold, you've bought into the myth of immune boosters

Go to any pharmacy, supermarket, or health food store in New Zealand and you will find a sizable section of pills, powders, and potions with labels claiming that their product “may help support immune function” or “enhances winter wellness.” These are generally marketed under the label of ‘immune boosters’. Specific illnesses are rarely mentioned: instead you see virtually meaningless phrases like “helps keep winter ills and chills away”. The main ingredients that are touted as helping build an immunity against colds are vitamin C, echinacea, bovine colostrum, and propolis or royal jelly. But can you really boost your immune system by taking these products? I asked Dr Joanna Kirman, an immunologist who specialises in applied, cellular and molecular immunology, medical microbiology, and vaccine immunology and technology.

“When someone talks about boosting the immune system, it’s not clear what they mean,” Dr Kirman told me. “There are so many different cells that are working together. What cell are you boosting? Boosting some cells is going to be relevant, and boosting other cells is going to be irrelevant. It depends on the type of infection and the context.”

If you look at any kind of product that is approved as a medicinal product, they will always include product information sheets with them, and they will reference the work that they’ve done - the peer reviewed studies that they have conducted - to show that their particular product works. Medicinal products also list effects, side effects, and how long and in what quantity it is safe to take.

We develop immunity to viruses through exposure to them. Dr Kirman showed me a video demonstrating how the immune system works. It is a fascinating and beautiful process, complex almost

“People can put a big tick on anything.”

beyond belief. When you get an infection, your immune cells are activated and start to produce molecules that can fight the infection. Some of what you experience as symptoms is your immune system fighting. Snot, for example, is your body’s response to an infection. Mucus traps a lot of microbes and we’re able to cough that mucus out. It’s disgusting but is beneficial to us. It can contain molecules that are antiviral and antibacterial. Even though we hate mucus, it is our friend. Same with vomiting and diarrhoea. It’s your body’s way of getting rid of pathogens.

An over-active immune system can make you very sick, so do we want to boost it at all? “It really depends,” says Dr Kirman. “There are a lot of disorders that are created by your immune systems - asthma, allergies, rheumatoid arthritis - lots of diseases where amping up your inflammatory responses might not be a good idea.”

I photographed a range of ‘immune-boosting’ products to show Dr Kirman. Good Health’s ‘Immulox’ claims on the package to support healthy immune function AND help balance an overactive immune system. It says they are “Passionate about quality and effectiveness” and they have a circle saying “effectiveness” with a big tick. Dr Kirman said “people can put a big tick on anything”.

The FDA in the US makes products label themselves as non-medicines. A US ‘immune boosting’ product I found has on the label: “This product is not intended to diagnose, treat, cure, or prevent and dis-

ease.” Products from New Zealand are not required to have similar labels. Here are some things to look out for.

Vitamin C

Most of us have taken vitamin C in the hopes that it will prevent or help cure the common cold at some point in our lives. And it truly is a cure – for scurvy. The idea that vitamin C prevents colds came from Linus Pauling, a brilliant American chemist who won Nobel prizes in both science and peace. He teamed up with “Doctor” (term used loosely) Irwin Stone, who told Pauling that he could live another 30 years if he took 3000mg of vitamin C every day. In 1971, Pauling wrote a book called Vitamin C and the Common Cold, and it sold like crazy. He believed that taking massive doses of vitamin C could both cure a cold and prevent you from getting it in the first place.

There are around 2000 published studies a year on the effects of vitamin C on the human body. The vast majority of these studies show that taking large amounts of vitamin C is at best pointless, and at worst dangerous. Since our bodies cannot store it, most excess vitamin C you ingest will be excreted in your urine.

Dr Kirman said that if you’re eating a healthy diet, you don’t need to take vitamin C tablets, and “if you take too much you get diarrhoea”. It is hard to overdose on vitamin C unless you’re taking massive amounts, as you will expel excess in your urine. “If you’re eating fruit during winter,

taking vitamin C probably won't do you any good either. If you're going to spend your money, spend it on fruit."

Another thing Dr Kirman pointed out is that "immune boosting" vitamin C tends to be incredibly expensive, especially when mixed with other, more exotic-sounding substances. If you really want to take vitamin C, you can buy it very cheaply and it will be exactly the same as the \$40 stuff.

Bovine Colostrum

Colostrum is a fluid that female mammals produce from their mammary glands after they give birth. It's a clear, yellowish substance that will be the newborn baby's first meal. As well as nutrients for the baby, colostrum contains antibodies produced by the mother animal that she will pass on to her baby.

Antibodies are cells made by the immune system that recognise certain alien cells, such as bacterium, and attach themselves to them. Once attached, the antibody makes it impossible for the foreign pathogen to enter the cells of its host, and so prevents infection. Each different pathogen requires a unique antibody to attach to it, so the prototype or pattern antibody cell is stored in the lymph node, where it can duplicate itself and send out an army of defensive antibodies to fight the invasion. By passing antibodies on to her baby via her colostrum, the mother mammal is giving her baby's immune system the information it needs to help fight the bacteria and viruses her baby may be exposed to.

Colostrum is a wonderful thing and the reason why new mothers are encouraged to breastfeed their babies if they can. It seems like it would make sense for us to collect the colostrum from other animals and eat it in order to gain their antibodies and strengthen our immune system (as long as you don't think of the baby animals missing out). Colostrum pills cost around a dollar each. They are touted as beneficial to the human immune system.

Dr Kirman told me why eating colostrum pills might not be a good idea. Anti-

“Will that make us live longer?” asks Dr Kirman. “Are we bees?”

bodies are labile, which means they have a delicate, frill-like structure that is easily damaged. Though they can survive going through a baby's digestive system and into the blood, they are unlikely to remain intact after being extracted, dried, and put into a pill. Doctors sometimes prescribe antibodies, but it is administered intravenously, not in pill form.

Even if the antibodies remain functional within the pills, it is unlikely that the antibodies the animal has made will be useful for fighting pathogens humans are exposed to.

The pack I found boasted having polypeptides - "tiny signalling information carriers known for their advanced immune balancing function". Dr Kirman said: "A polypeptide is just a protein. It sounds fancier if you write polypeptides. Peptides are the building blocks of protein, so if you have a string of peptides, you make a protein. I don't understand why a prolene rich peptide would be immune boosting."

Animals catch different diseases to us. Save your money and leave the colostrum for newborn babies.

Royal Jelly

Another food for newborns - royal jelly is a secretion made by honeybees used to feed newly hatched larvae. If a female larva is fed huge amounts of royal jelly she will turn into a queen bee, and nurse bees will continue to feed her on jelly for her whole life. Queen bees are much larger than other bees, and their lifespans are much longer. Bottles of royal jelly pills are around \$50-100.

"Promotes energy and vitality. Supports a healthy immune system," reads one bottle. Good Health's "Bee Vibrant" royal jelly costs \$89.99 for 100 capsules. It emphasises that "Royal jelly is good for making queen bees" and that it "Extends her lifespan". "Will that make us live longer?" asks Dr Kirman. "Are we bees?" "These things say they boost your immune system and they have no clinical data that supports that. They're hugely expensive."

Echinacea

Echinacea is a plant with strange looking flowers that is used in some traditional medicine. The Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA) has looked at 24 trials and studies that were conducted between 1990 and 2010.

The bottom line of the collected studies shows no association with prevention of the common cold, though exploratory meta analysis suggests echinacea may be associated with a small reduction in cold incidence. Treatment trials have shown no association between echinacea and a reduction in cold symptoms.

Dr Kirman also told me that the dose of echinacea probably varies enormously between different products. If the packaging doesn't tell you, you have no way of knowing the concentration of the supplement, the species of plant, or what part of the plant you are ingesting. Is it the flower, the leaves, or the roots? We looked at Nutralife's Ester-C, which contained vitamin C, echinacea, and vitamin D3 and offered "24 hour immune support". It retails at \$59.99 for 120 capsules. Dr Kirman said that "24

hour immune support” appears to be “completely unsupported by anything – except that they want you to take it in another 24 hours”.

What to do

Lumping colds and flus together as ‘winter ills and chills’ minimises how serious they can be, especially influenza. “Flu’s not minor. The cold is generally minor if you’re otherwise healthy, but a flu, absolutely not. It can be deadly. And a cold in individuals who are immunosuppressed, really small children, and the elderly, can be dangerous. They can get secondary infections after a cold. Colds are caused by a huge range of different viruses, flu is by influenza viruses. They are very, very different illnesses.”

So what should you do to prevent the spread of viruses? Dr Kirman says, “What I would spend my money on is getting a flu vaccine. It specifically boosts your immune system to the flu. It creates those antibodies against specific strains to the flu. If you encounter that strain of flu, hopefully the antibodies will mop it up before you even show signs of infection. Sometimes you will get the infection, but it will be a milder infection than you would have had without.” Even if you haven’t had influenza before, getting a flu shot helps protect vulnerable people who can’t get the vaccine themselves.

Colds are spread through droplets, usually via people’s hands. To prevent colds, wash your hands thoroughly and regularly and avoid touching your face and ears. There are some products available over the counter that have some scientific backing behind them. Decongestants and painkillers can help ease the misery of a cold.

Dr Kirman’s own research group is looking at acute respiratory infection in childhood. Vitamin D was one of the things they looked at. The study is called “Whiti Te Ra” - let the sun shine. There is a school of thought that low vitamin D levels could be associated with decreased immunity and susceptibility to infection. “It’s a very weird kind of thing. Production of vitamin

D in our bodies is stimulated by sunlight (UVB radiation). In winter there’s reduced daylight hours, it’s freezing, and the sun is a lot lower in the sky so you don’t get the same level of UVB exposure.”

What’s the harm?

I wrote this feature to hopefully stop students wasting money on products that probably do nothing, but Dr Kirman says there may be another reason to avoid taking immune boosters.

She says that though these products are not regulated, they can have side effects. “A good example of that is St John’s Wort, which can have quite significant side effects. It can affect the metabolism of some drugs.” It’s important for people who are taking anything over-the-counter to know what they are taking, so that if they do get sick they can tell the doctor. “It’s no good to say, ‘I’m taking Blackmore’s Immune Booster.’ They, like me, will have no idea what’s inside that. You can get drug interactions.”

If you have been taking immune boosters and swear they make you feel better, you could be right. The placebo effect is real. “One thing I can tell you that is really, really strong and quite amazing is the psychological effect of taking these things.” Weirdest of all, as medicines have become more effective, people’s expectations have also increased and the placebo effect has increased over time. Also, Dr Kirman says the immune system is strongly affected by stress. “If you are taking something that makes you feel better, or you feel like you’re doing something to help yourself, that can in a way boost your immune system, or keep your immune system in a healthy balanced state.”

Why do pharmacies sell these products?

Herbal supplements are sold alongside pharmaceutical medicine at pharmacies. There’s a consumer demand. Pharmacists don’t make much money at all selling medicines, Kirman says. They make their money through selling all of these extra



things. “In a way it’s sold as a health supplement, but there is very little evidence that it is contributing to your health in a positive way. When something is effective against a particular illness, at preventing it or treating it, it will be called a medicine and it will have to achieve the same stringent standards as a medicine.”

The manufacturers of health supplement products are probably convinced that their products work, although none responded to my emails asking for studies backing up their product claims. Dr Kirman says, “There’s a lot of misinformation. Once someone gets an idea in their head, it’s really hard to convince them otherwise. They say, “my product is safe, it’s got no side effects,” well, that’s because no one’s studying it. No one’s done a randomised controlled study looking at its effect on people.” They are relying on their customers coming back and saying this did something-or-other. “That’s not how medicines work.”

DIESEL OR DIE

BY JOE HIGHAM AND LUCY HUNTER
PHOTOS BY TREVOR COKLEY

Houses were left open, bodies of the undead lying in the stairways, semi-naked beside the corpses of burnt couches in front gardens, and on barely intact balconies. As the bus slowed, turning to pull in behind a Toyota Starlet that had its front windows smashed and “Sink it Cunt” spray-painted on the bonnet, one of the refugees was heard whispering to her husband, “I can’t live in a slum like this”. Her husband replied with the most reassuring message he could possibly give: “It’ll only be for a short while, my darling. Just until they find the antidote; then we can go back to Santa Barbara, okay?”

They had flown from the other side of the world to seek refuge in what was once known colloquially as our ‘slice of paradise’. They arrived in the isolated town of Momona, a desolate shed of an airport. Cows grazed untouched alongside the obvious effects of the bacterium that has devastated the globe - the rusted carcasses of cars, the human hair tangled around the fence wire. The cows were the only signs of normality for the lucky few who won the golden tickets to journey to ‘The Land of the Long White Cloud’.

60 percent of the known infected population live in segregation from the healthy minority, although nobody knows exactly what the bacterium is doing inside its human hosts. For some strange reason, Dunedin’s student population appeared to be resistant to the infection.

Only one flight per week into the entire South Island has been allowed for the last six months. The lucky few were taken by shuttle into town soon after collecting their bags from the rusty, seldom used baggage carousels.

The driver held a can of Diesel in one hand as he drove, swinging from it every couple of minutes. Empty Diesel cans rattled round the floor of the van. They emerged onto Cumberland Street. Few cars interrupted them as they drove through red

light after red light, the police nowhere to be seen. A right turn brought the vehicle onto Dundas Street, lined with terraced, red-brick, dilapidated houses, coupled with overgrown, trashed front gardens. And then a left turn onto Castle Street rendered an audible gasp from the occupants of the shuttle bus.

The driver got out and walked around to the main sliding door of the minibus, holding a clipboard in his left hand and a taser in his right. He raised the clipboard to his face; the anticipation was palpable, as each closed their eyes and prayed to the god who had forsaken them that their names would not be called out.

“Mr and Mrs Robinson?” came the call.

“Oh my god, John. How will we cope living in this... dump.”

“Let’s just do as he says. I don’t know if that taser is for them or us.” John whispered.

The Robinsons collected their baggage. The driver quickly got back onto the bus, honked his horn, and drove off, accelerating rapidly along Castle Street. The Robinsons looked around them at the chaos, wondering why this area of town was any safer than their beautiful Santa Barbara, which, though swarming with the infected, at least retained the aesthetic advantages that Castle Street severely lacked.

They cautiously approached the house they were allocated a room in. As they swung open the gate, a young man emerged out of the dark and dingy abyss and locked eyes with the Robinsons. Like rabbits, they froze. The young man seemingly sensed the presence of people before him because, though he wore a ripped Arana College sweater with a large hood that limited his vision to just the two feet of carpet before him, he lifted his head slowly. His eyes widened and the cereal bowl he had in his left hand began spilling on the floor, evidently not for the first time.

The minimal movement made Judy Robinson assume that he was in pain; too much to even worry about the two strange



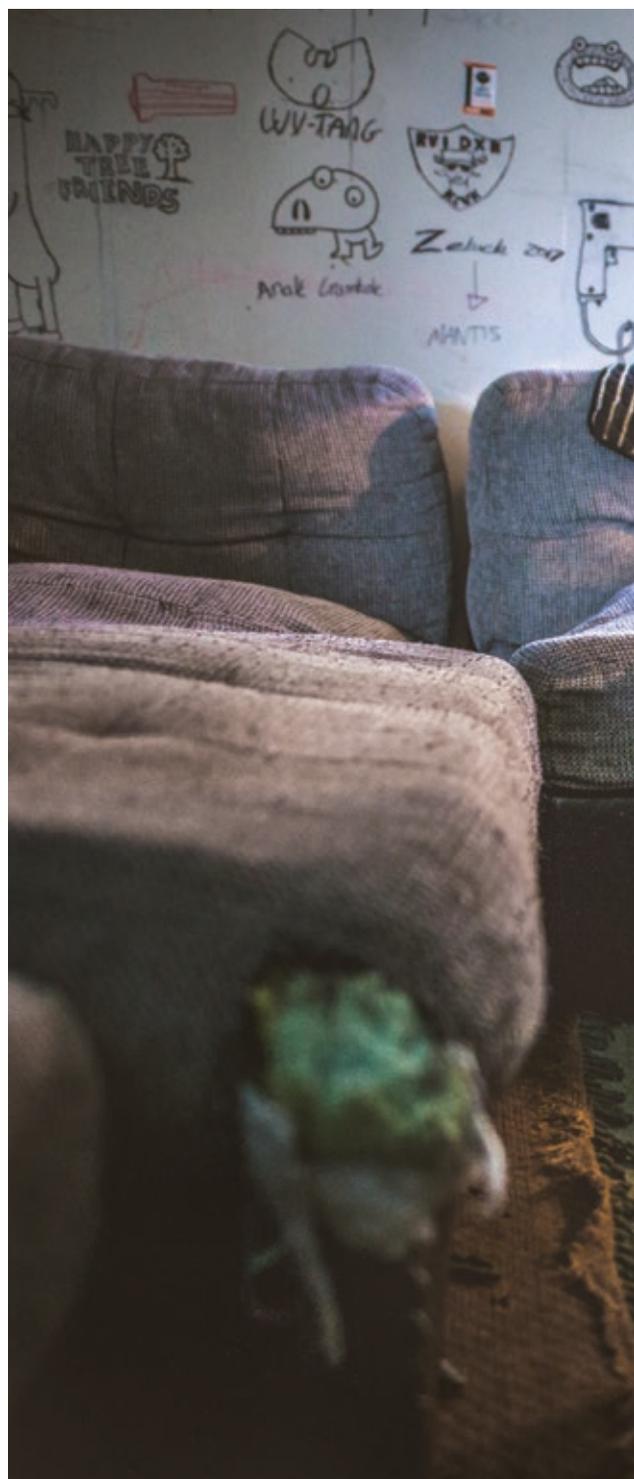
people standing in his front garden with baggage. Something clattered at his feet. They looked down. The floor was thick with empty Diesel cans.

The bacteria that caused the sickness was like nothing else Earth had ever experienced. It affected the physical world as well as its human hosts. It strengthened the flora and non-human fauna the infected came into contact with, while weakening the humans' flesh and minds. Cats became man-eating tigers, and a single flea could drain a human dry in twenty minutes. The infamous mould of Dunedin flats had gone from an unhealthy inconvenience to a menace, swamping beds, curtains, kitchens, and couches with thick green-and-grey mould. Worse still, the mould had learned to grow on human skin. What the Robinsons had thought were partially-clothed people were actually naked, half-covered by mould. Around the edges of the mould the skin was red and aggravated. The infected scratched at the mould and pulled off strips of rotten-looking skin.

Stranger still, the infection intensified negative thoughts. If a person felt a strong negative emotion, it was projected out into the environment around them. Group outrage had the worst effect. Rumours and stereotypes became reality. In the UK, for example, anti-vaccine memes had infiltrated enough people's minds that they forced their way into reality. The infected who had received MMR vaccines suddenly developed mercury poisoning. Simultaneously, the fears of the pro-vaccinators manifested in the vicious return of epidemic illnesses, even those that had been considered long gone. Along with cholera, measles, and whooping cough were polio, smallpox, and long-forgotten illnesses that should have disappeared as humans evolved. In the US, a similar phenomenon was happening with both terrorism and anti-terrorism. Planes and buses were blowing up almost as often as they weren't, while infected racists caged or murdered anybody who looked or dressed differently to them.

In Otago the outrage was different. Newspapers and social media focused on the menace of students out-of-control, a continuation of the narratives of old. In response, hordes of the infected filled the streets with broken glass, set not just couches but whole buildings on fire, had sex in public, dressed in culturally-appropriated costumes and sexually assaulted members of the public in the streets, ignoring the CCTV cameras pointing directly into the houses of the student ghetto.

But this young man, despite the mould growing up the walls in his flat, seemed to be fine. Apart from what appeared to be a penis scrawled on his face in permanent marker, his skin was clean. John and Judy, who had had two children around the same age as the young man until they were infected in Southern California just two weeks before winning the ticket to safety in Dunedin, said, "are you okay? Are you infected?" The man, showing visible signs of pain as he tried to open his mouth to speak and then readying himself to try again, simply





I'M ONLY DOING HEALTH SCIENCE, BUT EVEN I KNOW CHLAMYDIA IS CURABLE."



responded with, "just a really heavy night last night... Not that I know of, though I did have chlamydia a while back." He put down his bowl of cereal, picked up a can off the floor, shook the small amount of liquid inside, and emptied it into his mouth.

Judy and John were overwhelmed with happiness.

Although the staircase and corridor had food, rubbish, clothes and empty Diesel cans strewn so thickly across it that they had to wade through it rather than find a clearing for each foot, the Robinsons knew that one uninfected person meant the house was clear of the disease.

"Excuse my rudeness," said Judy, "but are there any infected 'people' living in... there?" She pointed inside the house, and scrunched her face up slightly at what would be her home for the foreseeable future.

The young guy built up the energy to answer, and then, once he had, said "I think only Olly is infected, but he shouldn't be too

much of a problem, he lives mostly at his girlfriend's place on Howe Street. We hardly see him."

Just as John was about to respond, the young man interrupted by saying: "but he's going to Student Health next week, so he should be clear soon."

"They have a cure?" John asked, not concerned at all for the future of the young man's friend or the global population, but for his son and daughter.

"For chlamydia? What world are you living in? Of course there is. It's just a course of antibiotics."

"No, we mean for the infection?" They both began speaking but, upon hearing Judy saying the same thing as him, John refrained from finishing the sentence.

"Look, I'm severely hungover, and now my cereal is soggy and inedible. I'm only doing health science, but even I know chlamydia is curable." With a heavy sigh, he said, "Your room is upstairs, first on the right."

He gestured toward the top of the staircase and then took a step toward the ajar door to his left.

"Wait," Judy said, as she looked worriedly at John, before asking, "you do know about the global infection, right?"

The young man looked fed up with the interrogation he was receiving from these two people who were, for the foreseeable future at least, going to be living with him and his flatmates.

"Look, it's April 2nd, which means Hyde Street was yesterday. I was drinking from 6am until I was kicked out at 4pm for not having a wristband, and then carried on drinking before going to town at 11pm, which I left at 4am. I have a 30 percent assignment due tomorrow, and I haven't left North Dunedin for two and a half months, so no, I don't know of any global infection."

As the man disappeared into the room, the Robinsons looked at each other and then looked at the street around them. The charred skeletons of couches adorned the road; Diesel cans clogged the gutters; doors to flats were wide open and no one seemed bothered about it. Although the signs of the infection were clear from a brief glance, the residents were not affected.

Two students stumbled down the road, one dragging along his left leg, presumably having minimal use of it. Each clutched a can of Diesel in their hand.

"Are you okay?" Judy asked the passer-by. She reached out to get his attention but stopped with a strange whimper.

"What is it, darling?" said her husband. She said nothing and held out her arm. There, in the middle of her forearm, was a tiny spot - no bigger than a speck of dirt - of the grey-green mould.

"It's the Diesel," said her husband, "the Diesel keeps them safe." He pulled her into the house, past the puzzled cereal eater, and went straight to the fridge. "You're welcome," mumbled their host.

The Robinsons opened a can of Diesel each and started chugging like their lives depended on it

Critic would like to thank the residents of Thirsty Flat



The Winter Blues (SAD)

Kenzie Reeves

You're wrapped up warm in bed in your dimly lit room and the last thing in the world you want to do is get up and start your day. Even if you could muster up the courage, dealing with the dreary, cloudy day and the bitterly harsh bite of winter just doesn't seem worth it.

'What should I wear today,' you think to yourself, and the pit in your stomach deepens. The idea of having to get dressed makes you wish you could sleep forever. A case of the Winter Blues has struck, and it has struck in full force.

Maybe you haven't heard of it (because it doesn't seem to be addressed a whole lot in society) but the 'Winter Blues' actually has a more formal name: Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD). It's a real issue.

According to the official SAD website, Seasonal Affective Disorder affects an estimated half a million people every during winter, in particular during June, July and August. That's a big number, right? So what causes SAD?

The Mental Health Foundation of New Zealand describes Seasonal Affective Dis-

order as a form of depression during the winter months caused by a biochemical imbalance in our bodies due to the shortening of daylight hours and the lack of sunlight. Symptoms of SAD include feeling withdrawn or depressed in the winter period, excessive sleeping, tearfulness, and abnormal eating patterns. Perhaps this is ringing some bells? This issue is important and it is not addressed in society nearly as much as it should be. We need to talk about it more.

Dr Davinia Thornley, a Senior Lecturer at the University of Otago, suffers from



Seasonal Affective Disorder. She gave me some insight into how it feels to have to deal with the Winter Blues and what she does to combat it.

“In my personal experience, it can range from sleeping a lot more than normal, crying for no reason, [to] wanting to eat a lot ... we are animals, and this is kind of our hibernation behaviour.”

Thornley has lived overseas in Alaska for three years; she describes it as a “frozen desert”. She told me that at some points in the year it was light at 11:00am and then dark again at 3:00pm. It was dealing with such a harsh climate when she first began really noticing the cruel effects of Seasonal Affective Disorder.

Usually a very active outgoing person who has no problem communicating with others, when Thornley and her husband moved to Alaska she started she “literally acting like another person”.

“I would eat and eat and eat, I was crying a lot, and I sometimes towards the afternoon would find myself just going to bed wanting to sleep.”

Dealing with SAD in such an extreme climate is exceptionally tough. However, don't be fooled. You don't necessarily have to be living in Alaska to suffer from it. When Thornley moved to Dunedin, after a few years of living in warmer parts of America such as North Carolina and California, she began to feel the same kind of effects all over again when winter rolled around.

So what are some ways that we can deal with Seasonal Affective Disorder instead of just brushing it off as something we can't control? Throughout the many years of

struggling with SAD, Thornley has adapted many coping strategies which she finds to be effective.

“Our whole house is painted very pale colours. Everything is pastel – pale blues, pale yellows. Our living room is a really pale off-white yellow. It's weird because it's just subconscious, but I turn away from dark colours in rooms.”

According to a study discussed on Live Science, the colour yellow is proven to affect people's mood by capturing the joy of sunshine and communicating happiness. Thornley agrees that even small changes that literally brighten up your day can really make a difference towards how you're feeling, even if it's just getting the brightest spectrum light bulbs that you can.

Getting a high dosage of vitamin D is also super important in combatting SAD.

“Vitamin D is the stuff that comes from the sun, it gets in our bones - we need it to keep us healthy, but we also need it to prevent SAD.”

Thornley tells me that when she first got to Dunedin in 2005, she wasn't really doing a whole lot to combat her SAD. Then, around five or so years later, she began taking vitamin D. This helped her get through three winters, but then things started getting bad again.

“I started to really struggle. I say this as a joke, but I think it's actually really telling,

but it's literally like you are being taken over by an alien.”

“Or a zombie?” I ask, and we have a bit of a laugh.

Thornley continues, “In the middle of winter, we always have mid-winter break right, from the university. So I'd have a bit of down time, and I'd be at my house and I'd be on the computer, and it was like the 'zombie' would make me start looking for jobs in warm climates.”

Thornley tells me that she doesn't want a new job; she likes her job. But something in her made her begin browsing jobs and holidays in warmer climates, just to escape the dreaded winter of Dunedin.

“I just remember thinking, 'wow, this is really problematic'.”

Thornley recalls desperately desiring to go on a tropical holiday, but decided it would be cheaper to buy one of the special lights named a 'Light Box' that are available to help combat symptoms of SAD.

“They're not cheap, and you can't buy them from overseas because the adapter is different. It costs about \$450, but that was better than dropping around six grand on a holiday to Bali or somewhere like that.”

This is true. Holidays in sunny, warm, climates sound like the perfect way of dealing with symptoms of SAD. However, not everyone can afford this. Therefore, the Light Box is a great alternative. Every morning,

“I started to really struggle. It's literally like you are being taken over by an alien.”



**HELP
AVAILABLE
IN NZ:**

Depression Helpline

free phone: 0800 111 757

Anxiety Line

0800 ANXIETY (2694 389)

24/7 Helpline

0800 543 354

Thornley sets up the Light Box on her dining room table and eats her breakfast in front of it. She finds this makes a huge difference to how the rest of her day goes.

“If you haven’t got time, it’s kind of like going for a run in the morning. It jogs your body into action, wakes you up, stops you feeling like a zombie. It can make a big difference, and for people who suffer really badly from SAD, I would really recommend it.”

However, as you may have picked up by now, there’s no easy answer to dealing with SAD. Thornley tells me that the light also helped for a while, but then things got even worse. She found herself dealing with a period each year around daylight savings, which she calls her ‘feeling underwater phase’.

“It’s a two-week period where the light shifts, and I literally feel as though I’m walking around under water - like I actually can’t start myself going.”

Another thing that Thornley does is exercise. She tells me that she deliberately chooses exercises which involve warmth, such as going to the Physio pool or doing hot yoga.

“It’s a win/win. You’re taking care of your exercise and your need for warmth and heat all at the same time.”

Thornley also makes sure to go out and absorb some sunshine at some point during the day, if there is any. She tells me that even just sitting by a window where light and warmth is coming in can be very helpful.

Thornley is one of the many people who deal with SAD while just passing it off as typical hatred of winter time.

“I never connected it with having SAD, I just thought, well I didn’t think really. I just

thought ‘that’s weird’ and that was the end of it.”

It seems that this is the mentality of many people. In New Zealand, we are often told to ‘harden up’ or ‘chuck some extra layers on’, when we are feeling the harsh effects of winter, however some people are often struggling due to something more serious. Have you ever thought that it possibly isn’t normal that during the winter you’ve dealt with feelings of depression and anxiety, eating problems, excessive emotionality, tearfulness, disrupted sleeping patterns? Maybe you’ve just been told to ‘put some more layers on’ or just to become more of a ‘tough kiwi’.

This is not the right mentality. Not enough people are aware of Seasonal Affective Disorder, and this can be a problem. Thornley agrees with me.

“If I had one thing I would say to New Zealanders more generally (because I spent thirteen years overseas); what I’ve found is that everything is cultural. And we in New Zealand are very bad at – well because we have a cultural norm about things – we dismiss what is actually proven in other places.”

Thornley is referring to the fact that SAD is less known or less accepted here. New Zealanders tend to have a cultural tendency to try and ‘toughen up’ when problems occur, rather than dealing with them.

According to various studies presented by Psychology Today, SAD affects more than 10 million Americans. It is clear that in countries like the US, SAD is much more widely known and accepted, which Thornley can vouch for.

“It has not been something that many people have understood or even acknowledged until I would say probably about the last twenty years or so, and it’s still making its way down to New Zealand. Because I’ve spent time living in America, it is much more well accepted there, also because you’ve got parts of America which are an extreme cold environment, whereas in New Zealand we don’t have as much of a temperature difference. And I think a really important aspect of that is that people assume that [the problem] is the cold, but it’s often light.”

As Thornley tells me, “If you’re having these feelings, it’s completely normal”. And she’s exactly right. Thornley is a wonderful example of how although it may take hard work, years of hard work perhaps, you can get on top of your symptoms; you can manage them.

So if you’re feeling symptoms such as increased depression, anxiety, tearfulness, eating issues, excessive sleeping, or irritability, which intensifies or reoccurs in the winter time – don’t brush it under the mat and just regard it as you simply needing to ‘toughen up’. Don’t let others tell you to simply ‘harden up’ either. You could be suffering from Seasonal Affective Disorder, which is a real, pressing issue. Even if you experience these symptoms are all year round and keep it at bay without dealing with it, it is not something to ignore. Don’t hesitate to get the help you need. Employ some of Thornley’s strategies to cope with SAD, or simply just talk to someone. It will be worth it.

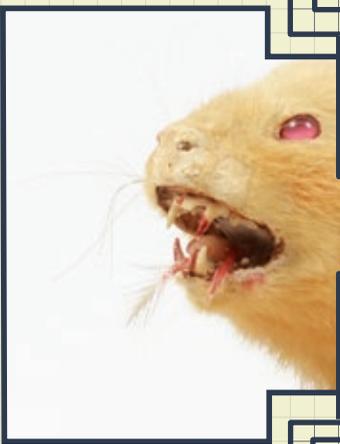
HUNT FOR THE MYSTERY OBJECT

at the Otago Museum

**WE HAVE AN
EXTRA DOUBLE PASS
TO GIVE AWAY FOR
THE MOST CREATIVE
ANSWER OF THE
WEEK**

DAY OF THE DAY

Everyone loves a reason to be weird, so why not make the most of the plethora of wacky special days of the year out there



CLUES: These animals were introduced to New Zealand from Europe in the 1880s

They lack pigments in eyes & fur

They played a role in the rapid decline of New Zealand native birds by the 1900s

GO TO THE OTAGO MUSEUM TO SOLVE
SEND YOUR ANSWER TO MYSTERY@CRITIC.CO.NZ
FIRST CORRECT ANSWER WINS A DOUBLE PASS TO:



LIFE BEFORE
DINOSAURS:
PERMIAN
MONSTERS

OR

PERPETUAL
GUARDIAN
PLANETARIUM



LAST WEEK'S MYSTERY OBJECT was 'Sweet As'—a ceramic model of a giant popcorn. Most of the exterior is coloured pink and coated with glass beads. Some inner areas have gold lustre. It was made by Madeleine Child in Dunedin in 2008.

➤ Madeline has said "the popcorn started after giving in to my kids hankering to buy coloured popcorn and given the opportunity to inspect it closely I (annoyingly) became excited and fascinated by its fleshy gorgeousness, organic fecundity and forbidden fruitiness. This mixed in with lots of messages and information on food politics and additives —dis-comfort food or eye candy?"

**CONGRATULATIONS *Angela Li* FOR FINDING THE
POPCORN. YOU ARE GOING TO THE PERPETUAL
GUARDIAN PLANETARIUM!**

Monday 24 -TELL AN OLD JOKE DAY

Why did the mushroom go to the party? Because he was a fungi. What do you call Monday 24 July 2017? Tell An Old Joke Day! Get involved, people.

Tuesday 25 -HOT FUDGE SUNDAE DAY

There's never a week that goes by without a celebratory day for some sort of food. Respectfully contribute to this cause by eating a hot fudge sundae today!

Wednesday 26 -ONE VOICE DAY

Today, people from all over the world read the Universal Peace Covenant in an attempt to unify the world in peace and harmony. You can contribute by reading the covenant, or simply being mindful of your interactions with others.

Thursday 27 -TAKE YOUR HOUSEPLANT FOR A WALK DAY

Make sure your houseplant is on a leash before you leave the house, and has an identifying collar tag in case it escapes.

Friday 28 -TALK IN AN ELEVATOR DAY

There aren't enough grains of sand on a beach to count all the awkward elevator silences I have endured in my time. It's safe to bet that the same goes for all of you. Why not start up a conversation with your awkward elevator buddy today?

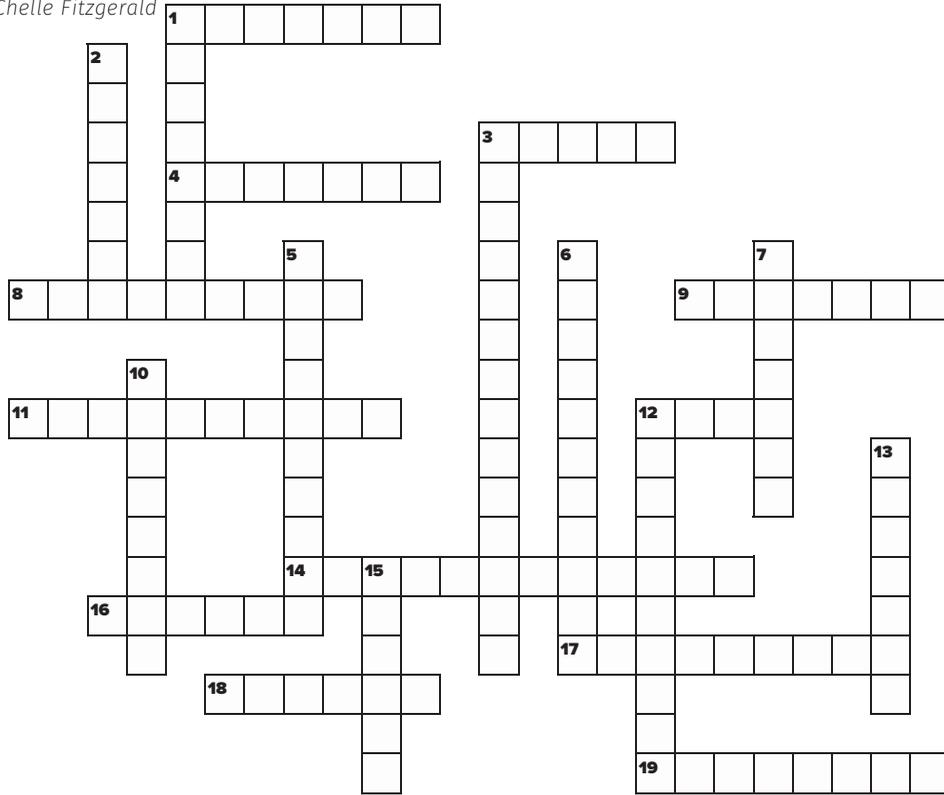
Saturday 29 -INTERNATIONAL CHICKEN WING DAY

Another celebratory food day is not something to miss out on. Especially when it is for the savoury goodness that is chicken wings.

Sunday 3 -PAPERBACK BOOK DAY

There's actually no hardcover book celebration day. So basically you're spending several dollars less on a book that you can celebrate for one day of the year. Paperbacks for the win.

by Chelle Fitzgerald



Across

1. Chemical element which is a common artist's paint pigment
3. A horse, often noble
4. Lord Voldemort's real middle name
8. Tired and jaded as fuck
9. Active volcano in New Zealand
11. Person who studies mushrooms
12. Cuprolaminophobia is the _____ of coins
14. Person in their eighties
16. Failed Allied WWII campaign, Operation Market _____
17. _____ O'Neal, ex-NBA star who found success with smash hit critically acclaimed film Kazaam
18. Prophylactic
19. Animal that cannot jump.

Down

1. World's top producer of cocaine
2. US city currently in financial ruin
3. Gondwana was one of these
5. Hilarious friend of Ricky Gervais, Karl _____
6. Mischief; hijinks
7. Capital of Indonesia
10. Damon Albarn's musical creation
12. Difficult; awe-inspiring
13. A small ornament
15. Wealthy and powerful businessperson

INVENTIONS OUT OF TIME:

BURIAL

5/5

Burial is one of the greatest achievements of humankind, so great that once someone has achieved it they rarely feel motivated to do anything else. Just consider what life was like before burial; we had dead bodies lying all over the place. They were everywhere: on the beach, in the bathroom, in your boutique chest of drawers. Nobody could have any fun without being watched by lifeless eyes. Having said that, the problem is purely aesthetic, not medical. The World Health Organisation advises that only dead bodies that have infectious diseases are a health risk. So that severed, but undiseased, hand under your bed shouldn't adversely affect your health. Though it will start to smell, which will remind you that you have a nose—everyone's least favourite bodily protuberance.

Burial also keeps alive that ancient and noble profession: the gravedigger. It will be an irreparable blow to the ambiance of imaginary graveyards if the sinister gravedigger is absent. I say imaginary because no one has ever actually seen a gravedigger; they just imagine they exist, lurking behind something.

If more persuasion is needed, think about the amount of trouble humanity is in in every zombie movie. Then think about how much worse the situation would be if zombies didn't have the added hassle of having to wrestle their way through coffin and dirt to reach us.

Some people advocate for cremation as a hip new alternative to burial. You should treat cremation as what it is: a fad. In twenty years we're going to look back, embarrassed, at the pictures of our cremations and wonder how we ever thought it was cool. Cremation also uses 'fire' (see the first installation of Inventions Out of Time for my thoughts on that).

In summation, burial is great. I wish I were buried.

1. What is triskaidekaphobia?
2. Many seabirds exhibit counter-shading. What is this?
3. Where was the actor Keanu Reeves born?
4. Who wrote the book Jurassic Park?
5. How many Grand Slam tennis singles titles has Serena Williams won?

- QUIZ ANSWERS:
1. The fear of the number 13,
 2. Being coloured darker on the back and lighter underneath,
 3. Super-predators above and camouflaged from prey
 4. Michael Crichton, 5. 23
 6. Shennanigans
 7. Jakarta
 8. Lethargic
 9. Ruapehu
 10. Octogen-arian
 11. Mycologist
 12. Formidable
 13. Trinket
 14. Garden
 15. Tycoon
 16. Condom
 17. Shagpile
 18. Elephant
 19. Elephant
- Across
Down
- WORD ANSWERS:
1. Cadmium
 2. Detroit
 3. Steed
 4. Marvolo
 5. Super-
 6. Lethargic
 7. Ruapehu
 8. Mycologist
 9. Shennanigans
 10. Octogen-arian
 11. Mycologist
 12. Formidable
 13. Trinket
 14. Garden
 15. Tycoon
 16. Condom
 17. Shagpile
 18. Elephant
 19. Elephant

Games

LITTLE NIGHTMARES:

reviewed by a pro & a friend
of a pro



▣ Lisa Blakie

I played this game with a group of friends and it was terrifying and fantastic fun! There was a lot of screaming and cooperation from everyone in the room, and I even needed emotional support near the end when I was too afraid to face the final spook creature (I don't want to be too specific in case of spoilers). I'm going to review Little Nightmares as a seasoned Professional Gamer™ and my friend who has played a lot of Zoombinis and Star Wars Battlefront 2 is going to review it too. Disclaimer, I use the word spooky a lot!

Lisa (Game Reviewer Extraordinaire)

If you're one of those people who likes to know what new games are like by comparing them to other titles, Little Nightmares has been feverishly likened to Playdead's critically acclaimed titles, "Limbo" and "Inside". However, Little Nightmares is all about the spooking and scaring and will blatantly try and make you jump. You can control the camera and examine your surroundings in each direction, but only so slightly that you can see potential environmental clues for puzzles or the presence of the spooky creatures that you may need to sneak past or run away from. I'm not sure what to call these "enemies". They're humanoid, but just totally messed up. You can't kill them, just distract and run away, but they are scary as hell and will try to kill you no matter what.

Sound in this game is perfection. You're alerted to monsters seeing you

with sound even if they aren't in your field of vision so you know when to RUN AWAY. Sound is also a key part of solving puzzles. A lot of the climaxes in the chapters feel very cinematic and do lose their impact if you suck at video games and die a lot, like me. This was especially frustrating near the end of the game but I guess I just need to stop being so shit, right?

You can unlock achievements from jumping on beds and there are little friends called Nomes that you can pick up and hug and then they follow you around for a little bit. These little mechanics, that essentially do nothing for the immediate gameplay, do a huge amount for the impact of the story. While the story did feel rushed and a little confusing near the end, the subtleties in what you can interact with in the game did more for me than the eventual climax.

The art style and character design

is fantastic. I will never forget Mr Long Arm McGee, who definitely gave me the biggest fright at one particularly scary point. I would highly recommend playing this game with a friend or a group of people for maximum spook level as well as for help with the puzzles.

Friend (First Time Game Reviewer)

Little Nightmares is a very spooky game: a review by a gaming layman.

First off, you are a tiny human with no face wearing a yellow raincoat and no shoes—impractical and very Millhouse-ian (my feet are wet but my cuffs are bone dry).

You have to navigate your way through a very poorly lit boat by solving puzzles, you know you are on a boat because the whole screen tilts from side to side. The controls that you need (on a ps4) are the circle for lighting a sneaky ciggie, the square for the sprinting, and the cross for some sick jumping. My first move was obviously to splash about in the puddles for a bit, because darn it if this child has to spend its entire existence being attacked by slugs and having NO FUN. Sometimes you have to pick up stuff—for that you are going to want to use R2 (I am looking at a controller for reference now, so I'm pretty hecking credible). Pro gaming tip, if you hold the sprinter and press L2 you can slide under things and it's preeeeetty badass. In this game you get chased a lot, and a lot of things jump out at you. I found out that my scream is particularly blood-curdling. Lisa watched a thing called a 'walk through' a bunch, so either she is a big ol' cheat or this game is pretty hard.

Recommend if you love problem-solving, being afraid and wondering if animated children get chilblains. 7/10 spooks from me.



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Music

Letter from the Music Editor

I'm interested in personal narrative. Especially narratives that are non-linear. Where the journey from A to C is not B, but G, Q, F, R, L. I gravitate to interviews rather than reviews. The words of the artist rather than the ink of the critic.

Yet, the limitations of the interview are frustrating. Finite. Condensed. The artist only tells the part of the story the interviewer is interested in. After every interview I conducted this year I wanted to urge the artist to write a book.

Write your memoir! The time is now! I would read it!

This winter I'm hanging out for an extended narrative to counteract the cabin fever. As *Grimm Selfie* and I wait for our copy of synth pioneer Cozey Fanni Tutti's autobiography to arrive at UBS, we share our winter reading list for rock memoirs.

Top 5 Rock Memoirs



1. Life
Keith Richards
How to become a pirate and other tales. In which the author mistakes Dunedin for Invercargill. Falls out of palm tree.



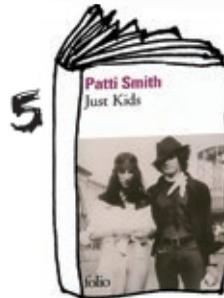
2. I'll Never Write My Memoirs
Grace Jones
In which the author writes her memoirs. With a ghostwriter. Spoiler.

3. Renegade: The Lives & Tales of Mark E. Smith
Mark E. Smith

How to become the most drunken bastard of them all. A cautionary tale. Features some jazz.



4. Clothes Clothes Clothes Music Music Music Boys Boys Boy
Viv Albertine
Artist struggles for succinct title. Relearns guitar. Repetition as a comedic device.



5. Just Kids
Patti Smith
In which the author is a kid. Hangs round New York with a complicated photographer. Gets cool.

This Boring Man

by Grimm Selfie

Back in November 2016, Johnny Marr, guitarist and cofounder of The Smiths, released his autobiography 'Set the Boy Free'. It's a book that spans his entire life, but of course focuses on how he came to knock on Morrissey's door, and together change indie music.

Marr's haircut alone launched a thousand bands, mostly terrible bands in '90s Manchester. In fact, it is surprising that there isn't a whole chapter dedicated to his follicles; his rinse and comb method. And what's with the title? 'Set the Boy Free'. Who is the boy and why is he being held captive? You grew up in Moors-Murders era Manchester, what you on about Johnny?

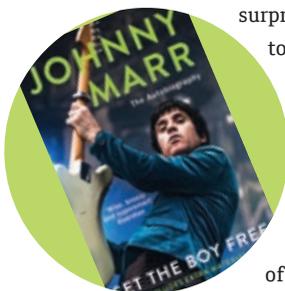
If you're a guitarist, or born in a certain time, or a fan of The Smiths, you will be aware of Marr's technique and tone and know why he is so celebrated. What you'll soon discover after

reading this book is that Marr is quite boring. He's the opposite of your usual 'rock star'. He doesn't drink or do drugs. He's vegan. He's been with the same girlfriend since he was 15. He taught Radiohead how to jog. He has a line of signature Fender guitars. The ones with extra buttons. He wears a lot of nice fitting, tailored suits. He especially likes the red buttons on a Paul Smith suit. He doesn't have a bad word to say about anyone. These are all good things. But this book is the antithesis of a rock-memoir.

In some regards, 'Set the Boy Free' is on par with Alex James's (Blur) 'How to be smug about cheese' memoir. They both have nice quiffs. They should both read Brix Smith Start's 'The Rise, The Fall, and The Rise'. Or, ironically, Morrissey's book.

Underpinning the whole book is the question: will The Smiths ever reunite? The answer is "Sorry, I fell asleep when Marr joined Electronic". All we know is that Marr and Morrissey shared some orange juice in a pub in 2015, and then radio silence. Do you really want them to reform?

Reformation Street is not often a fun locale.



My Cousin Rachel

(2017)
Directed by
Roger Michell
rating:
★★★★

Channelling (poorly) his inner Guillermo del Toro with a disproportionate amount of candles, chiaroscuro and murder-mystery piano motifs, South African Director Roger Michell (Notting Hill, The Mother) gives us a new version of Daphne du Maurier's twisty novel. The story that made Olivia de Havilland and Richard Burton a star in the US falls incredibly short in this new adaptation.

When his wealthy cousin Ambrose falls in love with the titular character Rachel (Rachel Weisz) while taking the sun in Florence, orphan Philip suspects foul play. Responding too late to Ambrose's plea for help, he rushes to Italy to find his guardian dead. However, back in England, the doe-eyed Rachel confounds Philip by making no claim on Ambrose's estate, returning every gift, alluring him with her beauty, femininity, and sexual freedom. Philip is left wondering whether Ambrose's hastily scribbled letters that described poisonous plots were simply hallucinations caused by a fatal brain tumour, or if Rachel is a manipulative femme fatale.

Rachel Weisz delivers a great performance, vacillating at every turn between innocence and sly nonchalance, and Sam Claflin's Philip is indeed a "glorious puppy, miserable and wet-nosed, looking for his mother". The pair plays the Oedipal theme quite well; Philip announces that he wants Rachel to wear his mother's pearl necklace every night.

However, the central key mystery, that is supposed to keep the audience wondering for the whole movie, is easily unlocked. The movie is often inconsistent, insofar as the supporting characters change sides and opinions from one scene to the other quite radically. The cinematography is pretty basic and predictable, yellow and sun scorched for Italy, wet, grey and dark for England. The camera often pans over Rachel's veiled eyes, in a too forced attempt to be unreadable and enigmatic. The gothic and ambiguous theme is not sustained throughout the movie, making it too theatrical and insincere. Therefore, despite the solid performances by the two main characters, the movie is unappealing, boring, and, worst of all, predictable.

Review: Rossana Boni



Spider-Man: Homecoming

(2017)
Directed by
Jon Watts
rating:
★★★★

We witnessed Peter Parker's long-awaited entrance into the Marvel Cinematic Universe in last year's Captain America: Civil War. Homecoming sees Tom Holland return as the third leading man to don the Spidey-suit, and lead what is essentially a teen high-school movie set within a world of super heroes and villains. The film embraces its genre, and is self-consciously influenced by director John Hughes, especially his 1986 classic Ferris Bueller's Day Off. We see Parker balance his school and social life against his secret Spider-Man identity and aspiration of becoming a fully-fledged member of the Avengers. We also get to see Michael Keaton play his third bird-related role, which is cool.

Humour is the most enjoyable part of the film. This is a much more light-hearted version of Spider-man relative to when Tobey Maguire wore the suit in Sam Raimi's 2002 version. Another aspect of the film that I really enjoyed was the role that Iron Man (Robert Downey Jr.) plays, in a way he serves as the Uncle Ben type father figure to Peter Parker, and the interactions between the two characters were always entertaining. The film wisely doesn't dwell on Spider-Man's origin story, as it assumes that the audience knows how Peter Parker became a super-hero, allowing it to move forward and focus on a unique story.

The film fizzles out slightly in the middle and is perhaps fifteen minutes too long, which, along with a somewhat lazy/convenient plot decision that occurs towards the end, takes away from what was otherwise another highly enjoyable Marvel film.

Review: Todd Johnstone



Food



Makes about 900mLs

Ingredients:

2 tins of coconut cream
 2 ½ tablespoons of tapioca starch
 4 tablespoons of dairy-free yoghurt
 (soy is cheapest, just buy the smallest tub)
 optional: honey / brown sugar / maple syrup to sweeten

Method:

1. Grab some old glass jars, rinse and put them in a cold oven
2. Preheat the oven to 150°C with the jars inside, when the oven is at temperature your jars will be good to use
3. Turn oven off
4. Shake the cans to combine the contents and pour all but about a third of a can in a large pot
5. Stir tapioca into the remainder of the cream and add to the rest
6. Gently heat until it starts to simmer, turn the heat down and leave it, stirring occasionally, for about 10 minutes until thickened
7. Leave to cool
8. Stir in the store-bought yoghurt and pour the mix into the jars. I used two old peanut butter jars and a slightly smaller one.
9. Put in the oven with the oven light on for 12-24 hours and then put in the fridge to cool for at least six hours.

As Good as Real Coconut Yoghurt, But Made a la StudyLink

by Liani Baylis

The ‘health’ industry appears to be a rich kids’ game. Forgive me that StudyLink is all a girl’s got going right now—amirite?

I’m determined to eat well (booze aside), but every time I step into the supermarket I reconsider the nutritional value of the dust lurking on my bedroom surfaces. I’m not talking about fruit, veg and legumes, but rather the ‘fashionable’ stuff you see in the ponsy aisle that costs the value of a black market kidney—I’m looking at you, kale chips.

Coconut yoghurt unfortunately falls into that category, well, perhaps not, but when the government only throws you \$176

survival funds a week, \$10 yoghurt makes me choke. Not sure if you’ve ever had it, but it’s the tits—cream of the dairy-free cream, so to speak.

There are hundreds of recipes lurking around Pinterest, alas I don’t have the budget of your average “Pinterest Mom” so I had to rummage to find the goods. This recipe calls for tapioca starch, save your pennies and get it from Bin Inn.

I’m 100% white girl obsessed RN, I get \$15 worth of yoghurt for about \$5, which will just about save ya a six pack o’ diesels. Holla.

Adapted from thekitchn.com



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Art

Finger Paintings

by Waveney Russ

Envision cruising in through the Octagon and walking straight up to 'La Débâcle' by Claude Monet (if you know where to find it that is, thanks Dunedin Public Art Gallery), then shoving your hands onto the oil painting's exterior; your Fatty-Lane-grease-infused digits sprawled across Monet's impressionistic paragon.

The thought of such a sin would provoke art enthusiasts and admirers alike to shed tears. But consider not being able to see the work, so beautiful that it could evoke such an emotional reaction, let alone not being able to see the colours of the world to begin with.

I recently stumbled upon a remarkable advance in the way art is experienced by the visually impaired. A company named 3DPhotoWorks, running out of New York, renders famous works into textured 3-D models for the blind and visually impaired to literally feel.

Founded by former photographer John Olsen, the company has rendered the likes of the Mona Lisa and the Portrait of Dr Gachet, transforming the experience of art for the blind in a way that we could hardly have imagined 20 years ago. On his website, blind.tech, Olsen states that "To blind people, the ability to see art on their own represents independence, equality and freedom". He further expressed that "3D tactile printing allows them to establish their own opinions about a painting or a photo. They no longer need to rely on the author's words, accept a docent's point of view or take an educator's equation for granted."

The video reactions Olsen has posted on his site are Facebook-video-where-the-dog-dies tear worthy, a celebration of the collaboration between technology and human altruism.



Photo credit: Timothy Varsányi

Reactions were supremely positive at his first exhibit within the National Federation of the Blind's annual convention, with reactions ranging from squeals of delight to the slightly ironic outburst from one woman who "couldn't believe her eyes!" Olsen operates on a no-barriers mindset; what those with full eyesight experience should be available to those without.

Although we won't be smearing Double Down residue onto Monet's icebergs anytime soon, even in the name of charity, if you have a friend or peer who is visually impaired within the university consider guiding them through the campus to touch the various sculptures sprinkled throughout, asking for their interpretation of the works, and talk through what you 'see'.

Be sure to check out artsaccess.org.nz for updates on accessible art exhibitions within the Otago area and beyond.

Art does not discriminate. We do not see with our eyes, but with our brains.

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ART
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Campbell Patterson call sick 2017 Video stills Courtesy of the artist and Michael Lett. ▶

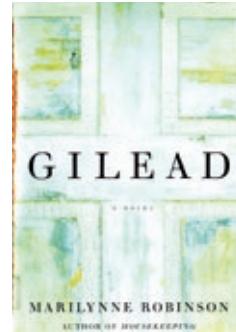
call sick
CAMPBELL PATTERSON

Books

Gilead

—Marilynne Robinson

▣ *Jessica Thompson*



It took longer than I'd expected for me to get into this book. Marilynne Robinson has proven herself a talented, tender and transportive writer in her other novels, and over the years she has received a veritable feast of awards.

Published in 2004, *Gilead* was the winner of the 2005 Pulitzer Prize for fiction, as well as the National Book Critics Circle Award. It is written in the style of a very long letter. The year is 1956 and Reverend John Ames is approaching the end of his life. Living in the remote and peaceful town of Gilead, Iowa, Ames has a wife and a seven-year-old son, whom he believes, sadly, won't remember much of him when he dies. He sits down to write this letter to his son, a thorough account of his life. The narrative is slow to start with, and I found myself having to desperately concentrate to persevere. Going into *Gilead* is a challenge; you don't have any emotional ties to John Ames until the end. While it begins on a heavy note with musings of an old man's inevitable death, what kept me invested was the appearance of his wife, the star of Robinson's other novel, *Lila*. The two stories are linked, and I recommend reading *Lila* before *Gilead* because you will gauge a good sense of Robinson's style, and become more emotionally invested. I won't focus on it though, that's for another review.

Gilead has been described as a masterpiece. It wasn't until over half way through that I realised this was true. I'm starting to get tired of myself; I praise her writing a bit too much, but for good reason!

From memories of his father, a Christian pacifist, to

his Grandfather, a radical abolitionist who "preached his people into the war", Ames relates the lessons he's learned from the people and poverty in his life. It becomes hard not to be affected by the questions he poses and the sorrow that stains the novel.

John Ames describes his job as "giving you a good basic sense of what is being asked of you and also what you might as well ignore".

What began as humdrum proverbs (excuse me, but after seven years of Anglican high school, I get put off easily whenever someone quotes the bible) became words of wisdom and philosophy. Robinson gives the reader an intimate and humble view of another way of life, quoting John Calvin and atheist Feuerbach to make sense of John's theological struggle.

John can also be funny and borderline cynical. What I liked about John Ames, and why he eventually grew on me as a character, was that he seemed as confused as most people, and never played up his wisdom as all-knowing. He is humble and caring, two traits pulled off without seeming wishy-washy, an admirable achievement.

Gilead has been discussed widely in literary circles, from Christian multiculturalism debates to Robinson's own lectures on the misconceptions surrounding John Calvin. To put the cherry on top, it was also listed as one of Barack Obama's favourite books.

A slow read, I recommend tackling this book during the holidays, when you want something to really occupy your mind. It is an emotional depiction of old age, and Robinson captures a passing life with poise.

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[Critic Interviews](#)

New Zealand's Funniest Comedian: RHYS DARBY

Touching on his time in the NZ Army, his belief in reincarnation, his comedy heroes and more, Rhys Darby had a chat to Critic as he returns to New Zealand and Australia for his new *Mystic Time Bird* tour.

Joe Higham: How's the tour going so far?

Rhys Darby: Great, yeah, fantastic. Only done four centres so far, so still a long way to go though!

Going back a few years, what was the reason you joined the NZ Army?

Well, growing up I was actually part of the Air Training Corps, a little cadet unit for kids who wanted to do something outside of school. Then I joined the Army Cadets and got really interested in the military through that. I rose to the rank of sergeant and started watching a lot of war movies in my teenage years and, for some reason, I thought this is what I should do — go and serve my country and maybe rescue some POWs from a foreign area. I dunno, I liked the adventure element of it a lot. I thought running around with guns and throwing grenades was fun.

I can definitely relate to that. But being in the army is almost the antithesis of being a comedian in many ways. Is there anything you learned or discovered in the army that planted the seed of comedy for you, or was it something completely different?

I already had comedy in my bones and in my blood. I was the class clown at school. I needed that kind of discipline because my father wasn't around me much growing up, so I think Mum wanted to chuck me into some sort of institution that would look after me. Whilst I was in there, I really flourished in the comedy aspect of things. I got into trouble a lot because I wasn't really the right fit, so that just made things funnier for me. Eventually I thought I'd better leave, in fact I was told by the commanding officer that I should do something else because I was kinda getting in the way.

Has Morse Code come in useful any time since leaving the army?

Not at all!

Can you still do it?

I'd have to brush up on what all the letters mean, but yeah. At one point when I was there I could do it at 40 words per minute — so pretty fast!

That's an amazing skill to have! So you moved to the United Kingdom in 2002 for comedy. Why did you choose the UK?

Well it was the obvious place to go really. We're in NZ, there's nothing happening here. I thought if I wanted to make it in the world, I've got to go back to the mothership. So it was the UK. I was brought up with BBC comedy, and was obsessed by it. So I wanted to be part of that world. I did seven hard years in London doing comedy clubs to rise up to headlining them, and my whole view was to get on television and get into sketch comedy acting. But it was actually America that ended up taking me, thanks to the Conchords. I never thought I'd get to America, but that's what happened. From there, the world was really my oyster. It was actually more difficult to get into the British system than it was in America, which is bizarre...

Do you think that your NZ accent helped you out quite a lot, in terms of its comedic nature?

Yeah, definitely. We were a novelty for the Americans, in fact for the world as a whole, because we're not British, we're not American, we pose no threat. Our voice is optimistic and naive at the same time, and I think there's that feeling of "aww these cute guys from some made up country". But we still had to be funny, we had to have perfect timing, we had to be original, and if those things came into effect, that was the perfect recipe.

So would you say you broke through worldwide through your portrayal of Murray Hewitt in *Flight of the Conchords*?

Yes of course.

How noticeable was the attention before and after the release of the series?

Thanks to Myspace, word got out pretty quick. But then we never saw the rest of the season. We made it and then I returned to the UK because there was no work in New York for me as a comic, there was no acting work, I had no money. The show was only on HBO, so a few million people in America saw it, but it was a slow burner. Thankfully, HBO enabled us to be more innovative and original. If you're on one of the big networks, they give you so many notes, and chop you down, ruining your original vision. We were very lucky to have it on HBO and be part of that awkward comedy scene that was happening with *The Office* and things, that people just sort of latched onto it.

I remember watching *The Office* and of course *Flight of the Conchords*, and they're just one and the same for



me, just equally as fantastic as each other...

Yeah.

Do you prefer acting or comedy more?

Comedy acting, definitely. I love doing stand up, it's what I'm doing now with this tour, obviously, but it's really just me acting on stage, playing different characters and improvising, so both of my favourite skills. With regards to the TV acting, I'm a perfectionist, I like how you get to do many takes to get it right.

So your show turns to the world of ancient mysticism to find answers to the world's problems, and in doing so you discover that you were a bird in your past life. So that makes you the mystic time bird, is that right?

That's right.

Ok. Can you give us a little rundown of your show?

Basically, I went off the rails last year. My mum passed away and I didn't know what I was going to do with my life, because I felt like I was doing this comedy thing for her, and now that she was gone, I didn't really know which way to go, and so I got some advice from this mystical man —

this old guy, who lives in Hawaii and he told me that I'd lived before. I believe in multiple lives. I believe that we live again because it makes sense. Because of my sound effect, my ability to mimic noises, he told me that I was previously a bird. That started to make sense to me, and then I started to realise that maybe I have always been a bird and this is the first time I've been a human. That's what the show's about — me trying to work out how to look at the positive side of life; we will live again, and the only thing we have to fear is ourselves. There's a little message about how humans need to pull their heads in — that we're not the only animals on the planet and that we're kind of ruining it. That's the message from the show.

I'm really sorry to hear about your mum, by the way.

Thank you.

What is the weirdest place you've ever performed a comedy show?

Probably a radar station in the Falkland Islands (off the coast of Argentina). I was working for the Combined Services Entertainment over in the UK. They sent us to various locations to sort of perform for the troupes, and one of them was the Falkland Islands. I went over there with Ed Byrne, and I remember being choppered in a big Sea King helicopter up to this mountain, where there was like ten troops who had been there for six months. That was really remote.

That must have been a treat for the people you were performing for.

Yeah they were very happy but I think they liked them more than us. Understandably.

Favourite venue to perform comedy in?

In New Zealand I like big stages. I've just done the Opera House in Wellington, that was really good. Grand old theatres like the one in Dunedin where I'm performing, the old Regent. It's just about having a lot of stage space, because I like to jump around. There's something - a sort of energy in those old theatres that kind of are easy to come to grips with and give a good vibe.

Top 5 favourite comedians:

I grew up really into Monty Python, I love Rowan Atkinson, I like Jim Carrey, Eddie Izzard, and Steve Martin. That's kind of my list. It's a mixture of classic sketch and physical comedy and general off the elbow weirdness. I'm not a big fan of your standard kind of stand up, because I never went and saw it, I actually found it a little boring. I'm not a Chris Rock fan or anything like that — I'm more into the performance side of things.

For the full interview, head online to www.critic.co.nz



Advice Column

SAGE ADVICE: “Music”

▣ Mat Clarkson

“Music is a higher revelation than all wisdom and philosophy.”

—Ludwig van Beethoven

Music is one of the many languages of the human soul, but, as Herr Beethoven points out, its profundity is surely of the highest order. This week I have been in contact with a local musical genius who has great insight into this, the most mysterious of all the verses of the heart. He wishes to remain anonymous, but I can reveal he hails from the honourable and stately suburb of Opoho...

“Classical music is bullshit. ‘Oh yeah, I love to sit in the dark for three hours and listen to flutes and hold my farts in, durr,’ get out of here. Don’t get me wrong though, the old-school composers were like the first beat makers, and should be respected as such. Even some of those violin parts sound like some good synth loops sometimes, but the bass never fuckin’ drops!

Let me tell you a story... One day, the Auckland Symphony orchestra was having one of their usual rehearsals. Their piece — none other than the splendid 2nd Symphony by Rachmaninov. While the conductor was briefing the ensemble on the day’s proceedings, a hooded figure entered the hall and sat in a seat towards the back. The orchestra thought nothing of this, as people would often come to see them practise. After several hours of repetitive rehearsals, the conductor was still not satisfied with his orchestra. He finally broke, ‘Ah! What is wrong?! We are missing something, what is it, who can tell me?!’ But the orchestra remained silent, forlorn, and timid. Then a voice piped up from the back of the room—it was the hooded figure! ‘Your percussion section is much too forte when they should be mezzo-forte. They sound like two portly men falling down a flight of stairs, whereas they should sound like the hearty knock against an

oaken cask of wine that was vinted in the holy land. Right now they are like a Family Feast™, whereas they should only be like a Zinger Burger™ large combo.’ The conductor was taken aback, and stared at his sheet music with a pathetic frown, deep in professorial thought. Suddenly he erupted, ‘Ah! You are correct! You are a genius!’ and the hooded figure removed their hood, revealing a young woman. The year was 2012, and that young woman was Lorde.

Lorde, Justin Bieber, Harry Styles, you name them—if they’re big in the music scene today, I believe they are a genius, and I mean an actual genius. Bieber likely mastered the works of Mozart at the age of nine, and performed for the families of Russian oligarchs. Harry Styles was probably the official court minstrel for the House of Saud in Saudi Arabia. I would not be surprised if these facts were buried by EMI, etc. when they first broke into the mainstream. The only reason Bieber, Styles and Lorde don’t play Bach concertos etc. on multiple instruments is because it’s too easy for them! It’s just not interesting! They abandoned that dusty old classical stuff in favour of a newer, more complex art. People will be rehearsing Bieber in 300 years’ time, I’m certain of it.

I too am a musician. I have decided to dedicate my life to my favourite genre: K-pop. I want to be a K-pop idol really bad. I have been trying to learn Korean, but it’s hard. I have dedicated many months of my life towards this dream and I’ve learned some basic phrases like ‘where is the toilet?’ and others, but it’s an uphill battle. I’m an okay dancer too; my uncle said I had good moves after we went to this neighbourhood party where I accidentally knocked down the fold-out table with all the pizzas and OJ on it while I was moonwalking—someone put it too close to my ass. I saw this documentary on TV though, where these Korean kids were practising dancing and singing for like ten hours a day! I am very old by K-pop standards and they are already ahead of me! They can speak Korean naturally because they are Korean and it’s not fair! I wish I was a ten-year-old Korean boy, and it’s not fucking fair.”



Hell Hole

THE FOG

✎ Jon Anderson

He clung to the cold roofing iron and surveyed the land around him. It was clear but for the fog. He couldn't see any movement among the old, tall buildings that sat, half-crumbled and smoking, and where he'd once been a student.

His arms ached. He'd been up here all night. He wished he could be back in his flat, where at least he could wrap himself up in blankets, but he was safe here. That was all that mattered. He would only move once he had a good enough reason to do so.

The collapse of the Central Library had been the start. It had taken everyone by surprise. The modern-looking glass front fell like a rope going slack and took half of the building with it, along with several hundred students. Then, as the wounded were being tended to, another building fell.

The rot showed no preference; it just announced itself with a groan, and then the building collapsed around you.

The rage was worse. He'd seen a young girl tear apart

another student. He hadn't stayed long to watch. It was hard, then, to know if thoughts were your own or affected by the gas.

He'd seen plenty of people just shrink into themselves and die.

This was not where he wanted to be. Everywhere he could see, the fog was present; it occupied the spaces that the students had left.

The building trembled again. He heard noises come up from below: footfalls, yelling and desks being scraped over to doors. Then a big boom.

The building groaned, like it was waking up from a long, long sleep. Someone screamed and he heard glass shatter. He slid down the iron and hurriedly searched for footholds. It was a long way down from the top of the clocktower. The building lurched, his legs dropped over the edge. He held tight to the ancient railings. He couldn't quite get his foot to stay... There was a slow shudder, and he felt the clocktower lean to the right. His panic exploded. As he fell, he caught glimpses of academics standing at the broken windows, blood on their hands and stupid grins on their faces. Their black regalia put him in mind of angels of death.

Ethel & Hyde

FLATTENED BY MY FLATMATE

Hey there Ethel and Hyde,
My flatmate reversed over my bag yesterday and now my laptop and my glasses are broken to the point they are completely unusable. I don't have any insurance, and neither does my flatmate. I need both of those things to study! Please help.

Ethel and Hyde is brought to you by the Student Support Centre. They advise you to take Ethel's advice.

➔ Send your questions to:
ethelandhyde@ousa.org.nz



Ethel says

Oh dear, what a silly sausage your flatmate is! This is a terrible thing to happen and right near the start of semester too. Don't panic though, because there are solutions. Studylink can help you cover the cost of glasses, and also help you pay for food if you have had to unexpectedly spend money on something which is essential to your study. To access this, make an appointment with Studylink. Also, there are two different funds which are available for situations like this where you have no other way of getting financial help. One is the OUSA Hardship Fund, which can grant up to \$250, and the other is the Otago University Emergency Fund, which is somewhat more flexible with the amount which can be applied for. Your situation sounds like it would fit very well for one of these funds. To access these you need to talk to an advocate (what a silly word that is) at the OUSA Student Support Centre who will go through the application process with you to help you get a replacement for your laptop and your glasses. Don't panic, help is at hand.



Hyde says

A SIGN, it's a sign. Clearly your flatmate wants to be your minion now, so best you oblige by taking the lead on setting appropriate tasks for them to make up for it. It's very important to let them know they will be groveling to you for the rest of their scUmbUcket lives in the form of Minion Duties, even after they have given you their laptop, which they will do iMMEDIATELY. Now you've a minion under your command, the way forward is as clear as the pus from my boil-lined armpit. TAKE OVER THE CITY! Their first job is to build a large wooden sheep on wheels with a cavity for two people, and four G-project G-Boom Bluetooth speakers which will pump out the most hypnotic trance beats ever. Minion—GET SPEAKERS NOW! Once set, get your sheep down to the Octagon and start the hypno-trance party and, after an hour or so, you will be able to lead the population to the harbor, where they will swim out, believing they are penguins, and YOU WILL BE IN CHARGE OF THE CITY! I will be waiting near the bridge with more instructions.

LUCKY IN LOVE

Each week, we lure two singletons to The Bog Irish Bar, give them food and drink, then wait for their reports to arrive in our inbox. If this sounds like you, email: critic@critic.co.nz

PAC MAN:

I arrived at the Bog (such a masculine bar for two gay guys to meet!) respectfully late and got shown to our table. The last Lion's test was on the big screen, so I spent about 15 minutes fantasising about which Barrett brother I'd want to get with. Jordie was clearly man of the match and closer to my age, actually younger than me... but Beauden has the looks.

Next some nice guy called Sonny from New Delhi came and sat with me, and poured me a drink of his jug. Sonny runs a home delivery Indian food lunch service. It's \$10 for rice, a curry, and a naan. By this point the game had been turned off, (I was glad I wasn't going to have to relive the most tense moment in recent Rugby history) and sound gear started arriving for the classic Bog open mic. I'd told Critic I was a musician so I wondered if the venue change was planned so I could drunkenly perform for my date.

I watched the set up for a while and another nice guy came and sat with me, he was performing that night and he did a great job! I kinda hoped he was my date but not long after, one of the bar staff came and sat down to say he'd rung Critic and there'd been some stuff up but I still could drink the tab. I ordered my muso friend a drink and then invited a couple of mates to come finish off the tab. We'd been drinking beforehand, so weren't going to complain about some free booze.

Honestly Critic I got most of the good bits of the blind date without all the scary stuff, but truth be told I was a little gutted, so I feel my night went as well as that Lion's game #15/15.

GHOST:

Well, I had it all planned out — I was meeting him at 7:00, I had ironed my good pants, and I had just finished washing my body in the shower (to remove dirt and toxins). Now I had just enough time to squeeze in an episode of Ramsay's Kitchen Nightmares to get me psyched-up for my big date. I had already seen this episode before, but that was ok, I liked this one.

Chef Gordon Ramsay's size fourteen feet pace up and down the kitchen. I am enamoured. "Please step on me, big feet man," I groan. I hope my date's feet tonight will be at least a size thirteen, or below a size seven. I am into everything except the normal sizes. I spend a few seconds thinking about rubbing cranberry sauce between Gordon Ramsay's meaty toes. "The marinade brings out the flavour of the meat," Gordon whispers to me in my mind. "Thank you Chef, I love you Chef," I groan into my empty room. Gordon looks straight at the camera and it's as if he's looking right into my soul. His tongue lashes another foolish contestant like a whip, and I like it. "You are pathetic! I should rub your face in the dirt! Get down and lick my shoe, you sniffing idiot!" Oh dear, maybe this episode is a little too exciting — better just skip ahead. Damn, it's a bad file and is playing in slow-motion. I can still make out what he's saying though. Gordon's slow-motion antics look as graceful as a well-choreographed Russian ballet. He flails his arms and barks domineering orders at the pathetic worms cowering in his kitchen, worms I'd happily trade places with in a heartbeat. I am being drawn in, hypnotised by Gordon's pure fury. Oh god, it's coming up to my favourite part of the episode — watching it just once should be safe though... Gordon grabs a little man with glasses by the collar and shakes him violently, "Your pancakes are pathetic. I'm going to wipe my shoes on that pancake and make you eat it!" I swoon, but it's ok — I'm still conscious. But what's this? The file is screwing up and is caught in a loop, repeating my favourite line over and over again: "...wipe my shoes on that pancake and make you eat it... wipe my shoes..." Dangerous amounts of endorphins rush into my brain, but I can't look away from the screen, and my mind suddenly goes black.

I woke at 2:33am with a pounding headache, and a message on my phone which read only "asshole".

The BOG
irish bar

**TUESDAY PINT NIGHT
& OPEN MIC NIGHT**

FROM 8PM TO 11PM TUESDAY NIGHTS



Drinking

SPEIGHT'S

■ *William Shakesbeer*

It's hard to review Speight's. It has so much meaning to so many people. It was the first beer my father ever gave me. It's the beer that has fuelled Scarfies for generations. Would I say it's the tastiest beer in the world? No. But it's the beer that makes me think of home, that calms my fears, that I know will always be there for me.

Speight's is a stock standard beer with no particular distinguishing features. A slight malty character, but not too much, and fuck all hops. It is the perfect can to crush after a day working physical labour, or if you want to render your gym workout pointless. An affordable jug can be acquired at any pub and goes down easier than a UniCol fresher.

If I rack my brain for any qualms I might have against the fine canned Speighetti, there are a couple. Perhaps it is the overly mild flavour, or perhaps it is simply my body becoming immune after consuming such vast quantities, but I find it genuinely hard to get drunk on. I like to think my liver is so accustomed to Speight's that it can process it without even trying. I guess that's why it also comes in 15 and 24 box sizes — 12 sometimes just isn't enough. I once drank a 12 box of Speight's and then did an exam at 9:30 the next morning. While any other beer would have made it near impossible, I snaked a B- and only had to take one vomit break.

And let's talk about their supposed 'Gold Medal Ale'. First of all, it's not an Ale, it's a Lager, so that's a crock of shit. And the three 'medals', which the title refers to and which are represented by the three stars on the label, were won in 1877. That was a hundred and forty fucking years ago, when the recipe was completely different to today. It's like how Squiddies still has a poster up from winning Critic Best Fish'n'Chip shop back in 2006. Maybe get something new to boast about guys, it's getting sad.

Taste Rating: 8/10

Froth Level: 5/10

Pairs well with: Aluminium cans, a big fucking bag, ya mates.

Tasting Notes: Serenity, joy, a sense that all is right with the world

Poetry

The Redundant Executive

Senior Lecturer

(A 7 year university grant)

Practised fingers pluck each chord,
the melody a fresh wave splattering
sea water on the assembly of the
elements

Quick movements on multiple strings
conjure the wind, a deep rumble,
gusting southerly heart
break

Head tilts into the eye of the storm,
eyes closed, mouth ajar in
tornados of expertise,
then

The air swells and bloats, the blood
of the cello seeps over the coarse
lines of travelled hands
red

Woman carries the hurricanes power,
groomed nails whip notes, precise—
she is a matador before the
kill.

Woman, woman, suspended with
radical artifice soars —
the concrete building
weeps on the ocean floor,
The monstrosity is blind.

—Leah Macpherson

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Committed to providing the best quality
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and beyond.

INHALE, EXHALE

■ Chelle Fitzgerald

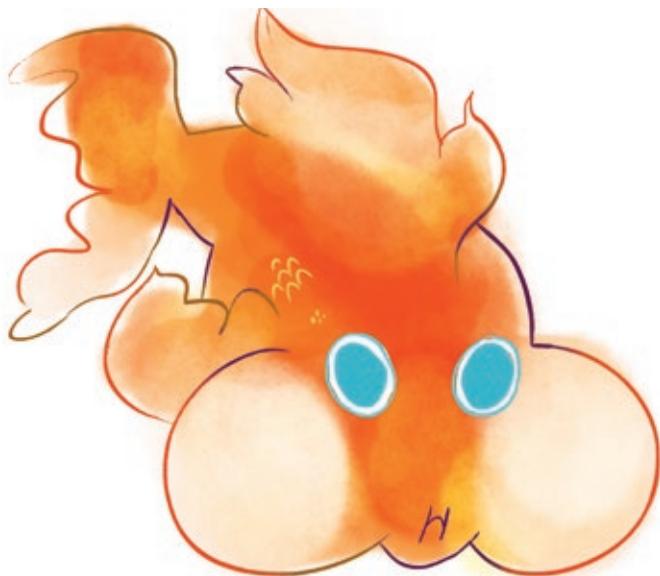
Try to hold your breath as long as you can. How'd you go? 1 minute, 2? Pathetic. You've a long way to go, sport.

The record for static apnea, also known as holding one's breath, currently stands at a casual 11 minutes 54 seconds, and

your face — and responds by lowering your heart rate, which is why breath holding is far more successful in water. The way in which people manage to hold their breath for these lengths of time is pretty simple — the less oxygen you can use, the more time you can hold your breath, and breathing pure oxygen for a while directly before an attempt is the way it's done.

Magician David Blaine, who broke the Guinness World Record back in 2008, described his rigorous preparation for the stunt in a TEDMED talk. He had to drop thirty pounds of body weight and increase muscle training in order to eliminate body fat and get his resting heart rate as low as possible, while training every day to hold his breath. He spent 48 minutes out of 55 holding his breath every morning, by alternating one minute of purging with 5.5 minutes of breath holding. Purging is the art of removing as much CO₂ from your respiratory system as possible — pretty much just hyperventilating. When you hold your breath, the CO₂ that you would otherwise be exhaling instead accumulates and makes your blood acidic, which is why we get to that break point where we feel like our lungs will burst if we don't breathe.

Blaine refrained from eating before the attempt, to slow down his metabolism, and he managed to get his resting heart rate down to an incredible 38 bpm, dropping it as low as 12 bpm while holding his breath. He also slept in a hypoxic tent every night, which simulates an altitude of 15,000 feet (pretty much Everest base camp) in order to build red blood cells in the body to assist in carrying oxygen further. All of this, combined with breathing pure oxygen before the feat, was what won him his record on Oprah, and he now probably lives underwater somewhere, thankful that he never got brain damage from his feat.



is held by Serbian Branko Petrović, who is also a suspected seahorse on his days off. Static apnea does not allow for the use of oxygen in preparation, whereas the Guinness World Record for breath holding does — which is why that particular record is a whopping 24 minutes and 3 seconds, held by Spaniard Aleix Segura.

It's often assumed that our ability to hold our breath, along with our hairlessness and subcutaneous fat, is a throwback to an aquatic phase of development, but the "aquatic ape theory" doesn't hold enough evidence. However, we do have the "mammalian dive reflex", which is triggered by cold water touching

It's often assumed that our ability to hold our breath is a throwback to an aquatic phase of development, but the "aquatic ape theory" doesn't hold enough evidence

President's Column

Hey Team

Hope all is well with everyone and you're slowly settling back into the semester.

At the current moment there's a few things going on within the University and we'd love to hear your thoughts on them:

The first is the current proposal to implement CCTV cameras around the residential area in North Dunedin. If you have any opinion on the issue then email your thoughts through to myself at president@ousa.org.nz.

The second large proposal at the University at the current moment is the Support Services Review. We'd

love to hear from you if you have any thoughts or opinions on this issue also.

For more information jump on the Support Services Review page which can be found on the Uni's website to form a better understanding.

All the best with the upcoming week!

Cheers!



Hugh Baird
OUSA President
president@ousa.org.nz



BE IN TO WIN WHEN YOU SIGN UP TO THE OUSA COMMUNIQUE NEWSLETTER



Congrats to Kendra! Sign up for your weekly chance at winning one of our epic subscribers give-away. You gotta be in it to win it!

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 (MAYBE COULD BE 3-4 TEAMS IF NEEDED)

[For more info head to ousa.org.nz/recreation/](http://www.ousa.org.nz/recreation/)

CULTURAL CARNIVAL

SUNDAY, 30 JULY
 11:00am-3:00pm
 The Link

Do you have a fantastic tutor, lecturer, or lab demonstrator?

Nominate them for an OUSA Teaching Award!

Nominations open online now until the 18th of August



COME ONE, COME ALL TO THE... INTERNATIONAL CULTURAL CARNIVAL

ALL PROCEEDS GOING TO REFUGEE INFORMATION & LEGAL ADVICE SERVICE OTAGO

GAMES - FOOD - PERFORMANCES - GOLD COIN ENTRY

Come one come all!

The International Cultural Carnival is on this Sunday in the link... games, performances, delicious food. \$2 donation on entry and all proceeds are going to Refugee Information and Legal Advice Service Otago.

WED 26 JULY 9PM - RE:FUEL FREE ENTRY

OUSA FUTURE DJ 2017 STUDENT DJ COMPETITION



Up to much on Wednesday night?

Not much to much Wednesday night? Come along and check out the battle of the scratchers! The OUSA Future DJ comp is on this week and its gonna be a banger. See you down at Re:fuel

OUSA presents the 2017 UNIVERSITY OF OTAGO

BLUES & GOLDS AWARDS

NOMINATIONS ARE NOW OPEN UNTIL FRIDAY 18 AUGUST



Blues and Golds

Nominations are now open for Blues and Gold awards! Head to www.ousa.org.nz/recreation/blues-and-golds-awards/

CALL FOR ENTRIES STUDENT ART EXHIBITION & SALE



OUSA Art Week : Aug 14 - 18, 2017

QUICK... Entries close August 1st at 5pm so shake a tail feather and enter your masterpieces.

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