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EDITORIAL: DADDY DAVID MADE IT LOOK EASY

I've spent a lot of time watching documentaries to get into the mindset of the National Geographic issue. It was just a good excuse to reconnect with Daddy David, really. But it made me think about the people behind the documentaries, and how sad it is that the University no longer offers a course for aspiring filmmakers.

Like most others who grew up with the captivating croon of David Attenborough's narration, at some point in your life you probably wanted to be just like him when you grew up. Remember when your spare time was spent equipped with your family's camcorder, marching into the backyard and doing some good old fashioned exploring? The last time you thought about this childhood dream was probably while zooted on your couch, one bloodshot eye trained on the UberEats tracker, the other on a praying mantis eating the head of her mate. "Queen," you chuckle.

But despite what Daddy David would have you think, wildlife documentaries are no walk in the rainforest. More like a trudge, a slog, laden down with equipment, swatting at mosquitoes, hoping the risk of malaria and trench foot from hours spent spotting the elusive stick insect is worth it in the end. And then getting the bugger to stay still for his mugshot. The people behind documentaries have my utmost admiration.

Kids have this wonderful fascination with the world that David tapped into – that all science communication taps into, really. I was one of those kids who wanted to be just like David or the army of science communicators found at BBC, the Discovery Channel, and National Geographic. You might not have known it, but the illustrious University of Otago used to be the proud host of a world-renowned course that laid the path to make those dreams come true: a Master of Science Communication. I completed the one-year Postgraduate Diploma that gave me a peek into the behind the scenes. Before the University cut the course, that is.

Something you learnt in the 'wildlife' unit of the film-making paper was how annoyingly unpredictable nature is. One day, I found myself filming the ducks in the Botans. After mocking me for my hungover state – part of a pattern of nonchalant behaviour towards the course I now regret – my lecturer handed me a tripod and camera, pointed at the pond and said, "Good luck." And God, he was right. The little fuckers wouldn't

do as they were told, unlike my short-film partner's boyfriend who'd been sullenly ordered around a climbing gym for a previous project. It was a game of cat (me) and mouse (duck) trying to anticipate their every move to set up the right shot.

At one point, having just about given up, I resorted to setting up a shot with the right framing and stared through fuzzy eyes at the screen, waiting for the elusive waterfowl to grace my lens with its presence. The blurry footage of duck feet was narrated by surly swearing as I bum-shuffled through duck shit to the next prime spot in increasingly vain attempts to highlight the majestic beasts'... waddling pattern?

Two films that demonstrate the mahi that goes into these documentaries are *Our Planet: Behind the Scenes* and *Chasing Coral*. If I thought it was difficult getting a duck to sit still – an easily located, abundant and relatively slow-going species – these film-makers took that on the grand scale. In one instance, a team of people sunk two years into capturing footage of the rare Siberian tiger, involving five week stints of remote self-isolation by some dedicated individuals in huts the size of a walk-in wardrobe. It goes without saying that the final sequence was more valuable than gold (or that long-awaited kebab after a night out). And it was all for the greater good of bringing awareness to our natural world.

Call me biased, but the lengths that science communicators go to – spanning to the far corners of the globe to capture moments that you'd otherwise know nothing about, packaging it in a compelling narrative, and bringing it to your (probably stoned) attention – is one of the most important, the most noble of professions. In this issue, we've included a list of short films and podcasts produced by the University's very own Daddy Davids, the final generation of students at Otago who were able to live out their childhood dreams and tell the story of the endlessly interesting world we live in. Send me a letter of what you learn.

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Letters should be 150 words or fewer. The deadline is Thursday at 5pm. Get them into Critic by emailing us at critic@critic.co.nz. Letters of a serious nature directly addressing a specific group or individual will not be published under a pseudonym, except in extraordinary circumstances as negotiated with the Editor. Critic Te Ārohi reserves the right to edit, abridge, or decline letters without explanation. Frequently published correspondents in particular may find their letters abridged or excluded. Defamatory or otherwise illegal material will not be printed. We don't fix the spelling or grammar in letters. If a letter writer looks stupid, it's because they are.

LETTERS

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LETTER OF THE WEEK

Dear Ms. Editor

With all the celebrations of 100 years of Critic going on, and good on it, I propose a feature that looks to, or is even directly ripped from, the future. What will the Critic be reporting on in 10, 50 or even another 100 years? Will Critic hold the test of time or be forced out of their top spot as another rival student mag takes the crown? What fresh new controversies will be stirring up campus?

Love,

Forward Thinker

Editor's response: Optimistically, I'd hope we weren't still writing about how shitty student flats are

Send letters to the editor to critic@critic.co.nz to be in to win a \$25 UBS voucher.

Hey pookies,

It's me again and that's right, If I can't have working internet, none of yous can. I took all your wifi connections down with mine.

(I'm kidding ofc. I have no clue how the wifi issue happened - but like lowkey maybe my letter was a bad luck charm for us all, mb gang) x

Yours,

That same privileged student with now even MORE first world problems.

Editor's response: Are you the rat that chewed through the cable?

tone down their authoritarian nature when keeping the flat clean? I'd like a house of democracy, while avoiding the anarchic chaos that is a bathroom full of assorted pubic hair...

Sincerely,

Shrödinger's Messolini

Editor's response: Lean into it. Embrace the carnage. One up them. Make pubic hair art, take pictures and proudly display them on your flat fridge.

Hello Critic

Just wanted to offer a correction to the recipe on page 42 of this week's copy. A Shepherds Pie is made with mutton/ lamb mince, not beef mince. Beef mince makes a Cottage pie

Yours,

A student who knows the difference between Cottage pie and Shepherds pie

Editor's response: Tomato, tomato

Dear Mrs Critic,

Have you considered getting a cooler name like Brucey? Balvy? Bonsai? Bowie? Badminton? Bazza? Brad? You give B vibes. Embrace it.

Sincerely, Someone who cares

Editor's response: Have you considered getting a cooler sign-off like someone who should get a life? Who should focus on their degree rather than sending me silly little letters? Rather than being a goofy little guy? A keyboard warrior who should leave me be? You give L vibes. Embrace it.

Kia ora Madame Critic,

I highly enjoyed this week's article on Flat Dictators. There's power-savvy presidents and queens of clean and then there's... well, you already described it.

The question I pose is: How does one

YOUR WEEKLY BULLSHIT ROUNDUP

OUSA Clubs and Socs building scaffolding is coming down!

Creditor claims totalling nearly \$300k have been received for Mexican restaurant Alley Cantina, which went into liquidation June last year, ODT reports

Missing: Two of the three Critic couch cushions. Give them back, please.

Katy Perry went to space

Recent Otago graduate and Beatniks band member Ollie Charlesworth was spotted in the ODT last week for spearheading a “democratic coup” of the Dunedin City Council. "My mission is to open democracy to fresh DNA, by putting myself and a majority of new candidates in council in October," he said.

The Pope died (rip)

NZ First's attempt to define “woman” and “man” in law is the latest in a series of member’s bills from the party aimed at countering DEI and woke. “Another week, another ‘anti-woke’ bill,” as The Spinoff reports

Things are getting icy! The Women's Ice Hockey World Championship has been hosted in Dunedin, and the men's equivalent will be taking place from the 27th of April to the 3rd of May.

About 70 activists were camping on Denniston Plateau last week in opposition to mining company Bathurst Resources seeking fast-track approval to extend its Stockton mine, staying put despite being trespassed, RNZ reports

Renowned academic, respected church leader, and 1960 Critic editor Peter Matheson has died

Massey Uni students reported to Massive that there were numerous instances of names being mispronounced at their recent graduation ceremonies

A major overhaul of the driver's licence system has been proposed by the government, meaning drivers on a restricted licence won't need another practical test to progress to a full if changes become law

There was a rare king penguin sighting on the Dunedin peninsula recently, ODT reports

A man trying to fly his daughter back to Wellington for university has filed a complaint with the Commerce Commission against Air NZ for price-gauging, saying it would be cheaper to fly to LA than fly domestic in some instances, RNZ reports



OSJP Rally For Palestine (Again)

"We're in it for the long haul"

By Hanna Varrs

News Editor // news@critic.co.nz

Otago Students for Justice in Palestine (OSJP) held another rally for Palestine on Otago University campus on March 16th. Speeches were given by Neave, an organiser for OSJP, and Brandon Johnstone, a member of Staff for Palestine. The group proceeded to march around the Uni, chanting for their cause: a free Palestine, and a university non-convicted in genocide.

The rally was the latest in a string of similar events extending back for the better part of a year. OSJP was born last May with the following mandate: "We are an education and action group demanding our university end its complicity to the ongoing genocide of the Palestine people." Their main efforts have focused on the University adopting a Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) policy, which would essentially mean having no financial ties to the state of Israel who the world is condemning for committing genocide. To date, the University has not made a decision – hence the continued rallies.

Following the rally, Critic Te Ārohi caught up with OSJP for a kōrero. Neave, a PPE graduate studying toward a diploma in theatre, acted as the spokesperson for the group. The rally was intended to serve as a public reminder of their goals. OSJP luckily didn't run into any issues, unlike one occasion in October last year that saw one student threatened with arrest following the alleged breaking of a glass door within the University's Clocktower. But this time, OSJP hadn't been involved in such a drama. "Not a sausage, really," Neave told Critic.

Given the varied track record, Neave said there's been "internal debate" within OSJP over the best course of communication with the University. For instance, should they spill the beans about a protest before it happens? Or does that "give the game away" as Neave put it. "A bunch of our members think that [communication with the University] is strategically not what we

want to do," they revealed. The reasoning is that it could allow the Uni to block protests, rendering them pointless – banging on the locked door of the Clocktower while the Uni Council stuffs wool in their ears.

On the other hand, Neave told Critic that they personally didn't mind "a bit of transparency" with the Uni. In their opinion, letting the Uni know that OSJP is "trying to keep things safe, and to procedure" could only be a good thing – perhaps preventing misunderstandings like last October. "But we're a democratic organisation," Neave digressed, explaining that they operate in a structure free from hierarchy.

Neave confirmed that OSJP has had formal meetings with the University Registrar and Jessica Palmer (Deputy Vice-Chancellor). But they didn't lead to anything concrete. "[OSJP] hadn't seen much action [from the University] by just talking, so that's why we think that these sorts of non-violent actions are the way forward in applying pressure," they said. The Proctor allegedly reaches out to OSJP often, and the internal debate about whether they should respond continues on. For now, poor old Proctor has been left on seen. Despite the disagreement, Neave assured Critic that OSJP is otherwise largely in consensus about strategy and planning, and that "we're all friends."

Despite the occasional bump in the road, OSJP is united in their determination to see their aims achieved. "We're in it for the long haul," Neave affirmed to Critic. "We want BDS enacted at Otago, as the situation in Gaza is only getting more and more dire. This continued policy of institutional neutrality is reprehensible, and if students stand up united, we can make positive change for human rights and peace." In case you're not yet familiar, institutional neutrality is the idea that universities should not, as institutions, take positions on social and political issues.

A University of Otago spokesperson told Critic Te Ārohi that "the University does not have an official position on the situation in Gaza. We have a long-standing position of institutional neutrality on geo-political issues that do not directly impact on the University." The Otago Staff for Palestine group has sent a BDS proposal to the University which is "waiting for a working group considering the issue of institutional neutrality to report back to the University before any further discussion takes place at senate." Critic did not gain a response from the Proctor regarding their relationship with OSJP, as he is on annual leave (blesh).

BDS hasn't only been on the table for the University. A little closer to home, OUSA has held a BDS "posture" that meant their annual revenue-earning Tent City turned business away from the BDS-listed Domino's (physically turning them away when they tried to attend anyway). The posture earned OUSA a shout-out at the OSJP rally from guest speaker Brandon Johnstone. He had perhaps missed the most recent update: Critic Te Ārohi reported in early March (Issue 3) that the BDS policy is confirmed to be up for review by OUSA by July following numerous complaints from the student body. Domino's Dunedin franchise owner also confirmed to Critic that his business had no connection to Israel.

OSJP weren't among the student complaints, however. Neave said they were "definitely pleased" with OUSA's handling of BDS. However, they expressed that they'd like to "see OUSA adopt that democratically and not top down," referring to the fact that the posture was adopted largely without student consultation. Neave was a fan of having BDS democratically and student-mandated at the upcoming referendum, acknowledging that some students may have felt the decision was a "unilateral action".

The nature of OUSA's BDS was also called into question. "I don't think Domino's was a list A or primary target," Neave told Critic (rip). OSJP follow the official BDS movement from BDS.net, restricting their efforts to targeted boycotts of brands like SodaStream, Coke-related products and HP computers. Neave confirmed that OSJP plan on submitting two questions for the

referendum (referendum questions are open until May 2nd!) regarding the BDS policy. "One is to have OUSA formally adopt the BDS policy [with a student mandate], and the other is to have OUSA lobby for [Uni] adoption of BDS."

Critic reported in early March that the OUSA Exec wished to "pursue further student feedback" and "will seek to canvas a student consensus by encouraging robust debate on campus" over the coming months, hoping to decide BDS by July. At the time, the Exec hadn't decided on an exact plan for how they'd "canvas student opinion", but discussed options such as a student/Exec forum and referendum. Seems we've leap-frogged straight to the referendum.

When approached for comment, Prez Liam told Critic that the Exec pursued initial feedback on the BDS policy by inviting people to reach out to him through the OUSA President email and Instagram. "This generated quite a lot of response," Liam told Critic. "I made an effort to respond to everyone who reached out. Beyond this, I've reached out to some interested student groups and discussed what this process will likely look like and how OUSA can best support them." He explained that a "town hall style forum" would be most appropriate to deal with any BDS-related questions, where students can "discuss and question all referendum questions with the Exec." So no special BDS forum. While he felt it wasn't fair to comment on the referenda questions submitted by students thus far, he did mysteriously allude to receiving "multiple options for a path forward."

However, students will still get a chance to have their say, even if there hasn't been a specific forum set regarding OUSA's BDS posture. According to OUSA's referenda procedure, a student forum must be held at least a day before voting opens, "where those who have put a question, and any students who would like to discuss/debate motions, can do so."



Voyagers Roll Red Carpet for Critic Alumni

"I pretty much credit my entire career to Critic"

Two former Critic Te Ārohi editors have been named as finalists for the 2025 Voyager Media Awards: Joel MacManus (2018) and Fox Meyer (2022-2023). Both now based in the Beehive's Press Gallery and working for The Spinoff and Newsroom respectively, the pair credit Critic Te Ārohi for their success in journalism. Despite their nomination, they share the same Kiwi awkwardness when receiving compliments – admitting to mostly looking forward to the free food and booze at the “swanky” May awards ceremony, where winners will be announced.

The Voyagers have been around since 1973, held annually to “encourage, showcase and acknowledge the best of New Zealand's news media across all platforms.” Like New Zealand's version of the Oscars (for journalism), the awards recognise and celebrate the work of all journalists, including reporters, feature writers, columnists, cartoonists, reviewers, photographers, and video journalists. Finalists are preparing their speeches and polite rejection faces before the red carpet is rolled out.

Fox is a finalist for ‘Best Up and Coming Journalist’. The science-heavy submission of three articles includes a story he broke about a Chief Science Advisor to the Prime Minister position that went unfilled for a long time, identified as part of an ongoing trend of science being an “inconvenience” to the government. “They say they're data-based, but all of their decisions seem to be contrary to that, and one of them was not appointing this Chief Science Advisor,” said Fox.

As a Geology graduate, Fox has always had a scientific lean in his writing. Prior to joining Newsroom, Fox's portfolio included numerous Critic articles about the Alpine Fault (a topic he'll chew your ear off about), chasing the elusive Ruahine mountain dolphin for 1964 magazine, and a stint in the Fiordland bush with the man who's lived there most of his life for New Zealand Geographic. “The theme that I submitted was trying to carve out a niche for myself as somebody who understands science and data and can use that to tell stories that others can't, and knows where to look for these things,” Fox explained.

Joel has been shortlisted for not one, but two categories: ‘Local Journalist of the Year’ and ‘Best Columnist, Opinion or Critique’. Suffice to say, the Wellington-based journo's local stories included a lot of Wellington content that caused Critic's eyes to glaze over (but interests were piqued at mention of a “killer bike lane”).

In his time at the helm of Critic in 2018, Joel captained the team through tumultuous seas of multiple University censorship controversies: first the Menstruation Issue that was confiscated by a prudish Campus Watch (they later apologised) and then what's become known as ‘BongShell’, when the Proctor confiscated a bong from a student flat (he also apologised).

Witnessing the subsequent student protest across campus, Joel recently told Critic that it was the first time he realised the power of journalism: “I remember standing there outside St Dave's and watching all these hundreds of people going by and going, ‘I printed a 400-word story in Critic last week and it's turned into this!’ [...] You do have those little surreal moments where you go, ‘Wow, big things are happening because of something I wrote.’”

Now the Wellington Editor at The Spinoff, Joel's passion has only grown since graduating from the Critic school of journalism seven years ago. Two recent examples of the impact he's continued to have – wielding his pen as a sword for change – was an in-depth

feature covering homelessness in Aotearoa and The Spinoff's ‘War for Wellington’. The latter was a two-month-long editorial campaign about the city's district plan, a big decision to change the housing rule book and allow more high-density housing – a campaign that he sees as having made its mark.

“I think I'm proud of that because, you know, everyone gets into journalism wanting to make a difference – and we like to believe that we do – but most stories don't have a tangible difference [...] It's quite hard to see a direct impact from one story, whereas that campaign was something that I really do think made a difference in terms of changing the rules to allow more high-density housing.” As one of the country's biggest current issues, Joel said, “If I made even a small dent in that, then that's, you know [laughs] that's something that I can be proud of.”

Both former editors' journalism journeys began at Critic Te Ārohi. “I pretty much credit my entire career to Critic,” said Joel, explaining he had zero inclination to be a journalist until he became involved with the student mag. “Honestly, I walked into the Critic office for the first time because I was interested in politics and I figured writing something for Critic would be more useful than getting in Reddit arguments and annoying my friends.” He found it was something he was passionate about, becoming “more and more obsessed” as he gained experience (read: fucked around and found out).

“Critic not only taught me well, and gave me a huge amount of experience – you know, I think the thing that matters with Critic is that you get actual practical experience, you're writing stories for an audience not for a teacher. And you're actually putting out a real publication and I think that's so much more valuable than sitting in a journalism school class,” said Joel. Fox pointed out that he was one of two finalists in his category to have come straight from student media, the other being former Canta editor Maddy Croad. “As long as one of us wins this award I'd be pretty stoked because that's just such a win for student journalism,” said Fox.

Asked what the Voyagers meant for Aotearoa, Joel replied, “I think journalism is important, and when you celebrate the best journalism, ideally that encourages people to do better journalism.” He noted that with the current challenges facing the profession – with successive rounds of job cuts and the threat of AI looming – it's especially important to “compete on quality” with the “proliferation of crappy content”. “Anyone can generate 500 words of crap AI, so if we want to survive, we've gotta be better than that [...] I think that's what award ceremonies like this can encourage,” he concluded.

As for the awards evening itself – in Joel's words being a “song and dance and a lot of people slapping each other on the back” – they're not too fussed. “I mean, it's a great swanky party with lots of free food and drinks, that's kind of the main reason you want to get nominated, you get to go to the party,” said Joel. Apart from that, he said it's nice to be in the room with other journalists who are “really excited about what they do” – including the “very handsome” Fox Meyer (sent via voice note in a groupchat including Fox). Fox agreed with Joel's sentiment: “I'm most excited about the free food and drinks, that's really the win for me.”

Critic had one final question: would they wish Critic a happy birthday in their acceptance speech? “Yeah, alright. I'll do it,” said Joel. Now to wait until May.

By Nina Brown

Editor // critic@critic.co.nz



Return of the Weka

"The first sighting showed up right in Studentville"

By Zoe Eckoff

Staff Writer // news@critic.co.nz



Flightless, small, curious, and feisty. You may think we're describing your most recent Tinder date, but Critic is actually describing an endemic bird: the weka. While weka are likely not fond of a candlelit steak dinner (they prefer the most critical piece of metal you bring along camping, ruining the whole trip), they're fond of invertebrates, fruit, and the occasional rodent. If you consider lime Tuis a fruit, it's really no surprise that weka made a recent return to our very own Duffers.

The ODT recently published articles investigating several sightings of the weka, two of which were in North East Valley and the Otago University campus, and another reportedly entering a student flat.

Critic Te Ārohi reached out to the Department of Conservation (DOC) about the weka sightings, who helpfully confirmed “regular reports of sightings of weka in Dunedin”. They could not provide exact numbers, but also confirmed several reports of weka near the Otago Uni campus in March of 2024. “There are no known weka populations in or around Dunedin,” DOC told Critic, explaining that “it's not known how the weka may have come to be in Dunedin”.

Being a flightless bird and all, their sudden appearance certainly raises suspicions. Did someone reintroduce the species to its motherland by hand? Is there some secret underground weka colony waiting to overthrow and enslave human populations? These are questions Critic asked certified avian-expert Oscar Thomas, a Masters student at Otago University and member of Birds New Zealand. He helped out Critic last year when we attempted to answer the age-old question about whether the University puts artificial bird noises across campus (which we're still suss about).

Oscar informed Critic that while “weka are extremely capable of walking long distances”, the nearest remaining weka population are Rakiura Stewart Island (over water) and Fiordland, which is over 300km away. “We reckon these birds may have been

brought here. Coincidentally, the first sighting showed up right in Studentville.” Which one of you packed a weka on your roadie?

Despite their presence, Oscar admitted that he was unsure if the weka would be able to stick around. “It's unlikely with only two or three birds. You need a lot more for a viable population”, he told us. However, he pointed to a speck of hope: “two birds in North East Valley have found each other, so they may give it a go. Weka are now endangered, but were historically widespread across Aotearoa including Ōtepoti, so it would be nice to have them back properly one day.”

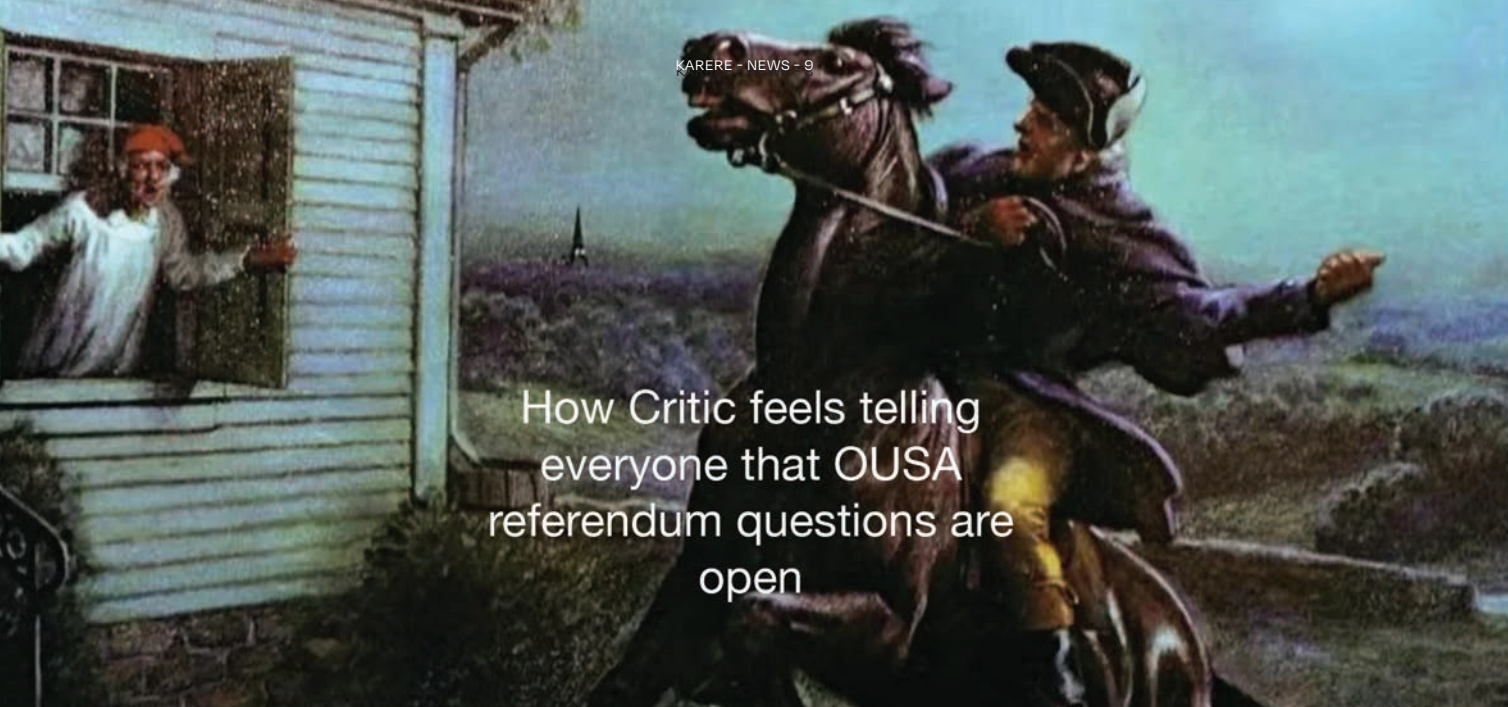
When asked if he'd seen the weka himself, Oscar told Critic he hadn't been prioritising searching for the elusive bird. “I know a few people who have encountered them,” he said. “Lots of sightings of what we presume are no more than three birds have been reported by members of the public to Predator Free Dunedin and Birds New Zealand.”

If you're like Critic, you're probably wondering why you haven't seen one of the weka yourself. “They're not easy to find, and most active at dawn and dusk. Besides, neighbourhoods aren't the best places to creep around with binoculars,” Oscar explained. That may be why when Critic went for a weka hunt, all they found was a couple of pūkeko and a baby dressed in a bunny costume. “They also make quite loud coo-eet calls that can give their presence away,” Oscar said. Coo-eeeeee!

Critic talked to five different students all around campus, all of whom either said “no” or laughed at the suggestion of weka being seen around the North D area. We promise we're not lying about this.

If you do happen to see the weka hanging around Dunedin, you can report sightings to 0800 DOC HOT. Maybe give Critic a call too, we're still pretty salty the weka didn't want to come see us.





How Critic feels telling everyone that OUSA referendum questions are open

Opinion: The OUSA Referendum Has Been Very Poorly Advertised

By Hanna Varrs
News Editor // news@critic.co.nz

Hear ye, hear ye! OUSA referendum question submissions are open and will close on the 2nd of May. That's really fucking soon – so whip out your thinking caps and email Vice-Pres Amy Martin (adminvp@ousa.org.nz) with all the questions you can think of!

Want a student bar? Shall we make OUSA yellow rather than brat green? Should the University have the power to discipline students' for their behaviour off-campus in their own private residential flats? The world's your oyster. Have your say and exercise your fleeting democratic power.

When asked about whether they'd heard about the upcoming referendum and the fact questions were open, Link-dwelling students John, Andrea and Ben glumly shook their heads. Their mate Mia said, "You like, submit a question to, I dunno? Online? And then people vote." Pretty much. "I've definitely seen things about it in the Critic [over the years]," a St Dave's barista confessed, maybe just trying to make me feel better.

Unfortunately, OUSA has failed to give the referendum the proper plug it deserves. You know there's an issue when I (News Editor, really nosy) didn't realise the referendum questions had even officially opened for submission from the student body. In fact, I only confirmed this once I physically emailed Amy about the whole thing. Clearly a bit of a problem.

The only other evidence I could find about the referendum even taking place is a post on the OUSA Exec Instagram (@ousaexec) which fails to communicate the dates for when questions open, when they close, when the referendum voting begins and when the voting closes. To make matters worse, there is absolutely no explanation as to what a referendum is nor how the fuck it operates. So let me break down the referendum procedure for you (Law student, nerdy), which is borderline inaccessible and contained in a random PDF I found in a Google search.

Step one: questions that are submitted by the student body will go to the OUSA Exec for approval. This acts as a sorting process so that the Exec can determine which questions will get mediated (read: go to a fancy lawyer who makes sure the

questions aren't worded in a biased way). You may be thinking: censorship risk! I like your cynicism. Rest assured – the only reasons why OUSA reserves the right to avoid recommendation to the mediator are if it relates to financial or administrative matters of the association, or if the question unfairly targets any student, OUSA or Uni member.

To cut down on all the boring jargon, this basically means students can submit any silly questions that they want and make a lawyer take time out of their day to read them. Last year, we submitted a question asking if the President should be officially referred to as 'Big Chungus'. Obviously (unfortunately) this didn't work out. Second time lucky?

Step two: OUSA advertises the questions. These questions have to be put out for ten days so students can have a good look and an even better think. The questions will have an accompanying pros and cons list, to put the implications of decisions resulting from the referendum in context. Talk to your friends. No question is a stupid one (we submitted Big Chungus) – this stuff can genuinely be complicated, especially if you're not devoted to student politics (also known as having a life).

Step three: student forum. This must be held at least a day before voting opens, and is a chance for students to ask about, debate and discuss questions with OUSA. Again – no question is stupid (do I need to mention Big Chungus a third time?). If you're a student and have a question about how something will impact you, ask it. If you're confused about any of this, chances are others are as well. Do your fellow students a favour: pipe up, create conversation and make the referendum accessible and effective.

Step four: voting. This must remain open for 3-5 working days. This year, it'll take place from the 26th to the 28th of May – so only three days (stingy). Most importantly, OUSA should work to ensure times/dates chosen allow for reasonable opportunity for Critic to cover the referendum, including the lead up to it. So I'll be with you through all of this to hold your hand. We can braid each other's hair.

Opinion: The Mid-semester Conspiracy That The Clocktower Doesn't Want You To Know About

By Gryffin Blockley
News Reporter // news@critic.co.nz

It's a tale as old as time (or 1869 at least): slumped in a chair in your first lecture post mid-semester break, you see your UC mate's story. There he is, week two into his three-week break, cracking a beer or doing whatever tragic standard 'fun' is for an engineer.

Our South Island universities/cousins both get three-week breaks, while all five up North get two weeks. Why do we only get one? On top of that, all other University semesters only have twelve weeks of classes – so why are we stuck with thirteen?

Upon finding this horrific fact out when enrolling at Otago as a naive Year 13, Mum assured me that the extra classes and shorter semester breaks all work out in the end: Otago students get longer summer breaks to make up for it (also a big lie, with only Canterbury/Lincoln starting a measly week before us). The thought of more time in the frigid winters was distressing (and that's before I'd ever stepped foot in a single-glazed student flat).

After a Sem Two last year that aged me beyond my twenties in just thirteen weeks, the thought of another gruelling academic year felt worse than clocking into my minimum wage job over the summer. Determined for answers, I began digging to see why Otago tauira are punished with a system none of us asked for.

In the days after the annual November migration of breathas up North last year, a proposal was quietly put to the University Senate. Starting in 2027, Otago will decrease the length of our semesters to twelve weeks, to match our Northern counterparts. Students' misery was not cited as a reason for the change. Instead, concerns around special examinations, graduation timing, and StudyLink processing were catalysts. Whatever. I'll take it.

If you're wondering what the University Senate has to do with this (or why that is a thing outside America) it turns out that this little-known bureaucratic group has an important purpose. According to AskOtago, "The Senate reports directly to the Council, advising it primarily on academic matters as the Academic Board of the University". This is basically code for the Senate being the only group that can fix the broken system.

But why propose this change now? Students have been begging for this change for years. Pleading for less intense semesters appeared in the OUSA referendum as recently as 2023. Heck, students' pleas got so loud Critic has written about it not once, but twice, over the span of three years.

The same reasoning was always thrown out: we need longer semesters because our papers are 18 points instead of 15 (which is apparently up for debate). Pretty pathetic excuse when you realise many students at universities such as Vic do several 20-point papers each semester now. Something isn't right, I reckon.

What really got the gears spinning in my mind was a throwaway line from an ODT article (if you can call a paywalled press release with a line or two added an article). The line quoted a discussion paper saying that reduced semesters could cause "better alignment with school holidays".

Things were falling into place. For those of us north of Christchurch, break time usually means a journey to the airport. Every North Islander has grappled with the worthwhileness of flying home for just one week. Especially with the jacked-up price of airfares during breaks, sometimes it just works out cheaper to stay in your flat, rather than flying up and bludging off the 'rents for a week.

If the semester were to be aligned with school holidays, this would be the perfect excuse for Air New Zealand to increase airfares even more. RNZ recently reported that an angry dad trying to send his daughter to Wellington for university reckoned it was cheaper to fly to LA than our capital during semester break. Does this mean Chris Luxon has been lobbying the University just to line his pockets?

"But wait!" you may cry. "Don't you remember who the VC is? Chris Luxon's (former) political enemy Grant Robertson now runs the show. Why would he be partaking in this conspiracy?!" Using theory only a POLS major could ever froth over, I am certain Daddy Grant is taking a gamble here. If airfares go up even more, students won't buy the tickets – they're too broke! They'll stick around. StudyLink can only do so much week-to-week.

Higher airfares mean fewer carbon emissions in the sky. What is at the forefront of the woke-left agenda Grant is secretly cooking up in the Clocktower (at least according to my sources from Facebook's Dunedin News)? That's right – climate change. Checkmate Grant. I know what's up.

The worst part of this conspiracy is that reducing our semesters by a week doesn't even give us longer mid sem breaks. Psychologically speaking, we think we'll be better off, but we'll just be as tired. Like rats in a cage. If we're just as tired, could this mean that the likes of Monster and V are next on Grant's payroll? I shudder to think.

At the end of the day, something needs to change. It's pretty tragic that Air New Zealand and Jetstar can put a price on time with our families. It's also sad that our semesters mean many of us have to play the mental gymnastics of 'Is it really worth seeing our families for just one week?'

And that is my undeniable proof that Otago's semester system is a scam. Or that's what I told myself at least, as I dropped over half a week's worth of wages on flights home. To fucking Palmerston North.



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A Marathon Effort for Mental Health

"Scoot's" 2025 Misogi

Content warning: Mention of suicide

Scott Casey-Woolridge ("Scoot" as he's known by friends) is a fifth-year Otago student who's planning an utterly insane physical feat for Matariki weekend to raise money for the I Am Hope Foundation. I Am Hope focuses on mental health, providing aid to young people who are struggling. Driven by his own experiences with mental health and generational trauma, he intends to complete a marathon-length ski, row, bike, and run – all back to back, with "maybe half an hour tops" in between. That's 42.1km of each. One after the other. In one day.

Interpreting the Misogi challenge as doing "one challenging thing a year that shapes your other 364 days," Scott rowed a kilometre for every day of the month in September last year – 1km on the 1st, 2km on the 2nd, and so forth. He told Critic that he has always been physically fit, and was just "spitballing on the piss" with his mates and said, "I think I might do this next. I don't wanna be one of those people that just says shit, so..." The follow through is more than admirable, especially considering the average Dunedin student can't even manage the drunken commitment of making it to class the next day. He added that his mates have been absolutely instrumental in helping him through this journey, noting Percy, Tiny, Moody, Sio, and Pete in particular.

Scott laid out the logistics: "I'll finish the ski, have a bit of food, some fluids, and then jump on the rower. The ski will be hard to eat or drink because I'm holding two handles, rowing and biking though I'm sitting down so that'll be a little easier." A confused Critic asked how he would ski given the lack of mountains in Dunedin, doubting Mt Cargill's occasional dusting of snow quite counted. "Erg," he replied. Critic wondered briefly if he was having a stroke. Turns out it's a gym thing – a skiing version of the fan driven rowing and biking machines.

Scott is aiming to complete all of this under 14 hours, while adding, entirely calmly, that although it is promoted as a one day thing, he'd been envisioning himself waking up the next day and doing it again if he was still shy of the \$51,100 goal. "Until we get there. Whatever it takes," said Scott. Jesus fuck.

The specific goal of raising \$51,100 is because one session of counselling or therapy costs \$140 on average, and multiplying that by 365 days in a year gets that figure. Scott wants to raise enough for one individual a day for a year. He added, "That's just what it takes right? That first one, and I know it takes a while to gain a relationship with your counsellor or whoever, but this is to just get the ball rolling, and I think that's what's important."

Scott's own mental health journey began with a difficult relationship last year where he discovered that he had an avoidant attachment style (a low tolerance for emotional intimacy and closeness). He then worked through a self-development book. From this, he remembered a traumatic event

from his teenage years: intervening when his mum tried to kill herself. "Talking about the experience I've had is not for pity," said Scott. "The way I see it, there are a lot of people that have stories like these and might be bottling it up in one way or another. If you think there's something in your life that's negatively affected you, reach out to your mates, talk to someone with a professional opinion. My experience is that people say, 'Oh it's family stuff, everyone has family stuff. I don't want to be a burden by introducing them to my shit.' But I've had some really cool yarns with people, and it's totally fine. No one's gonna pass judgement."

In Scott's opinion, New Zealand has a real problem in terms of mental health. "Society tells us a lot that we shouldn't talk about it. There's that stigma that people are becoming soft because they are talking about it. It's just not true. People's realities aren't fake – your reality is your reality."

He also began to consider generational trauma and how his mum's upbringing and losing her own mum at a young age meant that she dealt with that her whole life – which then affected Scott. "I think in two generations' time we might be able to get mental health in NZ in a really good spot. Hope is a massive driving factor – just having that hope that we will suss our shit out."

While he trains, Scott is trying to prove to himself that he can flip his negative experience into something that drives him to do something positive. Beyond that, he said that when things suck he replaces the thought of "Oh, this is a shit time" with the thought of how many other people he is doing this for, and how much larger it is than being just about him.

Fundraising for 'I Am Hope' is also personal for Scott as an aspiring teacher. He appreciates the foundation and all that they do for young people, recognising that their main demographic is teenagers, who are "going through a lot of changes as it is, and dealing with things at the same time. I Am Hope does a sensational job at subsidising these things for the kids going through stuff."

While Scott is aware that students don't have a huge amount of disposable income to donate to support the cause, he noted that "it's all exponential – spreading the word, spreading the awareness, promoting people to have difficult conversations, maybe even ones they're putting off with themselves."

On the first weekend of June, take a break from manic exam prep and go join Scott for a community run and sausage sizzle with a gold coin donation, all of which will go towards the \$51,100 goal. "If people want to flick me a message that they wanna come for a run or do some gnarly shit, that would also be well received," he said. You can reach him via Instagram (@scott.cw).

By Stella Weston
Staff Writer // news@critic.co.nz



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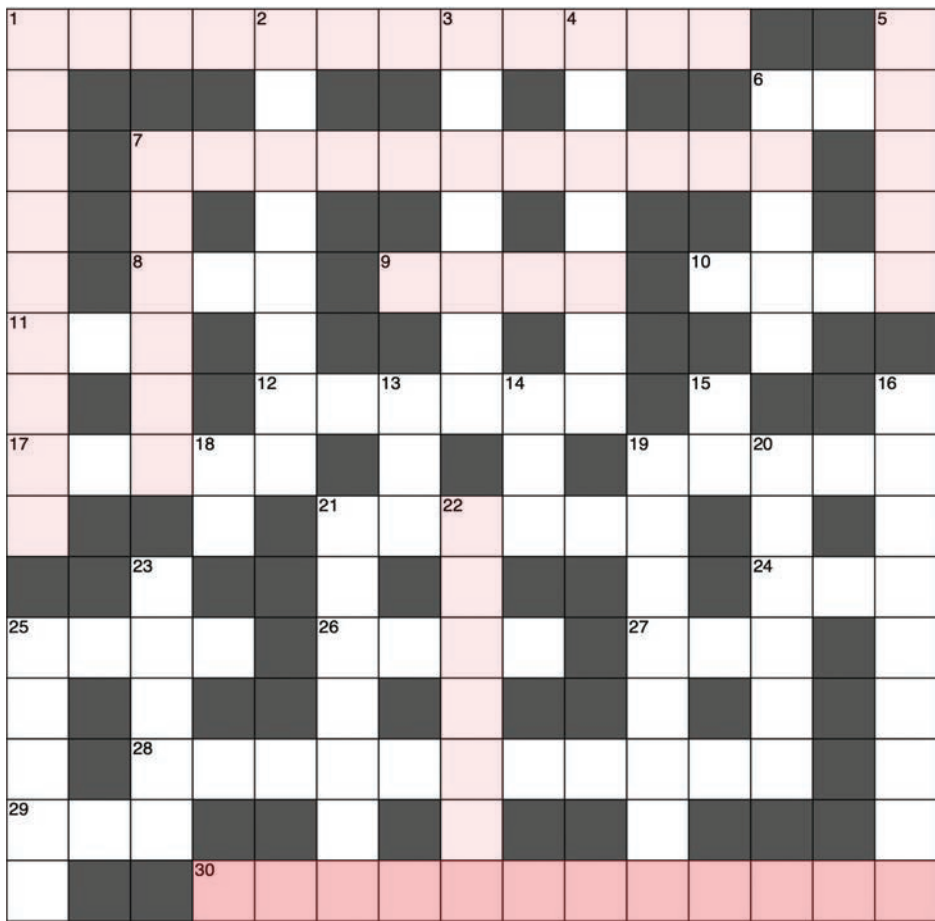
CROSSWORD

ACROSS

- 1 Potential knife nickname (2)**
6 American spy org. (acr.)
7 Heirloom timepiece (2)
8 Masculine ma'am
9 Spades or clubs
10 Mr pig
11 Consume
12 Bind
17 British TV
19 Army officer
- 21 Mrs Weasley sends Ron one in HP2**
24 Commercial WoF (acr.)
25 Hide with a spade
26 Cheeky smile
27 Furniture wood
28 Damsel's rescuer (2)
29 Lecturer's research debut (acr.)
30 You'd need the connected answers to be this (2)

DOWN

- 1 Dart**
2 Bouncer
3 In 2007, The Veronicas felt so _____ed
4 Judas, for example
5 All Blacks coach nickname
6 Young Green Party Co-leader
7 Gun
13 A rugby ref's back-up (acr.)
14 Slippery awa-dweller
15 Māori settlement
16 Hazy, sour, stout (2)
- 18 Vinyl**
19 If the Jungle Book kid were addressed formally (2)
20 Blazer
21 You'd find cucumber sandwiches and Earl Grey there (2)
22 Irish coffee ingredient
23 Saloon fight
25 Fundamenal



ISSUE 8 CROSSWORD ANSWERS

ACROSS: 1. BOULDER 5. TUNNEL 8. ORCA 9. UTI 10. POETRY 11. CEL 12. QUEEFS 14. E TÛ 15. ELON 16. EEL 17. EASEL 18. ERROR 19. ERA 23. BORN 24. NERDS 27. CHORD 28. HUI 29. SALT 31. EWE 32. PYTHON 33. RAT 34. BANANA 35. III 36. TARP 37. SKETCH 38. SANDFLY

DOWN: 1. BEACHES 2. UKULELE 3. DAIQUIRI 4. ROSE CEREMONY 5. TAPS 6. NIECE 7. EARLOBES 13. FISH AND CHIPS 20. TOMAHAWK 22. ARMENIAN

SUDOKU

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EASY

			4		5	6	9	
5				1	6			
8			7		9		4	1
	5	2			1	4		6
	4	8		7		2	1	
1		9	2			8	5	
2	8		3		7			4
			6	5				2
	3	6	1		2			

MEDIUM

	3	2	1				8	9
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8					5		2	
		7	3	5	9	1		
	5						7	
		9	6	8	7	2		
	6		5					3
7			4					
5	8				2	6	9	

HARD

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	2			7	4			1
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WORDFIND

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RUYTAKVQLDNBDUGFGOEKVQLMINQCRH
IBOABNEHDWJTHNLIENWOYZGUPPIHQ P
UECTGDAATYMBKGIVMSNEGACYCHCTVY
GUHOIEOOTTAUOWEFETHICALZQICNAP
ZINUHURVEZNENEBOTZHEKSWCYFYMC M
AVRIIAVSGSAMJVHDGRIVHATZBAZSJ P
LGWLESBPCOACYICFHRNSZRUYFKTDDV
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DJPEZXOWLJIYHZNWSSWPKNDAIATDIM
DIPQKFOMJNTTIRSYPKHDHWIQKQIOFA
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CGEQBZHSRJGGAERIUIJLOVRIFBUGDEH
XXBPEYOQGT AQRYATYKFEIHUCPHSNAY
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LYTHBBJWXBH AHUYLWGRQPSHPGLSEPB
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YZNLCKNXETPQQLVXLKZKGHASOTOMZS
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NUOHWGWMAPPWAMUODXTBOMKHCJGNKG
KARYXIAARRAVIMBYXKNJMIESVNZITPQ
QAOFVRDPUIRCFGF XPPKHIIBVUBNARR
GIUAHCDIOAFZZXROJYBIOMEOPBWRHG
IRGWDQLEBPMGAQKQWQZTLYVWLAWGYIZ
WGHIZCEXCAKXYBVQDQTGASLT KRBWLT

GEOGRAPHIC
ATTENBOROUGH
BLOODSHOT
WADDLE
HIERARCHY
REFERENDUM
VOYAGERS
MISOGI
CONSPIRACY
BIOME
MANAAKITANGA
SEDIMENTARY
MOSS
SNEGACY
ETHICAL
KAURI
DOCUMENTARY
RATATOUILLE
AMMONITA
SCROGGIN

SPOT THE DIFFERENCE

Illustrated by Connor Moffat

There are 10 differences between the two images



TERRAIN GENERATION

By Molly Smith-Soppet

Illustrated by Jimmy Tannock

Here at Critic Te Ārohi, we have reported on 100 years of changing student landscapes, but what about the actual land we stand on? In honour of the release of the great piece of media called *A Minecraft Movie*, as well as our annual National Geographic issue, we booted up a new world save and asked: What would Dunedin look like as a Minecraft map? From glitched-out infrastructure to illagers (breathas in Peaky Blinders costumes), Ōtepoti is a region of rich terrain, strange customs, and cursed loot drops.



Like any world worth exploring (living in), Dunedin has its own biomes, each with unique survival challenges, resource pools, local mobs, and weather cycles. There are highlands with +5 Frostbite resistance, beach zones buffed by Salt Air Aura, and a Netherworld where your stats drop but your lore points skyrocket.

This is a land where a liveable flat takes second-hand couches, a landlord who communicates exclusively in misspelt slang, and at least one airfryer. A night out involves a minimum of three interactions with opps, endless potions of dizziness, and a respawn at Trojan on the way home for a sloppy kebab.

We've also included a few rare achievements to keep an eye out for. Some will test your endurance, while others will net you XP and help you to unlock the hidden emote: "sense of belonging".

So equip your Adidas Sambas, charge your vape, and bring a spare diamond sword for the walk back from the supermarket.

The sun is setting.

Your heat pump doesn't do shit.

And someone just threw an egg at you.

Welcome to Dunedin. Good luck surviving the semester.

Mornington/Roslyn (The Frozen Peaks)

Dotted with precarious driveways, historic villas, and students old enough to have built the ancient cities

themselves, the Frozen Peaks offers a quiet retreat from your usual mobs and bottle-breaking wanderers. Still, the spawn rate for rare mobs is high: dog walkers wrangling 5+ dogs, retired geriatrics who know your landlord personally (yuck), and morning walkers equipped with hiking poles for that 'extra support'.

The Frozen Peaks rest atop the remnants of ancient volcanic activity, part of the greater Otago block uplifted by tectonic forces over millions of years. Common resources in this biome include Basalt and Breccia – stones stacked high to form breathtaking viewpoints and equally excellent ice skating opportunities. The terrain is steep, winding, and often glazed with frost.



Weather here defies logic. You can leave your flat in a shirt and come back an hour later, soggy, windburnt, and frostbitten. Trees in this biome are ornamental and imported – cherry blossoms and towering oaks stand proudly, despite their foreign roots. Pockets of native life occasionally stray here from the town belt, venturing into wine-mum strongholds in search of kai.

The students up here are a rare breed: Honours students, St Margs alumni, and postgrads who value silence, induction cooktops, and personal space. Items commonly found on their persons include a lovely woollen jumper, a pair of glasses, and a large glass of chardonnay – and not the cheap stuff. With resources on the peaks scarce, many villagers resort to growing their own produce and herbs. The only alternatives are artisanal grocers or Fresh Choice (aka an absolute bloody ripoff). However, the greatest resource up here is comfort, tucked up on the hills away from noise, chaos, and, most importantly, from the emotional risk of bumping into your ex at Pint Night. The air is fresher. The roads are free of glass. The likelihood of someone pissing or vomiting on your welcome mat? Effectively zero.

Though, this biome is not without danger. Ice patches are persistent, and there's always a chance you'll get snowed (or iced) in and be forced to survive on lentils, natural wine, and your neighbour's romaine lettuce. Parking wardens work around the clock. Rent is higher, but so are the living standards. A number of passive mobs roam freely – designer breed dogs and the occasional arctic cat. Few hostile mobs spawn, but the odd one does sneak through. Watch out for nosy neighbours raiding your carrot farm, and the odd chicken jockey joke from Gen-A school children after 3pm.

And yet, for those who conquer its slopes, the Frozen Peaks offer a kind of peace. It's a place for slow mornings, lovely sunrise views, and coming to terms with the fact you're not as youthful as most other students. But hey, at least your whole home is double-glazed.

Danger Level: 2/5

Top Mobs: Yummy mummys, ghosts, and Columba College students

Loot Drops: Fair trade coffee, Range Rover keys, and a sense of superiority

Survival Tip: Wear boots with grip. And never mock your flatmate's sourdough starter, it may be sentient.

Extra Achievements for this Biome:

The End? – Hand in your final exam

The End – Walk across that Town Hall stage!

The End Again – Successfully enrol in a panic Masters program because you aren't ready to face the overworld just yet

North East Valley and Woodhaugh (The Meadow)

Nestled at the foot of Signal Hill, The Meadow stretches through the North East Valley and into Woodhaugh. This biome is a whimsical place, full of overgrown gardens, surprisingly affordable flats, and a plethora of neighbourhood cats.

The Meadow lies within a long, sheltered valley that

channels cool air and runoff water from the surrounding hills. Carved by the Leith River, the ground is rich with alluvial soils—fertile deposits perfect for a backyard veggie plot, ideal for the cottagecore lesbian in us all. Piwakawaka flit among the hedges, and bees gather on lavender bushes with the same sense of urgency students have on the way to the Baaa pub quiz night.

Mossy cobblestone is a favourite among the builders of Woodhaugh, and moss occurs naturally here too – this biome is a certified ‘damp’ zone. The atmospheric texture this block provides adds to the fairytale vibes of the area, while also causing a few hip replacement surgeries a year (PhDs, I'm looking at you). As the place where cold air sinks and settles, frost pockets linger well into the day during winter. In Mahuru (September), kōwhai trees explode in yellow, drawing in a fresh chorus of birdsong from tūi and korimako. Summer brings fruit, and autumn leaves signal the end of the cycle.

Socially, it's the calmest place on earth. Community events are the bread and butter of The Meadow's inhabitants. You're more likely to hear birdsong than bass drops– a gentler rhythm of life for the students who call it home. As the less remote younger sibling of The Frozen Peaks, The Meadow is for those who want to escape the hustle, bustle, and gear-snorting and step into the calmer, more serene land of shrooms. Everyone knows someone who once flatted in NEV and never left.

Mobs here are all passive. You'll encounter barefoot villager children on their way to playgrounds, cyclists in hi-vis, and retirees trimming their prize-winning roses. There's the occasional wandering trader: a man who feeds the ducks in the Botans every day, or a woman singing songs out on the street. None of them are hostile; they just have a deeper understanding of the world–or at least some really good weed.

There's magic here, the kind that slowly wins you over. It's in the community gardens, the street art, the chatty creeper strangers and the delicious Beam Me Up bagels that, despite costing half a stack of emeralds, are so worth it. The Meadow doesn't seem like much at first. But it welcomes you, draws you in, until you become a fixture of it.

Danger Level: 1/5

Top Mobs: Stoned Garden appreciators, park runners, and Knox freshers

Loot Drops: Plant cuttings, op-shop clothing, and aligned chakras

Survival Tip: Never flat on the dark side of the valley... zombies will be your worst enemy

Extra Achievements for this Biome:

Bake Bread – Have your sourdough starter survive one in-game semester

Enchanter – Read your Horoscope every week

Getting Wood – ...

North Dunedin (The End/ Soul Sand Valley)

You know this biome. You've either survived and thrived or blocked that shit out faster than you can say ‘Dunner

Stunner’. This is North Dunedin, Ōtepoti’s most infamous suburb. If the rest of the city is a world of academia and structure, The End is its anarchic black sheep sibling: teeming with mobs, overflowing inventories, and lenient police. North Dunedin marks the beginning of many people's adulthood– but really it’s The End. It’s where undergrads descend into their most chaotic forms, where Castle and Leith parties become a rite of passage, and where the local fauna consists of students, possums, and stolen road signs.



The End is built on a sedimentary basin beside the Leith Stream– a flat, easily walkable zone where the hardest part is navigating piss puddles and beer bottle shards. Sure, the Leith floods when rain and hill runoff hit all at once—but it also gives the canoe club the rare chance to kayak right outside the Clocktower. Westerlies funnel through Castle and Leith streets, tossing bins and earning students a messy reputation in the ODT (#promiseitsthewind).

Ecologically, The End is ... fucked up. Native birds are mostly absent, despite the Botans being right next door. In their wake: noisy pigeons, feral cats and rats thriving on Castle Street, munching on student waste– alongside seagulls fattened on discarded UberEats orders.

Culturally, The End is folklore in motion, with many “I will never tell my children this” adventures to be had. The “traditions” run rampant – O-Week, Hyde Street and St Paddy’s passed down like taonga.

Every flat has an appropriately inappropriate name. Half the windows are boarded up, the other half are framed in black mould. Speaking of mould, The End's most abundant resource fills flats, fridges, and flatmates' lungs, thriving in every corner like it pays rent. Otago flats are well known to host the most strains, both of mould and weed.

The mobs here are relentless and seasonal. In February, herds of freshers roam in packs, rugby lads tote boxes of “Full Cream Speight's”, and jaded zombies mutter about exam stress come October. The draw of this biome is its high-octane social life, where everything happens at once: flat parties, rugby games, beginner DJ sets, and blazing couches lighting up the night.

One of The End’s biggest threats? Griefer. Whether it be a horde of zombie piglins raiding

your fortress for your end-game loot (the air fryer and heater your grandparents kindly funded), or just the general destruction of your de-fences– you’ll want to cultivate a good relationship with your landlord. Otherwise, you’ll end up more financially ruined than the guy who decided to make his portal edges obsidian while he was still on iron tools.

You won't find a heat pump turned on before 9pm. Instead, you will find 16-man flats, copious amounts of alcohol, and lots of bongs. There are mobs of students with gambling addictions, landlords with morals looser than slime in a boat, and the random flat cats who have *seen* some stuff. Yet beneath the chaos, there's camaraderie. Everyone here is whānau. A shared struggle that forges lifelong stories and banger memories.

Danger Level: 4/5

Top Mobs: Freshers, Campus Watch

Loot Drops: Speight's merch, a bag, DJ decks

Survival Tip: Always check the couch before you sit down.

Extra Achievements for this Biome:

Bodyguard – Befriend an Iron Golem (former first XV player)

Have a Shearful Day – Get a haircut at a Castle Street flat

Adventure Time – Wake up on the beach in South D after a night on the potions

Central Dunedin (The Warped Forest)

Dense with glowing signage and brutalist architecture, The Warped Forest includes the Octagon, George Street, and all the winding streets in between. Buildings spawn at random, with vape shops beside sushi shops and curated second-hand stores galore. If North Dunedin is chaos incarnate, then central Dunedin is its polished mirror: equally volatile, but drenched in neon signs and political posters.

The Forest's canopy is made of heritage facades and the ghostly remains of businesses that died in the George Street makeover era. It's a place where vape clouds drift like fog, nothing ever finishes construction but somehow everything keeps functioning. Geologically, The Warped Forest overlays a volcanic plateau worn down by humans. Pavement replaces soil, and shops sprout from asphalt like invasive fungi. Here, you're never quite grounded.

Mob behaviour in this biome is unpredictable. You'll find flocks of Villagers working minimum-wage jobs alongside aggressive Traders emerging from alty coffee shops, waving posters for free club entry or suspicious meal deals. Feral hens wander the streets, guarding the road cones that students try to smuggle back to The End to decorate their abodes. Loot is abundant, but often cursed. Stop to look at a flyer for too long and you'll be hexed into attending a DnB night you never agreed to. Be wary of bakery pies that have been left in the warmer for too long– they'll curse you with 48 hours of Poison II. That said, stumble upon the right chest and you may be rewarded with lava chicken, flint and steel.

‘Don’t mine at night’ does not apply here. The Forest is always active: queues at the bank, cafés abuzz with strawberry matchas, and street preachers competing for the best spot in the Octagon. With no structures here obeying Euclidean geometry and buildings that seem larger inside than out, players must remain alert. Here you can go from a lecture to a job interview to a gin bar, all in three blocks. Beware the potions in this biome– effects often aren't worth their trade values. But after a few, you might just find yourself buying a stack for all the other patrons too.

Danger Level: 2.5/5 before 10pm, 5/5 after

Top Mobs: Vape clouds

Loot Drops: Rob Roy wrappers, capitalism, and a rice ball

Survival Tip: The key is to always be wearing headphones and to avoid the Octagon at night if you're sober

Extra Achievements for this Biome:

Librarian – Study in all libraries on campus

Archer – Bottle a fresher from 20 blocks away

The Lie – Bake a cake with your flatmates whom you secretly hate

St Kilda/St Clair (The Beach)

Ahhh, the land of the Groms, pilates mums and pretentious postgrads – The Beach. St Kilda and St Clair are where the city stops being so rigid and starts living. Life here is ruled by the moon and the surf report. A sandbox sculpted by time and tide, these suburbs sit atop ancient coastal dunes, ever-changing and restless. Their roots stretch back to when sea levels changed and Otago Harbour was still a prehistoric lagoon, shaped over centuries by coastal erosion and sediment drift. The dunes act as windbreaks and barriers to the sea fog that rolls in when cold ocean meets warm air.

The ecology here is resilient but delicate, with native grasses working hard to stabilise the shifting sands. Further down the coast, little friends like ōi and kororā nest. But at The Beach, swarms of gulls dominate the skies, dive-bombing your Friday night fish and chips. Offshore, amongst the surfers, kelp forests sway, filtering water and feeding marine life, doing their part just like the residents. Generations of whānau fish from the pier or walk the esplanade. Beside them, students chase the dopamine of an outdoor life: surf, runs, saunas, and sunset pics.

But don't let the easygoing vibe fool you — this is still an intertidal zone. It's hard living, but it builds character. Flats are old. Wind knocks over bins instead of students. Sand gets everywhere. You'll adapt – or perish. You'll learn to gauge wind speed by the angle of someone's hair. You'll always wash your feet before coming inside. Every now and then, a server-wide event hits, and harsh rainstorms flood low-lying flats (keep a stack of sponges just in case). This biome is also under threat, not only from extreme weather events, but from the slowly decreasing durability of the floodbanks. One day soon, it might shift into a swamp biome. If you plan on building your base here, prepare to navigate your boat between the vines and lily pads that are inbound.

This biome spawns rare and legendary mobs: territorial surfers who also happen to be in rock bands, speedo-clad retirees who've braved the water every day since giving up work, and the occasional rogue sea lion on the footpath, glitching into suburban life from some offshore server.

Danger Level: 3/5

Top Mobs: Sea lions, off-leash dogs, and sunburn

Loot Drops: Surf wax, yoga mats, and oat milk mochas

Survival Tip: Respect Tangaroa, learn how to spot a rip and always check the tides before a beach bonfire

Extra Achievements for this Biome:

Lion Hunter – Pet a random cat

Buy Low, Sell High – Make money at the op shop

Zombie Doctor – Nurse a hungover friend back to the land of the living

Dunedin isn't just a map, it's a living, glitching, beautifully scuffed server where every player leaves behind their own legacy. Maybe you make your mark in the frozen peaks of Roslyn, or maybe you rage-quit during the North D lagstorm of week 5. Either way, *i tū koe*, you stood here. You crafted, you explored, you remembered to sort your recycling.

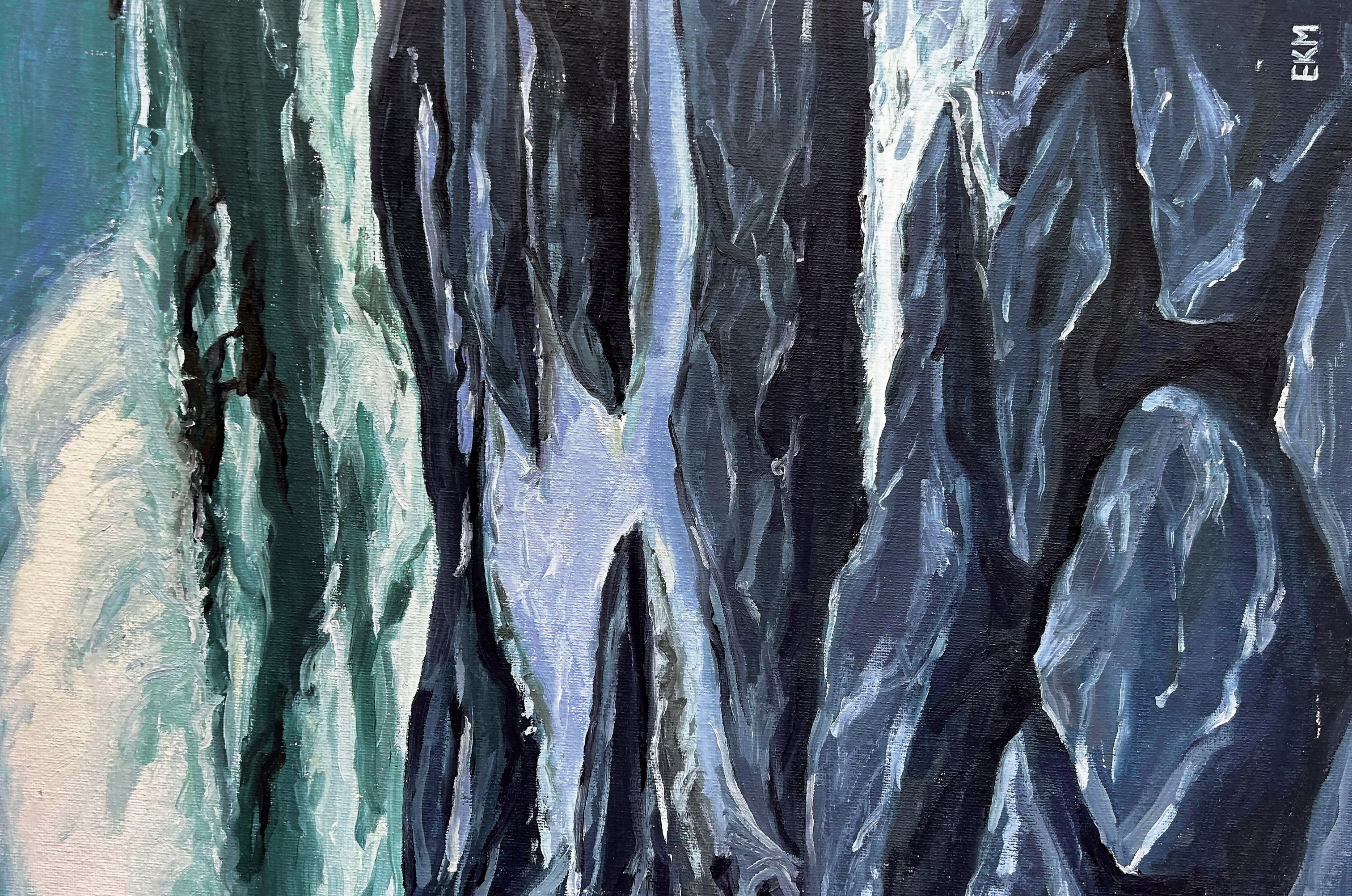
As you log back in for the rest of the sem (save this file), take a moment to honour the biomes that shaped your journey. It's more than a university town. It's a crafted whenua, stitched together by code, chaos and community. This is your tūrangawaewae, and sure, maybe you haven't defeated the Ender Dragon, but maybe – just maybe – you will unlock the rarest achievement of them all: finding your purpose.

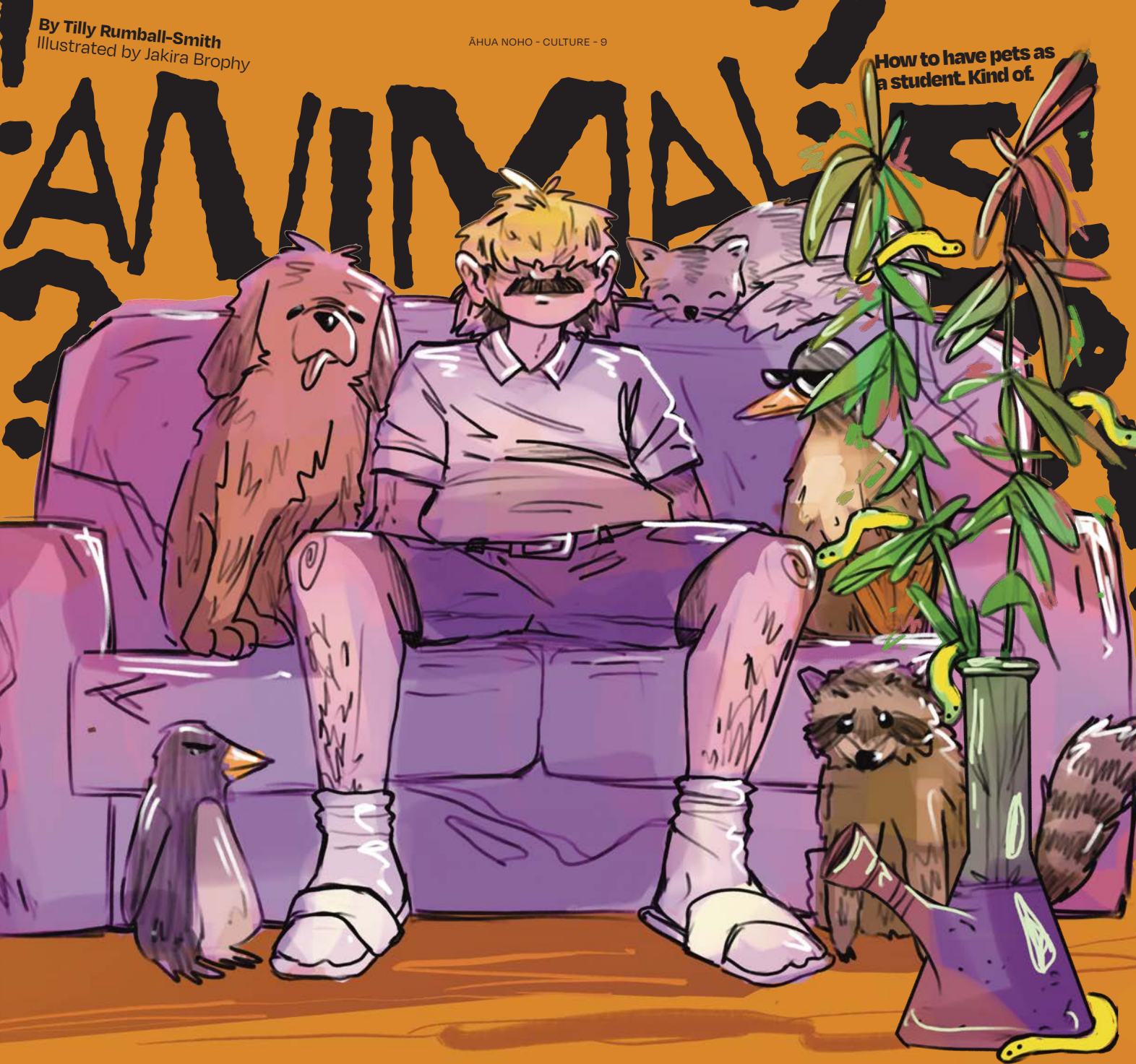
So plant a sapling. Build a dirt house. Pet a flat cat. Practice manaakitanga. The world keeps loading and there's so much more to explore.

Respawn point set.

See you when the sun rises.







How to have pets as a student. Kind of.

Kiwis own more pets per household than almost anyone else in the world, so it comes as a bit of a culture shock to leave that behind for studenthood. Many of us grew up with household pets who, unfortunately, remained in the household when we moved out. Without us realising, our final year of high school would be the last time we lived with our beloved furry friends. At least, until we have a stable job and can own a house instead of flatting. Neither of these things appear to be happening anytime soon in this economy, so here's a list of ways to have pets in Dunedin while you're struggling through your degree.

1. BUY A SWAN PLANT FROM THE SATURDAY FARMERS MARKET. THEY COME WITH MONARCH CATERPILLARS. These caterpillars are remarkably robust in terms of a flat pet. I've fostered twelve and two have survived which, judging from my flatmate's concession that she "sometimes blows smoke in their face to get them high", is a substantial achievement. Another name

for swan plants is milkweed, so I suppose they are always chewing on grass. Two weeks ago we watched in awe as one caterpillar wormed his way into a chrysalis on the plant we keep on the coffee table. He has stayed like this since, boringly immobile. We think he got so big because he ate the rest of the caterpillars, even though the internet says they are vegetarian. He also ate an entire swan plant so we had to get a backup. I say "we" but my flatmates are only mildly interested in the caterpillars and they most commonly come up in conversation when I'm asked to vacuum up the caterpillar poo on the coffee table. Still, I think they're a good depression-curer when they manage to stay alive. You can't touch them because it burns their skin but it's fun to watch them wriggle around and eat all day. Must be nice to be a caterpillar.

Joy Rating: 6/10. A good quick-fix for the Dunedin blues, but caterpillars can only do so much. Plus, what happens when they become butterflies and fly away? Are you sure you can deal with more abandonment issues?

2. GET HIGH AND GO TO THE MUSEUM'S BUTTERFLY EXHIBIT Sources confirm that it is actually possible to visit the butterflies without being high, but no one seems to know why you would do that. If you can scrape together the \$15 entrance fee, I've been told that frolicking with the butterflies after a bong is a somewhat spiritual experience, eliciting emotions that have been suppressed ever since you started uni. Perhaps you could bring a flute and warble to the flutter of hundreds of wings. Wearing bright colours can help attract butterflies to land on you. Please note however that the phrase "butterfly kisses" really leaves out the fact that their legs have claws.

Joy Rating: 8/10. These butterflies won't leave you, but you're high so you're having a good time regardless.

3. WALK THE DOGS AT THE SPCA I will die on this hill – not the Ōpoho hill where the SPCA is located, that one is miserable in the rain. Every Sunday I go to walk the dogs at the centre for a couple hours. You can listen to a podcast or some music while you go on a bush walk. However, other times you'll have to stay alert because a dog is pulling you hellishly in all directions. Most of the time, these dogs are delightful and sad, like one very old dog I used to take to the Rhododendron glen nearby so it could walk all over the flowers. The SPCA volunteers coming in to cuddle and walk them are the only form of human contact they get – they need love just as much as your dogs at home. #notanad but SPCA desperately needs more volunteers and the dogs need you too. Sometimes there are puppies and it is literally your job to play with them.

Joy Rating: 10/10. Dogs = serotonin. I don't make the rules.

4. TAKE A REALLY BAD FISHER TO THE LEITH We've all got that friend who cannot fish for the life of them, the one you brought on a fishing trip once but never again after realising they were genuinely detrimental to your own abilities. This will not result in any harm to the fishes since this friend will be unable to catch anything, causing their hunter-gatherer ancestors to sniff with shame. But happily for you, they will attract fish with bait so you can spot them (if anything actually lives in the Leith) and wave a friendly "hello" as they skirt around the hook. I'd advise against this if a) your flatmates are expecting fish for dinner and b) you're not prepared to confess your true intentions (fish are friends, not food). Just do what everyone's dad did after a fishing trip (read: pissing up on a boat) and lie about your success, frying up a frozen Hoki fillet discretely bought on the way home. Even if you don't get to see any fish, there's still tons of freshwater life in the Leith. Like ducks, insects, and condoms.

Joy Rating: 4/10. It's a gamble whether you'll actually spot a fish and if the guilt of weaponizing your friend's incompetence is worth it.

5. BUY A PADDLING POOL SO DUCKS WILL SEE IT AND SWIM IN CLEANER WATER THAN THE LEITH This one is self-explanatory. Ducks can fly, so they'll see your pristine little pond from the air. You could put little bits of bread in it to tempt them even further. Just one piece though, can't spare any more toast in this economy. Once you begin to attract ducks, you can start your waterfowl empire. Let the ducks quack the word. Make them start a turf war with the seagulls. Expand your paddling pool to a multi-layered paddling park with different temperatures to cater to different duck's preferences. Make duck nests. Eat algae. Become one with the ducks. Don't jump off your roof. You don't have wings.

Joy Rating: 7/10. Like your very own nature documentary on a budget.

6. FEED THE DUCKS IN THE BOTANIC GARDENS Don't worry if you can't afford a paddling pool – although I'd

sincerely hope you'd be able to, they're very cheap from the Warehouse – you can travel to the ducks instead! There's a pond in the Botans near New World Gardens that will literally give you bread (unfortunately just for the ducks). However, frozen peas and corn make the best duck feed, as their digestive systems aren't really equipped for bread. You can sit on the bench there and embrace your inner child while you hurl scraps of food at the ducks. Best to go in times of emotional turmoil or when you're experiencing FOGU (Fear of Growing Up).

Joy Rating: 6/10. Tapping into some childhood whimsy is great until you're surrounded by five year olds and become VERY aware of how old you really are

7. START A WORM FARM You could do this on purpose but it's kind of yucky. But, I don't know, maybe bugs are your thing. Annelids, to be specific. There's also a massive worm farm that already exists that you can visit on your way to Unipol. Also I didn't want to say it before, but you probably have a worm farm already. When was the last time you looked inside your food scraps bin outside? Mould ain't the only thing growing in there, honey.

Joy Rating: 2/10. Mmmm worms!

8. BECOME A FURRY **Joy Rating:** No comment.

9. BECOME A WITCH WikiHow outlines how to become a witch in 15 steps (with pictures). Completing the steps will take an hour or two max but less if you summarise the steps in ChatGPT. According to Madam Chatty, people who have read Harry Potter tend to find becoming a witch a bit easier, so this is for you Potterheads lurking about. Yes, we all saw you at Hyde. Once you become a witch, if you're a good person a black cat will follow you around always and forever with loyalty. This is your 'familiar'. If you're a bad person you get a toad (kiss them and see what happens if you're that lonely).

Joy Rating: 1/10 or 10/10. Are you a good witch or a bad witch?

10. FOSTER A DOG ANYWAY AND HOPE YOUR LANDLORD DOESN'T FIND OUT Fuck it, here's exactly how to hide a dog. It's basically the same as hiding a hookup you regret from your flatmates. Distraction is essential: go towards the flatmates yelling and shouting over a problem you've just thought up while the hookup slinks out the back door. Same with a property inspection. Direct your landlord's attention away from the dog by making someone else walk it around the block while the landlord's in your flat. Instead of kicking a condom under your bed, you're kicking a dog toy. In the event of an emergency, such as a flatmate finding a random rugby sock in the dryer: "where the fuck did this sock come from" or the landlord opening a cupboard to find copious amounts of dog food, you must lie and embarrass yourself. Safe answers include, but are not limited to: "I stole it from my lecturer's office" and "dog food is my favourite snack." This is the only way you will escape suspicion unscathed – they will be too disgusted to ask any further questions.

Joy Rating: 9/10. You will love your life but you will always be on edge. There is no reward without some risk.

Life without pets can be hard, but hopefully these tips will help. At 6am the morning I finished this article, a cat appeared on my doorstep and wandered into my flat, but left after all I could produce for it was coconut milk from a can. Am I becoming a witch? I don't know. If all else fails, you can always adopt a fresher for a bit and teach them the ways of Otago so they don't fuck up like you did.

Backyard Ecology: A Semi-Scientific Journey into the World of Moss

Bryology: The study of mosses and liverworts

Did you know that camels have three testicles? Well, if you did, you'd be wrong – and anyway, this article is about moss. That green stuff that grows on trees, rocks, and those trolls from Frozen. The stuff that goes unnoticed most of the time...

When you think about the natural world, it tends to be the big things: animals, forests, the ocean. In Aotearoa New Zealand, we're brainwashed on bird propaganda. While Americans are divided along red or blue political lines, here you're either a kererū or a tūi household. Not to mention the fact we're all united under the term Kiwis.

But what about the flora that provide the foundation of life for these fauna? They're the backstage crew that keeps the whole environmental show running. Deciding that birds have had more than enough air time (pun intended), I sought to learn a little more about moss. I'm no expert – I know almost nothing about it. I am, however, quite the expert of admiring pretty green things, especially when they come in shiny plastic baggies. Surely this couldn't be much different?

A quick Google told me that New Zealand is home to about 500 species of moss, and roughly 108 of these are endemic (meaning they're not found anywhere else in the world!) With these sorts of numbers, I figured I was bound to find *something* if I went looking. The mission: traverse deep into the Pineapple Track – one of the larger hills between the city and the airport, for those not in the know – to classify as many different kinds of moss as I could. For the sake of half (or maybe even quarter)-assed science, I risked my camera, dodgy ankles, and shiny Doc Martens in the quest to be an ecologist for the day.

Spoiler: I managed to find about four or five of the 500 before becoming too aware of the fact that I was alone in the bush with hardly any cell reception and no knife. Like swimming in a lake too long – sooner or later you start thinking about the unseen depths beneath you and what creatures might find your toes appetising.

At the very start of my hike, I was greeted by an entire retaining wall of moss – a convenient excuse to stop and catch my breath in admiration. This was your classic storybook moss: thin, clinging closely to the dirt, and of a lovely green hue. It was basic-ass, whimsical-ass and old-ass, too. I have recently learned that mosses are amongst the earliest land plants to have evolved from aquatic ancestors, and have been around for more than 400 million years. Technically, if you touch moss, you can claim you've basically touched a dinosaur.

Despite their association with deep, dark forests, some species of moss like *Byrum caespitium* (commonly known as 'sun moss') actually thrive in sunny areas. As I said, I'm no expert, but Google would never lie, right? Generally however, mosses prefer moist, dark environments – like the mould in my wardrobe, apparently. Mosses are non-vascular, meaning they don't have true roots. They absorb water straight from their surroundings, which is why they're happiest in humidity. Maybe moss should be introduced to U-Bar.

Further into the track, some of the most fantastic mosses I came across (not that it's a competition, all mosses are

wonderful) were growing upon the stones of the rushing Ross Creek. Deep in the gully, I spotted *Monoclea forsteri*, a 'liverwort' species – named so because their bodies resemble liver lobes. That's one for all you Health Science freaks. For everyone else, they look a bit like if a mum slimy ruffled fungi loved a dad lilypad very much. Just a bit gross.

Alongside this slightly discomforting sight, nestled among damp rocks, was *Cyatophorum bulbosum*, or quill moss. Its slimy appearance means it can sometimes be mistaken as a member of the liverwort family. However, its structure is quite different – small leaves lay in neat rows along the stem, giving it a fern-like appearance. If you spot this species, you can sleep soundly at night knowing that the surrounding forest is healthy: quill moss needs a clean, stable habitat to survive.

Visually, the most beautiful moss I came across was *Hypopterygium rotulatum*, or umbrella moss. Surprise surprise, this was also beside the river. Slender, peacock feather-like leaves stem from its centre and reach outward, giving the appearance of, as the name suggests, an umbrella. Scientists are pretty straightforward like that. It's not cutesy, either. These mosses act like tiny insulation blankets, buffering moisture and creating habitats for tiny invertebrates like springtails and mites.

A bit further up the river bank, growing on some wonderfully decaying logs, I found *Dicranum majus* (greater fork moss). This moss was probably my second favourite, and would definitely have a place in my fairy home. In terms of texture – because you know I had to get all up in that moss – this was lovely. It's a fluffy, pipe-cleaner looking species that can grow up to 7cm tall, carpeting forest floors, rotted wood and the bases of trees. It's pretty majestic stuff.

After my discovery of the greater fork moss, I figured I'd seen enough variations of green things for one day. It was time to moonwalk through some tall grass to dislodge the dirt from my docs, drive a bit too quickly down the winding road, and walk the streets of North Dunedin once again.

As it turns out, I may be something of a moss connoisseur. To say the least about the expedition: it was shit (I was cold, damp and dirty). To say the most: it was magic. I felt that childlike wonder of backyard exploration return, and I had to refrain from picking enough moss to build a fairy village at my flat.

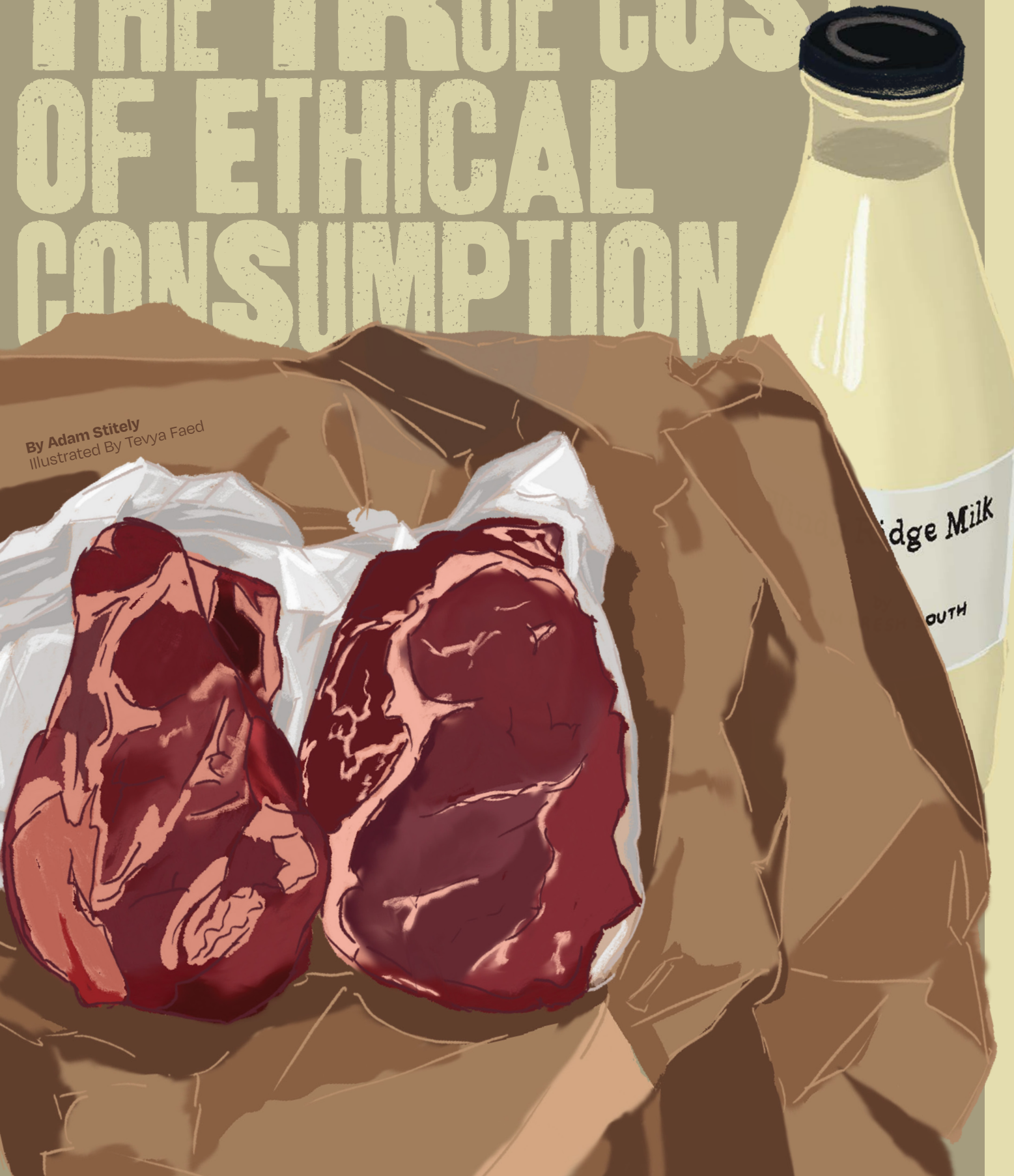
In a Nat Geo sense, I felt like I had the potential to be one of those people observing little things in nature while comparing my notes to other little things in books and then writing bigger things about them after that. Scientists, I think they're called.



By Isabella Simoni

THE TRUE COST OF ETHICAL CONSUMPTION

By Adam Stitely
Illustrated By Tevya Faed



Inspired by a rewatch of *Food, Inc.* (2009), the god-given right to shit on Nestlé, and an attempt to offset years of Fatty Lane-sponsored staff meals, Critic Te Ārohi spent five days living as an Ethical Consumer – cutting out anything even vaguely unethically sourced. Despite our best intentions, it turns out ethical consumption is harder than it looks. And there actually is such a thing as too many potatoes.

Unlike what your local café would have you believe, ethical consumption isn't just about paying an extra dollar for oat milk or saving turtles one paper straw at a time. My take on “ethical” meant cancelling that duopoly of supermarkets (because those prices aren't very fucking ethical towards the bank account). Dairies, restaurants, and fast-food chains were also cut out of the picture.

Some concessions had to be made. Ethical blinkers were on when it came to furniture, clothing, blankets and appliances, and although I would love to go without fossil fuel and power consumption, I have assignments to do. Still, everything else I consumed in the five-day period – food, household cleaners, toothpaste, toilet paper – had to meet some kind of ethical standard, with the overarching goal of completely eliminating single-use plastics, unfortunately ruling out the Glad-wrapped Miga Hako rice balls from the Link.

Without access to products like laundry powder and dishwashing detergent, I was forced to improvise: hand-washing clothes (boiling water will hopefully do the trick) and considering rendering animal fat into soap if nothing else can be found. Hell, I might even have to go full lockdown boredom mode and attempt to make sourdough. One could argue about the advent of agriculture and the stabilisation of society, but that's a debate for another time – we're not going full Ted Kaczynski this week.

To address the elephant in the room: yes, I eat meat. However, animal rights considerations and slaughter methods will be considered in the purchasing of meat. For the purposes of finding ethically sourced meat, I should be able to identify where the meat was sourced from and how that animal has been raised and killed. Essentially this will limit myself to meat that is wild game, home kill, or meat that is halal.

All produce had to be organically grown in New Zealand, which will be supported by some sort of certification or ethical stamp of approval. The focus on local produce is mainly down to reducing unnecessary resources in transporting goods (think of all the packaging and carbon emissions involved) and the different labour laws which may induce the exploitation of overworked and underpaid workers. Also: no seed oils, no palm oil. Save the rainforest, baby.

DAY ONE – SATURDAY

TOTAL SPEND: \$127.11

There are three things you immediately notice when you wake up in the morning with the moral code of a monk:

- A)** How am I going to wipe my ass?
- B)** How am I going to brush my teeth?
- C)** I really need a fair trade coffee.

In the hope of fixing these three issues, ethical consumption was purposefully started on a Saturday where I kicked things off at the Dunedin Railway Station farmers market. The aim for this trip was to find the basic necessities (soap, toothpaste and food) before coming to the realisation that I would be undertaking an involuntary diet of intermittent fasting throughout the week.

Unfortunately – but somewhat expectantly – I was only able to snag produce from the farmers market: a bag of potatoes, a bundle of radishes, spinach and a few bulbs of garlic from Oamaru Organics (allegedly spray-free and NZ certified organic). Next I grabbed plums and manuka honey from Earnscleugh Orchard, before already forgetting about ethically sourcing things

and grabbing a punnet of cherry tomatoes from a mystery farm (don't worry, the plastic punnet they came in was returned to the following market).

After the farmers market, I stopped by one of Dunedin's hidden gems: Links Butchery on Princes Street. Links advertises itself as a “whole carcass butchery”, claiming to champion local farmers and source all their meat from local farms. I don't know which ones, but I trust it. I spent a small fortune on a kilo of scotch fillets and a \$10 litre of full-cream Windy Ridge Milk. I also collected some home-kill sausages from a friend and successfully peer-pressured my flatmate into doing all the house chores seeing as I had no chemically induced products to do so.

For lunch, flexing the freshly bought and vaguely ethical food, I cooked steaks and put together a make-shift salad. Now, this sounds like a great feed, until you realise not having butter, oil, salt and pepper or salad dressing really takes away from any type of satisfaction. After spending a total of \$54.11 on the steaks and not wanting to completely butcher it (ha), the best course of action was to cut off some of the excess fat and render that down in the pan as a substitute for oil. The steak was bang average, slightly overcooked and not having salt and pepper was terrible. I now know why Columbus set off to find a new trade-route to get some spices, because at this point it was day one and I was already ready to do some bad things for some flavour. My neighbour's Himalayan salt lamp is looking pretty lickable right now.

Starting a theme for the week, I had the exact same thing for dinner but added some baked potatoes to go with it. I was really feeling like Matt Damon in *The Martian*. Decided to chuck some manuka honey as a topping on the steak and potatoes. 4/10, would do again.

DAY TWO – SUNDAY

TOTAL SPEND: \$44.14

Sunday morning began with some home-kill beef sausages, which weren't bad but again, cooked with no oil or butter and without bread or condiments. For lunch, I went full *Liver King* mode – steak eaten straight off a cutting board. Expect me on Joe Rogan next week to talk about the benefits of elk meat.

After another mediocre meat experience (that's what she said), I decided to go full-holistic trad wife and make my own butter. It was easier than you'd think; just pour milk in a bowl, scrape off the cream and blend the shit out of it. Easy enough to do if you have access to a bottle of full cream. I didn't. I had a \$10 bottle of milk with barely any cream in it. Results were fine, a mix between butter and really whipped cream that was slightly smaller than the single use butter packets you get with cheese rolls. Utilising this luxury, I cooked the second last steak, this time melting whatever butter I had in the pan and attempting to baste the steak with it and a few cloves of garlic. Great success.

If you're wondering what happened to that toilet paper and toothpaste I couldn't find, Saturday was rough. I had contemplated taking a shower instead of using toilet paper, but I held strong. Sunday morning, desperately trying to amend some immediate needs, I went to this organic shop called Taste Nature (found on the bougie side of the Octagon) which makes you feel like you're spending a small fortune to fund a middle-aged woman's spiritual adventure and top of the line dream-catcher before they explain the health benefits of mushrooms to you. Basically like Lottie from *Yellowjackets*, except without the psychosis. Or maybe with the psychosis. Either way, they aren't wearing shoes in public.

Scratching the itch, I managed to purchase some overpriced manuka honey and milk soap, bamboo toilet paper, and natural fluoride-free toothpaste. While in Rome. I also bought a \$12 loaf of gluten free bread. It was awful. I ate three slices of it before giving up and going full paleo diet – which may in fact be less ethical than what I normally eat, but I digress.

DAY THREE - MONDAY

TOTAL SPEND: \$0.00

Monday was the first day I was forced to be on campus and it very quickly taught me a few lessons about ethical consumption. One: If you don't pack a lunch, you're not going to eat. Two: I had to bring my own toilet paper and soap to campus, meaning that to avoid the embarrassment of whipping out a bar of soap in the Central toilets you have to use the ones on the second floor of the Business School where no one will see you. Three: Not eating anything isn't a good way to be productive. And if you haven't bought anything to cook before 5:30pm, good luck Charlie.

This was by far the worst day of the challenge. I missed breakfast, and had only brought a few plums and a leftover steak wrapped in the paper bag the plums came in which ended up sticking to the steak completely. Yes, I still ate it. Yes, I enjoyed the cold steak eaten straight from my hands in the Business School. If you saw this, no you didn't. At this point, staying on campus too late to buy anything and not eating nearly enough, I had one last steak and continued to dig into the 2kg bag of potatoes and the last remaining radishes. The rest of the well-rounded diet included eating honey straight from the jar and a few mugs of honey and boiling water to make a make-shift tea. Simply lovely.

DAY FOUR - TUESDAY

TOTAL SPEND: \$33.47

Another rough day for the metabolism. All that was eaten before 5pm was a singular slice of gluten-free bread with honey. Running

off fumes, I gave in on the ethical consumption and put back at least three black coffees on campus (drank in one of those Univeristy bamboo cups, so at least there was no rubbish).

Despite the start, the rest of the day was a godsend. Learning about the 5:30pm cut-off the previous day, I decided to stop by Links before they closed. Morals becoming slightly skewed, I purchased some steak and onion sausages, justified by my belief (and not backed up by any research whatsoever) that cows are raised more ethically than pigs. These were cooked up with the remaining cherry tomatoes and garlic to make a makeshift sauce that wasn't very thick but decently enjoyable. After making dinner and no longer feeling lightheaded, my parents arrived in town from Southland, where they dropped off some produce from their garden: pickled jalapenos, courgette, tomatoes, garlic, chillies, a fresh baked half-loaf of bread (gluten included), and an industrial amount of green beans which were mostly eaten raw after having withdrawal symptoms from a lack of snacking.

DAY FIVE - WEDNESDAY

TOTAL SPEND: \$0.00

On Wednesday I actually managed to eat throughout the day, and at this point the towel had already been thrown in for coffee, which made me realise that I might have a dependency on it. Everyone has their vices. On a side note, I still hadn't done any washing up to this point and thankfully had enough clean clothes to get me through the week. Although just using bar soap with no shampoo or deodorant couldn't have been a pleasant experience for those around me. But I had bigger fish to fry (metaphorically, didn't feel like fishing in the Leith). Despite starting to get the hang of ethical consumption, I got asked to go out for pizza Wednesday night so I folded. Grease has never tasted so good and I think my body was craving salt.

CUMULATIVE SPEND: \$204.72

If these five days taught me anything, it's that ethical consumption is pretty fucking hard. Massive props to those who manage it, but without some level of masochism it feels like a challenge designed to make you fail. And maybe that's the point.

It would be great if we could all live ethically, conscious of the environment and where our products come from, but that only feels achievable if you have the time to churn your own butter or can fork out \$12 on loaves of sad bread. Living as a student already feels a bit like being a caveman at the best of times. I don't know if the costs (in all meanings of the word) associated with ethical consumption are worth it right now. Plus, I really don't want to increase my risk of getting scurvy.

LOCALLY PRODUCED DAVID ATTENBOROUGH'S: A GUIDE

Looking for your next Attenborough fix but want something local? Check out the babies of Otago Science Communication grads and alumni. With a cheeky behind-the-scenes "brought to you by" to let you in on the highs and lows of bringing science to the people. If Nina's editorial is a eulogy to the department, consider this its memorial. Sit back, grab some popcorn and curse tertiary cuts.

RHAPSODY FOR A ROCK WREN - SHORT FILM

Lauren Schaer's *Rhapsody for a Rock Wren* is a love letter to the human-nature connection and Mount Aspiring National Park. Schaer's narration is like being tucked in by David Attenborough after a good hour of bitching about people from your hometown – therapeutic. It's a gentle lesson in slowing down, tuning into the tiny (alpine feathered) things, and not letting your only interaction with nature be your flat's dying houseplants.

Pairs well with: A glass of sav, a bit of Rupi Kaur poetry, and embracing your inner Disney Princess (ie, nature flocks to you).

Brought to you by: Camping alone for 15 days in a remote valley in the mountains

Find it on YouTube or at www.rhapsodyforarockwren.com

GLIMPSES OF GOLD - PODCAST

Cecelia Lei, goldminer descendant and certified history detective, takes us back a couple of hundred years to dig up the buried stories of early Chinese settlers in Otago – including her own great-grandad. From forgotten family lore to unmarked graves, you'll never look at Lawrence the same way again (that bogan-chic town on the way to Queenstown).

Pairs well with: Porridge, soul-searching, and Ancestry.com

Brought to you by: Hours of listening to your own voice during edit (the worst thing ever).



UNDERBIRDS: THE FIGHT TO SAVE THE SOUTHERN NEW ZEALAND DOTTEREL - SHORT FILM

Filmmakers Abi Liddell, Brady Clarke, and Isabella Lewis head to wind-swept Rakiura to follow the Southern Dotterel (or pukunui in reo), a bird so endangered it has its own support group (AKA DOC's recovery team). Meet two of its rangers (probably half Stewart Island's population) and learn why this little battler has everyone stressing. Both heart-warming and heart-wrenching, you'll want to schedule a cheeky menty-b after this one.

Pairs well with: A hot thermos of Milo, stormy weather, and a good cry.

Brought to you by: Over eight hours of tramping and hypothermia on Rakiura.

Find it on YouTube

TRIP ADVISOR: DRUGS IN DUNEDIN PT. 1 (MDMA) - SHORT FILM

Dive into North D's drug culture (but in a slightly more educational way than your usual Saturday night). In a sort

of *A Christmas Carol* re-telling, a breatha snorts a line off a crusty table and is launched into a series of very real chats with students, dealers, and experts in psychological medicine. Creator Janic Gorman explores the good, the bad, and the sick science of gear.

Pairs well with: A vape, a steak and cheese pie, and a comedown.

Brought to you by: Drugs.

Find it on YouTube

KAURI K95 - SHORT FILM

Follow Auckland Council's best-kept conservation secret: a team of four-legged legends trained to sniff out the pathogen that causes Kauri dieback (*Phytophthora agathidicida*, a nasty disease that kills our native kauri trees) quicker than Critic can sniff out an NZUSA scandal (see Issue 8's feature). Think paws and pure wholesome vibes.

Pairs well with: Granola, clean tramping boots, and missing your family dog.

Not brought to you by: Camera batteries confiscated by aviation security (the maker had to buy new ones)

Find it on YouTube

ARE YOU READY TO SHAKE, DUNEDIN? - SHORT FILM

For those of you who get your rocks off on seismic activity, Rhys Latton's doco on Dunedin's 1974 earthquake features vintage George Street footage, cute old people, and stop-motion tectonic plates. The PSA: is Ōtepoti prepared for our next quake? Which is a scary thought in a town held together by hundred-year-old bricks and mould.

Pairs well with: A cheese scone with your fossilised postgrad mate who's been in Ōtepoti way too long.

Brought to you by: A hyperfixation on the Coronation Street intro



MĀTAURANGA MĀORI AND SCIENCE - PODCAST

In a shameless self-plug (Jodie Evans, hehe), tune in to hear how Mātauranga Māori is reshaping science in Aotearoa. Through the lived experiences of Māori genetics student Gemella Reynolds-Hatem, and the insights of science education expert Professor Georgina Stewart, it's a kōrero about empowering tauira and restoring mana to the research process.

Pairs well with: A herbal tea and decolonising science

Brought to you by: Sound room giggles and technical difficulties

Find it on Spotify on RNZ's Our Changing World: Summer Science series.



This is a story about one Snegma “Sneg” Ramsay (Snegory to my parents).

Once a snail fell from the sky and it taught me about love. “Fell from the sky” is a fanciful way of saying that I dropped him by mistake when I found him in my kitchen sink. I thought that he was a clump of mince, he was so small back then, and when I picked him up I realised that his shell was badly broken. A large fragment came away in my trembling hands, but the poor creature seemed blissfully unaware of the death sentence it had just suffered. He was barely one centimetre long and resilient, moist; unbothered. I knew what had to be done.

Google: how to look after a VERY talented snail?

Google: broken snail shell repair diy

LESSON ONE: YOU CAN NEVER MEND EVERYTHING.

Fortunately, it seems like the field of Malacology (the study of molluscs: slugs, snails, mussels, clams, octopuses and more) has progressed since Sneg's injury in that fateful summer of '21. These days we know that garden snails such as Sneg, or Cornu aspersum, can recover from chips and holes in their shells. Back then? Google told me to put him out of his misery. Even the snail-keeping forums said it was certain death. To freeze them, drown them, get them drunk on beer first (fun fact: snails and slugs can be lured with beer. Do not abuse this knowledge) and then euthanise by force. I couldn't. I just couldn't. I'd had to euthanise a mouse earlier that year. It had crawled onto my doorstep, seizing, dragging its hind legs limply, a tiny dark puddle of urine slowly spilling onto the stone step; and I realised the infirmary box I'd prepared for her would be her coffin. Best practice is to manually break the spinal cord and I still remember how her cervical vertebrae felt in my hands before I made her go limp. I thought of where she was buried in the garden and how I didn't want to do it again. By that point, the teensy snail had made its way onto my finger. Its eyestalks waved around, and I looked back, and before I knew it Sneg had a name and he needed to live. Beneath his exposed shell I glimpsed membranous organs quivering. I wanted to kiss it better but that would probably kill him, so instead I put him in a takeaway container with some veggies and whispered some nice words.

LESSON TWO: BUT TIME WILL ONE DAY MEND ALL.

Snails can't live without their shells and they're much more complex creatures than you'd think, as I came to learn. They've got lungs and a heart that beats to circulate hemolymph (something quite like blood) plus kidneys and livers and all that good stuff to boot. They breathe oxygen through their pneumostome (breathing pore) that great big hole on the side of snails that you might've wondered about. Their anus, or butthole, is riiight next to it due to the snails' torsion (being a slug but twisty) so by a beautiful feat of nature they shit right on their own heads. The shell is secreted constantly through a snail's life, and it starts growing from the base of the spiral, not the centre. Sneg's shell had chipped away close to the apex. It would take a long time to heal naturally, and he'd surely dry out or get an infection well before then. Snail shells are mostly made from calcium carbonate, which they get from their environment. Kauri snails, for example, will cannibalise other snails and eat their shells for the gains. Some people had success with feeding their frail snails cuttlebones, which is the mantle of another mollusc so that makes sense. However, it was lockdown in 2021, and I was fresh out of cuttle. This meant hours of grinding down chicken eggshells (carefully boiled and sanitised) into a fine powder with a mortar and pestle, before sprinkling a nice line of calcium onto a carrot for my new slippery friend. I cooed words of encouragement a la Esio Trot and carefully bandaged his shell fragments back together as best as I could. Glad Wrap and duct tape was a shit idea, but I also had these

leftover Second Skin dressings 'cos I'd been through a lot too, and they were a brilliant idea. I fed him eggs and love and tiny drops of water and I watched him heal.

LESSON THREE: SLIME.

Snails produce mucus constantly, which includes different kinds for slithering and for keeping their body moist. I went through a breakup not long after adopting Sneg, and found myself also producing a lot of mucus. Oh my god, SO much mucus. Perhaps, like a snail, this could mucus also be purposeful? I was not a snot goblin bound to a pile of blankets. I could be a slime lord, in touch with my emotions, shamelessly damp in the fresh air. Oh, Sneg, your slime trails were a mirror in which I saw myself. I don't know dude, things got weird for me for a bit.

LESSON FOUR : FUCK IT, TREAT YOURSELF.

I ended up following my own mucus trail down to Dunedin, and not long after, Sneg followed. He quickly became the world's most spoiled snail, and discovered he could get away with only eating the tender inside core of the carrot wheels I would slice for him. Sneg would sit in the middle of the carrot and scrape at the middle with his radula – these cute little mouth parts that molluscs have (they tickle) – and leave a hollow orange donut behind. He could munch on the base of a bok choy for weeks, but carrots made his eyestalks move in a way I decided to read as joyful. My mum had driven Sneg down to Dunedin for me, and his takeaway container home quickly got upgraded to a miniature glasshouse terrarium palace. I filled the base with a soft mulch lovingly robbed from my neighbour's yard, and kitted it out with tiny patio furniture and snail-safe plants like basil and mint. Holy shit, did Sneg love basil. I let so many New World potted basil die in Sneg's cottage. I'd plant them in his cottage one week and make some bolognese, and within a couple weeks I'd find him slithered onto the topmost leaf of the waning plant, nibbling massive holes in the greenery mockingly. How I adored him. On a grocery run one day, when I realised that I was about to splurge on the fancy teensy organic carrots for my snail,

I found myself staring at them, thinking that I too might deserve nice things. It started with me eating fancy carrots with my snail, and eventually led to me finding someone who'd cook me dinner and keep some veggie cuttings aside for my snail.

LESSON FIVE: SOMETIMES IT'S GOOD TO HIDE AWAY IN YOUR SHELL.

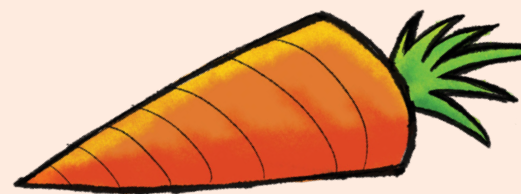
I kept diligently feeding Sneg calcium and, over time, the chunk in his shell healed over with a thin white membrane.

I'd upgraded from chicken eggshells to powdered calcium supplement (\$25, measured out in snail-sizes with a spoon I crafted from a paper straw) which I shook over his food and enclosure. He drank from a porcelain sauce dish, constantly kept with a shallow supply of water, because if it covers their pneumostome they drown. I wiped up all his tiny shits, because he loved to shit on the walls and run through it. His head constantly got shat on, but sometimes life does that to you. He used to bobble his eyestalks when he saw food, he got excited around water, and he used to like slithering on me but he didn't like other people as much. Snails make foam when they're unhappy, and if he foamed at people they did not pass my vibe check. He spent most of his time buried in the dirt to keep himself moist, which led to regular panics where I'd thought that he'd escaped, just to find him buried in the dirt somewhere, chilling, shitting on his own head, minding his business (ha). As he grew up, I watched the scarred chalky-white segment move further and further up the coil of his shell, and it comparatively became a smaller and smaller part of him over the course of his life. Wonder if that means something. I had him for almost three years, and watched him grow from an almost transparent little clump, easily mistaken for mince, to an adult snail the size of a \$2 coin, own house on his back and everything. There were times where I didn't care to feed myself, but I did because I had to make something for Sneg. I could've kept my curtains closed forever, but I had to let the sunlight in so my precious fucking snail could bask for a bit. I gave him a good life, and I guess he gave me one too.

LESSON SIX: GRIEF IS A SPIRAL. ALSO THE COPS WILL GET CALLED IF YOU CRY TOO LOUD, APPARENTLY.

Sneg passed in a heatwave a couple summers ago. I'd done my best to take care of him, and when I found him buried deep in the dry earth, unresponsive and mucusless, I was crushed. Absolutely distraught. If you've made it this far and have basic reading comprehension, you have figured out that I am not the most stable person. When my snail died, it added fuel to what was beginning to become a deep depression. Somewhere out there, a psych team has notes on me where I disclosed a “sneath in the snamly!” A lot of them thought I was nuts, a few got the message that there is no love like that between an autistic and their pet vermin, and that the right snail in the wrong place taught me a lot about how there's no correct speed to live your life. Recovering was a slow and patient process, and it took me a long time to mourn Sneg, too. I kept his shell on the mantle for a while, but shattered it last year coming home drunk and had an absolute meltdown. The neighbours called in a noise complaint (come on, bro) and I had to explain to two very impatient cops while I was very much in my dressing gown that I was mourning my long dead snail, and, secondarily, my youth. The cops left pretty quick. I was, again, left with a broken snail's shell. And this time I couldn't fix it. But I didn't need to (because he was dead). I watched that segment of my life spiral further and further away.

I don't have a lot to remember my dead snail by, physically at least. But he taught me a lot for a creature that doesn't even have a brain (they have to call it “cerebral ganglion” instead, it's honestly tragic) and he's managed to live on. I find him in my increased optimism, my appreciation for the slow majesty of healing, and as a central figure in tales about love that I drunkenly swap with strangers. Love is a legacy. A snegacy.



everything
you need

Earlier today a typical finance student from Castle Street said to me, "Everyone's out for mushrooms but no one knows what the fuck they're looking for." Not knowing what you are looking for can cost you your life. His words prompt me to write...

This autumn thousands of people across New Zealand will be eating 'magic' mushrooms and journeying in to realms unimaginable, the vast turns space of the human psyche. In fact magic mushrooms are so prevalent in Otago during autumn that it is almost impossible not to come into contact with them, which is why we intend to educate you a little before anyone drops dead. Think of it as 'Psychedelics 101'.

First and foremost it must be clearly understood that the 'psychoactive' substance in magic mushrooms, psilocybin, is extremely powerful and in potent doses can profoundly affect your personality, paradigm and in turn

your mental stability. However having said that, the greatest danger faced by mushroom pickers is mistaken identification; picking the wrong kind of mushroom can be fatal. If you think you might like to go tripping this autumn and have little experience with such things then please be sure to read the contents of this article; it's important for your safety.

the history

Psilocybin's treatment in our society is immature, to say the least. We don't understand the substance, we don't have control over its supply and the effect for the individuals who use it is often earth shattering and inexplicable. For these reasons, and more, the consumers of magic mushrooms enter a world where science is not yet prepared to go.

However this substance, psilocybin, is far from a new discovery. Magic mushrooms have been used for their mind expanding properties by shamans in North and South America, Asia, Europe and Africa for thousands of years. The effects and potential properties were well understood by indigenous cultures everywhere; the Aztecs called the mushrooms 'God's flesh'.

In 1957 magic mushrooms got an injection into Western popular culture in *Life* magazine, featuring in an article as part of a Great Adventure series. The author of the article, Gordon Wasson, described the 'adventure' thus, "The visions came whether our eyes were opened or closed... They began with art motifs, angular such as might decorate carpets or textiles... They evolved into palaces with courts, arcades, gardens - resplendent palaces all laid over with semiprecious stones... Later it was as though the walls of our house had dissolved, and my spirit had flown forth, and I was suspended in mid-air viewing landscapes of mountains, with camel caravans advancing slowly across the slopes, the mountains rising tier above tier to above the very heavens."

Despite the revelations proffered in the *Life* article this 'spiritual technology' was absent from Western academia until 1960 when Harvard University lecturer Timothy Leary, ate a couple of mushrooms in the village of San Pedro, Mexico. According to psychedelic researcher, Jay Stevens, Leary became "aware of a subtle sort of pulsing buzz - as if the world was alive, the birds, the bushes, the swimming pool, everything humming with life. As he let that lulling hum take hold, he began to slip back through exotic history, images of Nile palaces and Hindu temples flashing up on some inner screen, passing through bejewelled vistas,

devolving back until he bottomed out in that primordial chemical soup."

Following the experience in Mexico, Leary established a Psilocybin Project in his department at Harvard, although the research was outlawed by the government before the substance could be properly understood. Leary and his team did, however, manage to observe some phenomena which had profound implications for humanity and 'science'.

In the first psilocybin experiment doses were given to 175 writers, housewives, musicians, psychologists and graduate students. Over half claimed they had learned a great deal about themselves, and about the same percentage felt that psilocybin had changed their lives for the better; 90 percent wanted to take it again.

Leary also managed to conduct a project at Cordon State Prison, Massachusetts. There he gave a number of inmates doses of psilocybin over several months; and watched their lives change. Officially the project was aimed at reducing reoffending, but Leary confided to his students, "Let's see if we can turn criminals into Buddhas." After the first month the changes in the convicts were dramatic. The hardened criminals (murderers and armed robbers) were talking about love and ecstasy and sharing concepts that were certainly rare at Concord. In fact the early results of the study were so promising that Leary flew to Washington to discuss the possibility of introducing psilocybin to the national penal system.

However as Jay Stevens, notes, "the prison study also highlighted one of psilocybin's main sticking points. The prisoners were changing, true enough, but they were changing in a way that made science uncomfortable: they were getting religion. What they were on to, Leary decided, was a kind of applied mysticism."

Poet and Beatnik Allen Ginsburg described the Psilocybin Programme thus, "they were all so cheerful and optimistic and convinced that their kind of experiment would be welcomed as a polite, scholarly, socially acceptable, perfectly reasonable pursuit and would spread through the university and be automatically taken on as

part of the curriculum."

Philosopher and writer Aldous Huxley, was the first high profile Westerner to expound the virtues of opening 'the doors of perception' and travelling to worlds as yet unknown. A dedicated 'tripper', Huxley consumed psilocybin with Leary. Huxley warned Leary that the work would face strong opposition despite the obvious importance of the research. The advice was prophetic and Leary was eventually thrown out of Harvard, while the US government set about banning psilocybin, LSD and mescaline, which by this stage were all being studied by Leary's team. It was at this point that psilocybin and magic mushrooms were cast out into the cold. To this day psilocybin remains virtually unresearched, except by the people who consume it.

the picking

Psilocybin is found in approximately 75 different species of mushrooms from three different genera around the world. There are, however, only eight known psilocybe species in New Zealand (see identification guide). Around Dunedin you will find Liberty Caps (*Psilocybe Semilanceata*) abundantly growing on sports fields, parks and pasture after rainfall. Conifer Psilocybe (*Psilocybe pelliculosa*) and Potent Psilocybe (*Psilocybe baeocystis*) can be found in pine forests and in alpine areas throughout the region. One of New Zealand's strongest magic mushrooms is the Psilocybe strictipes is also found in pine forests, although at the time of going to press inadequate details were available for positive identification. Strictipes have a yellow/olive-brown cap which is wrinkly at the edges when mature and tighter coloured toward the middle, bluish gills which attach directly to the stem with no gap, and stem

flesh that turns brown when broken. If you do not know this variety by sight DO NOT pick them.

Your best method to learn how to identify any species is to get to know someone that does know that species and learn from them. Text and pictures are a poor substitute for the experience of an



Above: Allen Ginsberg

individual that knows what they are doing. An experienced mushroom gatherer will know the subtleties in that species that will help him to reject a lookalike from the target 'shroom'. Sometimes it can be just a slight difference in colour/tint or minor texture change, or the plants that are growing around a mushroom that will let

the experienced shroomer know which one is safe and which one is not. Just because a mushroom turns blue does not mean it is safe. Nor that it is hallucinogenic. THERE IS NO ONE SAFE TEST FOR ANY MUSHROOM!

When in doubt - do not eat it. When all doubt has been removed - check again. There are two kinds of mushroom hunters - smart ones, and dead ones. Even some of the smart ones are dead now.

how much?

HOW DO I KNOW HOW MUCH TO TAKE?

There is no predictable way of estimating the amount of psilocybin in each mushroom. The amount is determined by the strain, size and age of the mushroom, and how they have been stored. Liberty Caps (*Psilocybe Semilanceata*) and Conifer Psilocybe (*Psilocybe pelliculosa*) are comparably weak, usually a dose of 20-30 mushrooms will cause a strong 'trip'. *Psilocybes Cubensis* and *Stuntzii* are of a similar potency. Only TWO or THREE *Psilocybe baeocystis* or strictipes mushrooms will be needed for a strong trip so be very careful with these, though you are less likely to come across them this far south. At low doses, magic mushrooms may produce feelings of relaxation, not dissimilar to those of cannabis.

Psychic effects can be obtained from dosages between 10 and 60 mg, and generally last for 5-6 hours. There is usually less dissociation and panic than with LSD. Both wild and cultivated mushrooms vary greatly in strength, so one strong plant may have as much psilocybin as 10 weak ones. Once picked psilocybin begins deteriorating. Drying decreases potency by about 50%, while freezing or refrigerating will slow but not stop deterioration. The bottom line is that mushrooms are best eaten fresh.

Living on the edge sucks...
jump!

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There is an excellent site on the internet where you can have your dose calculated for you. visit it at: <http://www.lycaeum.org/shroomery/calculatedose.html>

There is a huge amount of information about magic mushrooms on the internet so if you want to know more then this is a good start, and there are a number of international publications on the subject available through mail order.

The Trip

After monitoring tens of thousands of psychedelic trips Leary and other researchers were only able to ascertain that the biggest determinant for how a trip will unfold is the mind set of the individual taking the substance and the setting in which the trip is had. This means you want to be around people you love and trust, and in a safe and secure environment: a happy place will make for a happy time.

When ingested by the tea method or eaten raw, a feeling of nausea may occur, do not worry this will pass. If dried



Left: William Mellon Hitchcock (right) millionaire owner of Millbrook, taking part in a Tai Chi session with Timothy Leary (left)

out and then wrapped in zig-zag/zila papers the feeling of being sick will be replaced by a feeling of coming up on a really clean hit of LSD. Mixing mushrooms with wine or honey will not affect their potency and can make the experience more pleasant, although it is not advisable to take mushrooms if you have already had lots to drink.

Many people have their first psychedelic experience at night in the city, at clubs and the like. This is NOT conducive to a happy trip: your self awareness and the aggressive behaviour of those affected by alcohol around you are likely to make for an anxious time. The city can look very ugly on mushrooms late on a Saturday night. If you do have a bad trip, all you need to do is get to a quiet place with low lighting, and perhaps some ambient music, and a friend to help talk you down. Never trip alone and if you can have someone who's straight keeping an eye on you all the better.

If you've never tripped before, be sure to be in a comfortable, secure space, away from phones, parents, heavy machinery, the police and the like. Such hazards are likely to cause anxiety that will fuel paranoia and possibly make your trip less enjoyable or even frightening. In reality, however, you have nothing to fear unless you THINK you have something to fear. This is the key to inner space experiences and as such you are forced to confront your own fears. It is this aspect which can be very challenging for some people, especially those with past trauma, previous psychotic episodes and even people who are not particularly honest with themselves. If you feel that everyday life is challenging enough, then I suggest that progressing on to less certain realms and shattering your reality is NOT desirable. Approach these things with caution and forethought.

The Law

Thanks to police law bending possession of magic mushrooms is a Class 'A' drug offence under the 1975 Misuse of Drugs Act. By legal definition mushroom possession should (like cannabis) be a Class 'C' offence because the

plant matter occurs naturally (this is the case in Britain). Once mushrooms are dried or brewed the charge 'should' be Class 'B', and then once chemically prepared to extract pharmaceutical quality psilocybin Class 'A'. This legal anomaly is due to the police changing the way they charged mushroom pickers following a statutory change that would have quashed previous convictions. To my knowledge this has never been successfully challenged, although hopefully someone will one day have the time and resources to do so.

The police generally turn a blind eye to magic mushroom picking, since getting 'serious' about it would land an embarrassingly large number of people in court. To keep pickers on their toes the police do 'bust' a few people in Otago and Southland each year. Police have been known to stake out popular picking spots, on mountain bikes, in the early hours of frosty mornings. If you get sprung you have two defences:

- One being to tell the police that you are thrilled to see them since you have just come across some illegal mushrooms while on your morning walk and were on your way to hand them in at the police station (be sure not to hide your pickings!).

- Alternatively you can say you had no idea that the mushrooms were hallucinogenic and maintain you thought they looked like yummy eating mushrooms; after all you cannot be convicted of a drug offence you didn't INTEND to commit.

Very few drug detectives know the social and legislative histories of psychedelics, even fewer understand the psychoactive processes initiated by the drug taking and virtually none will realise the spiritual implications of tripping. The police just do their job in ignorance and you have to pity them for it. They will tell you anecdotes about kids going crazy and walking off balconies on mushrooms but have no appreciation of the conditions which precipitate such an event.

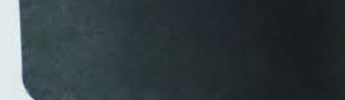
a final word

No one can deny that psychedelics, like psilocybin, are extremely potent and should be handled with the utmost respect and care. Conversely no one should deny you the right to eat a mushroom that grows in a field and ingest the magical substance which has had such an essential role in religious practices worldwide, and which is so far from the Western medical experience that its research is banned. By trying to control psilocybin and its cousins LSD and mescaline the state is preventing scientists and the public from investigating a field of experience so huge and unexplored that it is without parallel. To be sure, these are uncharted waters, an ocean vast and unknown. You will find few cultural reference points to guide and reassure you way, and you might just be shocked by the things you discover on the other side. Magic mushrooms are a gift from the gods and should be understood and respected as such. Respect them and you'll have no problems. Be safe and be sure.

Professor Fungus

"We do not see things as they are, we see them as we are." - Old Talmudic saying

mushroom



warning guide

WARNING: Unless you are well versed in the identification of mushrooms, do not try to identify any species of mushroom from these pictures without the text descriptions below. And even then be very cautious. Most species of Psilocybe are considered to be LBM's (little brown mushrooms) and have thousands of look-alikes (to the beginner). Eat one wrong mushroom and, up to 2 weeks later symptoms develop, and the only chance of saving your life is a liver or kidney transplant. A mushroom should never be eaten unless you are 100% sure of its identification. Even experienced mushroom gatherers have made errors. Do not take this warning lightly.

Liberty Cap: *Psilocybe semilanceata*

Description: Slimy, narrowly conical, brown to tan cap with brownish gills and smooth, off-white stalk; in pastures and manured areas.
Cap: 1-2.5 cm wide; sharply conical, often peaked/nipped, and not expanding; sticky, smooth; brownish, fading to tan, bruising blue on margin.
Gills: attached to stem, close, broad; grayish, becoming dark brown.
Stalk: 5-10 cm high, 1.5 mm thick; very thin, whitish.
Veil: Partial veil.
Spore print: Purple-brown.
Habitat: Scattered to numerous, in tall grass and grassy hummocks in farmland, parks and sports fields.

Conifer Psilocybe: *Psilocybe pelliculosa*

Description: Sticky, dark brown, conical cap with brown gills and off-white, hairy stalk.
Cap: 0.5-2 cm wide; conical to bell-shaped; sticky, smooth; dark brown, fading to tan, bruising blue.
Gills: attached, close, narrow; cinnamon-brown, then darkening.
Stalk: 6-8 cm long, 1.5 mm thick; whitish, darkening; covered with small, grayish fibers.
Spore print: Purple-brown.
Habitat: Several to many, separately or in clusters, on conifer (pine) mulch in forests. This species, often confused with the Liberty Cap (*P. semilanceata*), lacks its narrowly conical cap and is only weakly hallucinogenic.

Common Large Psilocybe/Gold Top: *Psilocybe cubensis*

Description: Large, fleshy, yellowish cap with brown gills and a persistent ring on stalk; bruising blue; on cow manure, nearly year-round.
Cap: 1.5-9 cm wide; conical or bell-shaped, becoming convex to flat with central knob; sticky, hairless; white with brownish-yellow center, becoming entirely brownish-yellow, bruising and aging bluish.
Gills: Attached, close, narrow; gray, becoming deep violet-gray, then black; edges whitish.
Stalk: 3.5-15 cm long, 0.3-1.5 cm thick, becoming enlarged below; smooth, grooved at top; white, bruising blue.
Veil: partial veil membranous; leaving persistent white ring (soon blackish from falling spores) on upper stalk.
Spore print: Purple-brown.
Habitat: On cow and horse dung in pastures.

Potent Psilocybe: *Psilocybe baeocystis*

Description: Sticky, conical, brown cap with brownish gills and off-white stalk; bruising blue.
Cap: 1.5-5.5 cm wide; conical with incurved margin, expanding to convex or flat; sticky, olive to buff-brown, bruising and aging greenish about margin.
Gills: Attached, close, broad; grayish, becoming dark purplish-gray.
Stalk: 5-7 cm long, 1.5-3 mm thick; whitish, covered with small, whitish fibers.
Spore print: Dark purplish.
Habitat: Scattered to numerous, in wood chips, on decayed wood, and decaying moss.
Comments: This species is a potent hallucinogen that contains several active compounds. Its side effects are not well known.

Stuntz's Blue Legs: *Psilocybe stuntzii*

Description: Sticky, brownish cap with brownish gills and brownish, ringed stalk; bruising blue.
Cap: 1.5-4 cm wide; conical, expanding to broadly convex with central knob, or nearly flat; becoming somewhat wavy and uplifted; sticky to moist, smooth; dark to yellow-brown, often green-tinged on margin.
Gills: attached, close to almost distant, broad; off-white, becoming brownish.
Stalk: 3-6 cm long, 3 mm thick, sometimes enlarged at base; yellowish, smooth to fibrous.
Veil: Partial veil leaves fragile ring that becomes bluish zone on upper stalk.
Spore print: Purple-brown.
Habitat: Several to clustered, in coniferous wood-chip mulch; reported on lawns.
Look-alikes: The deadly *Galerina autumnalis* has tawny cap fading to yellow, brown gills, and rust-brown spore print. *Stropharia* species do not bruise blue.
Comments: Like some other blue legs, this does not blue conspicuously. To avoid confusing it with the Deadly Galerina, be sure to take a spore print.

Student ALLOWANCES

Notice to all Students

Receiving Student Allowances

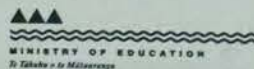
DATA MATCHING EXERCISE

The Student Loans and Allowances Division of the Ministry of Education monitors the payment of student allowances.

As part of the monitoring programme, the Privacy Act 1993 and the Education Act 1989 permit a data matching exercise to be carried out. This match identifies any person who is illegally receiving both student allowances from the Ministry of Education and a benefit from Income Support at the same time. This exercise occurs three times a year.

Students who are found to be receiving both a benefit and student allowances are liable to be prosecuted.

If you have any concerns regarding your student allowances payments, or you are unsure whether you still qualify for student allowances because your circumstances may have changed, please contact your student allowances staff immediately.



WEDNESDAY LIPSYNC 98 FINAL

DOORS OPEN AT SEVEN PM
LIVE ON THE TV DOWN THE STAIRS

1st - \$2000
2nd - \$1000
3rd - \$500

15 ACTS
IN the
FINAL

GET YOUR BAR BUYS CARD FOR ONLY
THREE DOLLARS FROM THE BAR
BAR BUY DEALS this THURSDAY

FROM 8-10pm \$1 SPIRITS & \$3 JUGS

Get 5 Bar buys Points on Thursdays thru out April

its back
This is Not a Drill
SKITS, STAND UP, MUSIC.

Starts at 9 pm
Thursday
no cover charge

RADIO ONE
RAD TIMES

Gig GUIDE

TUESDAY
29 APRIL

OPEN MIC NIGHT
THE BOG
Hosted by Boaz and Samarah. 8pm.

FRIDAY
2 MAY

THE AMBER TEMPLE
PEARL DIVER
w/ The Entire Alphabet and Sam Charlesworth. Tickets from undertheradar.co.nz. 8pm.

FRANKIE VENTER
DROPKICKS
w/ Becca Caffyn. Tickets from tickettailor.com. 7pm.

SATURDAY
3 MAY

REID+WOLKEN+CLAMAN
TRIDENT HOUSE
Tickets from humanitix.com. 8pm.

DR. REKNOW - 'MIRACLES'
ALBUM RELEASE
THE CROWN HOTEL
w/ ITALIKS. Tickets from drreknow.com. 8pm.

WINGATUI DEAD ROCKERS BALL - DUNEDIN FIRE BRIGADE RESTORATION SOCIETY FUNDRAISER
WINGATUI COMMUNITY HALL
Featuring Bulletproof Convertible. Tickets from bulletproof.nz. 8pm.

SKIN & BONE
MOONS
Tickets from undertheradar.co.nz. 7pm.

GHOST BELLS, OHM, AND FLESHBUG
PORT CHALMERS PIONEER HALL
8pm. \$15 waged / \$10 unwaged. All ages.

SUNDAY
4 MAY

SONGWRITERS' NIGHT
DUNEDIN FOLK CLUB
7.30pm. \$5 members. \$10 non-members.

1
91 FM



Alternative rock/metal band Ammonita is sick of surf rock and ready to make Pint Night their own. The band that recently played Hyde Street is known for opening up Pokémon packs on stage and their repertoire of head-banging tunes. The lineup of second-year students is lead singer and rhythm guitarist Paige Sumner, bassist Karl Young, drummer and occasional vocalist Zoe Eckhoff, and lead guitarist Iván Fernandez. Zoe, a fellow staff writer for Critic Te Ārohi, was happy to talk on behalf of the group.

Zoe concernedly asks, "If you are not studying music, but you wanna be a part of the scene, where do you go?" Zoe has found accessing music facilities in Dunedin "pretty much impossible." The band currently rehearses in Zoe's parent's place in Māori Hill, but is constantly having to deal with a barrage of noise complaints.

In early October last year, U-Bar hosted Next in Line, a multi-genre music exhibition for emerging artists. It offered first-year bands an opportunity in the spotlight, and Ammonita took that opportunity by the balls. Describing this as the kickstart to their journey, the next week the band was invited to play Pint Night alongside Nic Sick, OneDay and Fülbar (previously known as Sølstice). This group of musicians remain uniquely connected, especially the latter two. Zoe calls them "brother and sister-like bands," and though they are all from different genres, "we are all of a similar wave" of success in the scene.

Currently, you can hear their first proper original song 'Substance' if you happen to catch one of their sets. The rap-metal banger is about the world being so fundamentally fucked that people are forced to turn towards alternative substances to deal with it. Zoe thinks that "it's important to scream about these things" because "people just don't get angry about this stuff enough."

Ammonita is very keen to branch outside of their regular rotation of Pint Nights. Zoe hinted that a gig at The Crown Hotel is in the works, which would be their first independently organized show. The band aims to have a set of originals that people know and love to mix between the covers. She is determined to record a few songs for Spotify so one day she can say to her kids, "Hey, look at what I did at university!"

You can follow Ammonita on Instagram @ammonita_band to keep up with upcoming gigs.

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NOM*d**

Exhibition Partner
CRAIGS
contemporary art gallery

29.03.25 - 06.07.25
FREE! OPEN 10AM - 5PM DAILY
30 THE OCTAGON DUNEDIN
WWW.DUNEDIN-ARTMUSEUM
DEPT. DUNEDIN CITY COUNCIL

DUNEDIN PUBLIC ART GALLERY

The image is a promotional graphic for a music chart titled "Top 100". On the left side, the words "Top 100" are written vertically in a large, bold, black sans-serif font. To the right of this, there's a section for the date and time: "16 APR" in bold black, followed by a large white circle containing the number "1", and "91 FM" in bold black below it. The main part of the graphic contains a list of ten songs, each with its rank, artist name in parentheses, and album title. Each entry includes a small icon representing the album cover. At the top, a white rounded rectangle highlights the first entry. At the bottom, another white rounded rectangle highlights the last three entries under the heading "Mazagran Hit Picks".

16 APR

1

91 FM

Top 100

1 Mim Jensen (NZ) - Safe in Body
No. 1 last week | 5 weeks in chart

2 Neive Strang (Dn) - Find You In The Rabbit Hole
1 week in chart

3 Casual Healing (NZ) - Hypersensitive feat. Mā
No. 6 last week | 2 weeks in chart

4 SODA BOYZ (NZ) - Enough
No. 2 last week | 4 weeks in chart

5 Vera Ellen (NZ) - sangria (demo)
No. 4 last week | 5 weeks in chart

6 Bunchy's Big Score (Dn) - White Noise
No. 8 last week | 6 weeks in chart

7 George VILLA (NZ) - Keep It All Together
No. 3 last week | 3 weeks in chart

8 MĀ (NZ) - BIOTW
1 week in chart

9 L. Hotel (Dn) - Dead Ends
No. 9 last week | 8 weeks in chart

10 Keira Wallace (Dn) - Lambs Aren't Waking Yet
1 week in chart

11 Beef x Mouth (NZ) - Wash Away
1 week in chart

Mazagran Hit Picks

Ragweed (NZ) - 17 Microns
Lucy Munro (NZ) - Seventeen

Present your GreenCard to receive:

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Tūhura Tropical Forest

Offer valid Monday to Friday only

WATCHING ALL
137 NICOLAS
CAGE FILMS

IN THE
CAGE

All Caught Up

By Jordan Irvine

It is now 1997 and the latter half of the decade has a clear emphasis on action films. Most of the films Cage has starred in have been action-packed blockbusters. Perhaps the improvement of CGI and other visual effects had something to do with it. *Toy Story*, the first film made entirely on computers, had been released two years prior – so why not blow up a car every time it gets shot at?

While some of the films are gun-filled slop, to put it nicely, at least Nic brings some personality in his acting. This could not be more true than in the film *Face/Off* where Cage is once again unhinged in tone, dialogue, and facial expressions. Kind of. For the first 15 minutes it is all you could ever want – until his character gets put in a coma. Then his face is swapped with John Travolta so Nic is tame but John Travolta is batshit insane because he is being Nic. Cool.

Inside the Golden Statue is a documentary about the 69th Academy Awards where Nic is a presenter. "I thought this would be at least a little bit interesting," says Evie. It is not. I am also not talking her into watching anything else. "Are you writing down what I'm saying?" Yes I am Evie, and you are not escaping the Cage that easily. Mythos Hollywood is another lost film which makes my life easier.

The 1998 film *City of Angels* opens with one of the saddest scenes in film where Cage takes a dying girl to heaven because he is an angel. This movie is good but it doesn't matter because this is the film that the song *Iris* by the Goo-Goo Dolls appears in. To be honest, I spent the entire film waiting to hear it and at the hour and 24 minute mark I got

my wish. It was awesome. Eventually the Cage stops being an angel for Meg Ryan (a doctor he falls in love with) and he can feel things for the first time, concluding in an awfully awkward sex scene.

The Cage does not have a coke addiction but he sure likes portraying characters that behave like they do a line or two. *Snake Eyes* is a great example of this, a thriller that surprisingly wasn't loved by critics – the film features great performances from Cage and Gary Sinise with stunning and unique cinematography.

Junket Whore is a documentary that features archival footage of the Cage at one point. It's about how publicists and people in PR ruin or get in the way of journalists (preach). Unfortunately, time has caught up with me and I am now writing this in the week of going to print – desperately watching another Nic Cage film to meet the word count. It did not matter, though, as Nina wanted the word count to be about 550 words and what I wrote about the next film went over that word limit, so I am writing this to meet the exact word limit. I don't know what counts though because titles and such, so going off word doc total count. Bingo.

Caginess: Got distracted by MAFS and Rocky

Welfare Check: Got strep throat (probably unrelated)

Total Films Watched:
42/137

By Hunter Jolly &
Nina Brown

NO:

When rats are in a flat it's called an "infestation" not an "invitation". Are students really so desperate for animal interaction that you'd be willing to befriend the nasty little critters that your landlord has set traps for?

I'm sorry, I just can't. I spent too long in flats plagued by the pests, twitching with paranoia that one would jump out at me when my flat would finally do something about the towering pile of Domino's boxes and sticky RTD cans. I'd be woken up in the middle of the night by the sounds of scuttling and scratching from inside the walls behind my bed, sometimes making its way into my dreams – nay, nightmares. Just the thought of a rat sitting on my shoulder wrapping its creepy little tail and digging its claws into my skin sends a shiver down my spine.

I'm sure that there's a logical argument for having a pet rat, one I would only consider if put in the position of pretending to like a good friend's pet rats. I would tell them they could be kind of cute if they've had a bath, were a little on the pudgier side and had that sleepy demeanor that made them a sweet cuddle companion. In another life I might have found them okay – *Ratatouille* is one of my favourite childhood movies and I've been known to avidly defend pigeons and possums, two other animals that have been demonised under the label of "pest". But that all goes out the window when they trigger my gag reflex.

Ratatouille is fun in a reassuringly fiction way. As a viewer watching from the comfort of your (hopefully rat-less) couch, you can self-righteously judge the staff of Gusteau's who hang up their hats at the revelation that it was a rat behind the restaurant's success.

"Snobs," you scoff. But do you really think that you wouldn't be holding back a small barf at the sight of a nest of rats swarming a kitchen? Chances are you've been known to set a trap or two in your time.

Rats have long been considered a pest, nibbling their way through the native species of Aotearoa, one bird egg at a time. "Rats" is a swear

word, causing your mouth to curl into a sneer. Rats are what you associate with the spread of disease, festering waste, and poison. Rats can stay in the walls where they belong, not my lap.

YES:

If you're anti-rat, I'm anti-you (but not you, Nina, you get a pass because I work for you). There's so much undeserved and ignorant stigma against these beautiful little guys, and it has to end.

First, I'd like to say that the nasty connotations that come to mind when thinking of rats aren't at all justified in my opinion. No, they aren't to blame for the spread of the plague. Look it up, nerds. They're not the genocidal little goblins that so many people consider them to be. Do they need to be cleaned every now and again, considering that they are wild rodents, capable of transmitting some illnesses? Yes. Is that a big problem? No. People clean their pets, that's just part of your job as an owner of basically any animal.

Rats are also quite shockingly intelligent, much more so than guinea pigs and bunnies, it seems. You can even teach them to drive little cars. There's another thing for you to Google. It's amazing! They're also so much more social than these other rodent alternatives. I think that if you're going to have a pet, it may as well be a clever one. This way, bonding is a lot easier and there will be so many more fun activities to do with your little companion. I sometimes try getting one of my guinea pigs to hang out with me, but all Mechagodzilla does is provide cuddles and eats food. I love the wee bugger for that, but golly, sometimes I wish he'd play with me :(

My next point is perhaps the most relevant one for students who may be wanting pets, but don't really wanna hang around dirty Danners for much more than their degree's duration looking after them. This point is, of course, their lifespan! On average, rats live about two or three years, so in all likelihood, depending on when you get them, you won't have to go through the process of abandoning your pet when you eventually leave the city or country.

My opponent has stated that rats are pests in our country... well, so are cats! "Oh no, rats are killing birds!" Sure they are, but YOUR pet rats won't be, unlike so many pet cats out there that go and murder an innocent bird every chance they get. (I love cats, don't get me wrong, but goodness they're still a tremendous issue, even when they're pets!) It's not like by having pet rats who spend most of their time in an enclosure, you're part of the pest problem. Having free range cats on the other hand...

DO RATS MAKE GOOD PETS?

I'm sure we're all familiar with the classic scroggin mix. A fuel-packed, lightweight, outdoor Kiwi staple. I find myself in a love-hate relationship with scroggin. Half the time it's the perfect pick-me-up mid tramp; the other half it's a depressing mix of sad raisins and soggy banana chips. Taking the best bits of a scroggin and oaty slice bar, this recipe hits 100% of the time! This slice is easy to make and travels well for all those nature based activities. As always feel free to swap up the add-ins for your favourite scroggin ingredients and enjoy!

INGREDIENTS:

- | | |
|------------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1 cup plain flour | ½ cup dried cranberries |
| 1 cup oats | 150 g butter |
| 2/3 cup brown sugar (packed) | 4 Tbsp golden syrup |
| 1 tsp baking powder | 1 egg |
| 2/3 cup choc chips | 1 tsp vanilla essence |
| ½ cup pretzels (broken up) | |
| ¼ cup sunflower seeds | |
| ½ cup peanuts | |

make sure to get roasted & unsalted

INSTRUCTIONS:

- Step 1.** Preheat your oven to 180 degrees and prepare a baking tray with baking paper.
- Step 2.** Place a small pot over a low heat and slowly melt together the butter and golden syrup. Once melted place to the side to let cool slightly.
- Step 3.** In a large bowl combine the dry ingredients (flour, oats, sugar, baking powder, choc chips, sunflower seeds, pretzels, peanuts and cranberries.)
- Step 4.** In a separate bowl beat the egg and vanilla essence. Once combined, add two tablespoons of the butter-golden syrup mix, stirring until combined.
- Step 5.** Making a well in the dry ingredients, add the wet ingredients. Mix until thoroughly combined.
- Step 6.** Press the slice mix into the prepared tin, making an even layer.
- Step 7.** Place into the oven for 25 mins or until golden brown.
- Step 8.** Remove from the oven and cool for 10 mins before slicing.
- Store in an airtight container and enjoy some good fuel on those outdoor pursuits :)

MI GORENG GRADUATE
By Ruby Hudson



Ah, Victoria Bitter, VB, Very Best, Vitamin B. This isn't just a beer, it's the unofficial IV drip of Aussie tradies and cricket players alike. Personally, I had never indulged in a VB before this experience so I had my fears. Would I grow a mullet? Would I have Vegemite toast for breakfast? Or would I immediately throw a shrimp on the barbie or whatever? There was only one way of knowing.

I cracked into my first can of what some refer to as the nectar of the gods – if the gods worked at Bunnings. Unusually, my VB was cold, which is rare for these drinks as they are usually found lukewarm. Similar to the Double Brown experience, sort of like your neighbours bringing in their groceries, you just don't see it happen.

The first sip was surprisingly smooth. I could see where the Aussies were coming from. VB is known for being 'full strength', and at around 4.9% average it's not enough to make you forget your ex but it's just enough to make them seem like a good idea again. VB's slogan is "For a hard earned thirst", and even though my thirst may not have been hard earned it was definitely quenched. Back in the day, VB had a low-carb version but Aussies treated it like a bad haircut – tried it once then never spoke of it again.

I was surprised to find myself enjoying my beverage; sure, not as much as a full cream Speight's but I'd still well and truly drink it again. I did encounter one problem, though: after drinking only half a can, I already needed to break the seal. This beer is the taste of clocking off, whether that be a hard day on the stop go sign or, like me, consuming one retrieved from the Critic office fridge at midday and immediately loving the feeling of being parked up.

The mark of a true thirst-quenching beer, my eyes slid to the fridge where a second awaited. The sun came out at the same time, so it would have been rude not to. I cracked open another, just as good as the first, my sip again going down like water. Even though single, I felt the need to go pick up my girlfriend from school – the Aussie tradie in me was really taking over. My second can also brought the realisation that VB had the ability to turn any occasion into a reason to day drink.

Wedding? VB.

Funeral? VB.

Fixing the lawnmower? VB.

The versatility is out of the gate, just like you'll be on the back of a kangaroo after 12 of these bad boys.

Despite being called 'bitter' it's actually more of a lager, so it's not trying to hurt your feelings, just your liver. In conclusion, the Victoria Bitters really spoke to me. It had me missing hot summer days, overcooked sausages, and the ability to say: "Yeah nah, fucken oath cunt get a VB in ya, ya dog."

PAIRS WELL WITH: Meat pies, sunny backyard cricket with mates, NRL on the telly

X-FACTOR: Encapsulating your wannabe Aussie

HANGOVER DEPRESSION LEVEL: 5/10, woke up with a koala in my bed

TASTE RATING: 7/10



SEND US YOUR QUESTIONS



Kia ora team,

Every now and then, students get the rare chance to call the shots – and the OUSA Referendum is exactly that moment. It's more than just a vote. It's your chance to set the agenda, shake things up, or bring back something you miss (yes, even those iconic Orientation posters).

In the past, students have asked us for everything from a student bar to tackling the supermarket duopoly – big ideas and small wins alike. That's the beauty of it, you decide what matters.

So, if you've ever thought "OUSA should really do something about that," now's your time to make it official. Democracy isn't just for election day, it's for every day we choose to use our voice. Let's make it count.

Please submit questions to AdminVP@OUSA.org.nz before the 2nd of May

Liam White
OUSA President

Illustrated by
Tevya Faed

RANK - COLUMNS - 9

45

You had as relaxing of a break as someone with three assignments due the first week back can have. Try not to take your lack of break out on those around you, they don't deserve to feel your wrath just because you're averaging five hours of sleep a night.

Susty activity rec: Bike to Andy Bay

★ PISCES ★

This week your savings are at risk, so be sure to be cautious of any hidden cost that may affect you and your wallet. This is where your habit of not reading the fine print will bite you in the ass.

Susty activity rec: Glowworm hunting at Nicols Creek

★ LIBRA ★

As a fresh start to the semester, it's time to come up with some new-half-of-the-sem resolutions. Whether it's kicking your Cola addiction or actually writing notes in class and not just doing the Wordle, any improvement is a positive!

Susty activity rec: DIY name plates with old Critics

★ ARIES ★

Lately, your grades have been slipping a wee bit. The orb's advice? Read through your assignments before you hand them in. Some mistakes make it through the cracks and are absolutely tanking your GPA, even if you just put it through Grammarly, something needs to change.

Susty activity rec: Visit the Dunedin City Library

★ SAGITTARIUS ★

Aquarius, you're so much closer to your goals than you think; it's time for that final push to reach your dream result. Stick with your plans and remember that you want this, don't just do what your lazy brain wants and go back to bed.

Susty activity rec: Grab some veg from the farmers market

★ AQUARIUS ★

A lump has settled in your guts and you're feeling anxious about everything this week. Remember that a lack of eye contact does not mean that someone works for the KGB and wants you dead, some people just can't handle looking into your beautiful eyes for too long.

Susty activity rec: Donate your old clothes

★ SCORPIO ★

This week you will discover your all-time favourite movie! Others won't understand why you like it but it will become your new hyperfixation. You have always been a little alty with your choice of media, and this new fave is no exception.

Susty activity rec: Make your own chilli oil

★ CANCER ★

Your fridge is in desperate need of a deep clean. If you fail to do it this week, then you will fail your flat inspection. Rotting fruit that you bought in your 'healthy' era is not a nice smell for your flatmates every time they need milk for their coffees.

Susty activity rec: Picnic at the Botans

★ LEO ★

Take a trip outside of Dunedin this week. You've been at Otago for far too long to have travelled as little as you have around the region. So load up your Bee card and jump on the first bus you see. You may end up stranded in a place called Balacava (but hey, it will be a good story).

Susty activity rec: Host a potluck with friends

★ CAPRICORN ★

As the bull of the zodiacs, you are often seen as temperamental and quick to judge but this week you are just a big softy. Life has been taking it out of you lately and sometimes you just want a hug. Just remember that it's weird to hug strangers...

Susty activity rec: Try dying old clothes with veggies

★ TAURUS ★

Maybe give up drinking for a little bit, you have been feeling a little off and it feels even worse after a night out on the town. Try going California sober, you'll feel as awesome as everyone else in the club but 1000x better than them the next day.

Susty activity rec: Yoga at OUSA

★ VIRGO ★

Your music taste has been garbage as of late and you can't stop listening to the same three songs over and over again. It's time to branch out because at this point your Spotify Wrapped is completely fucked.

Susty activity rec: Swap some books at a Lilliput Library

★ GEMINI ★



Dine out at Black Dog, Dunedin's iconic cafe, bar and restaurant. A wide selection of food and drinks, and a great central-city location.

USE YOUR GREENCARD
Black Dog Kitchen & Bar - Free soft drink with any regular priced main meal. Dine in or takeaway. Not valid in conjunction with any other promo. www.blackdogdunedin.nz



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All studies are approved by a Health and Disability Ethics Committee administered by the Ministry of Health.



SNAP OF THE WEEK



SEND A SNAP TO US AT @CRITICMAG BEST SNAP EACH WEEKS WINS AN OUSA CLUBS & SOCS SAUNA VOUCHER

SNAP OF THE WEEK

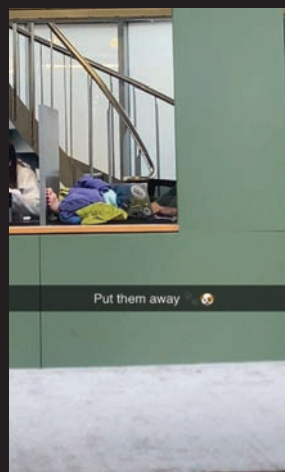
CONTACT CRITIC ON INSTAGRAM TO CLAIM YOUR PRIZE



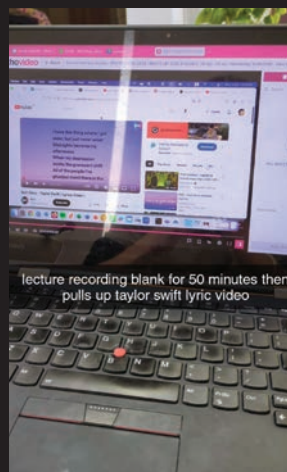
Who wins the bong competition



What a heartless person made fruitless hot cross buns 🤔 #scammed



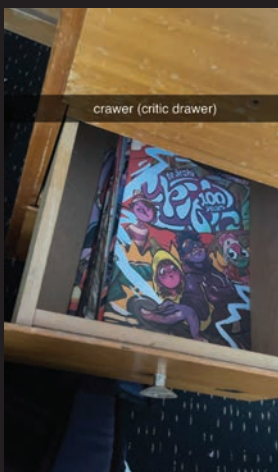
Put them away 🤖



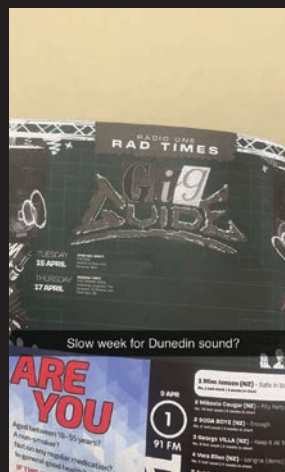
lecture recording blank for 50 minutes then pulls up taylor swift lyric video



Everywhere I go I see his face



crawler (critic drawer)



Slow week for Dunedin sound?



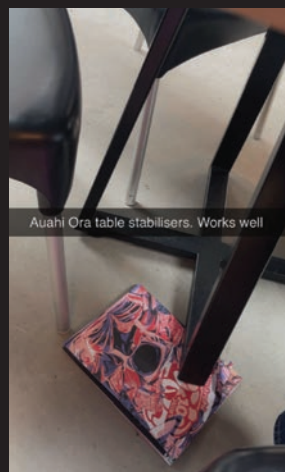
Critic ♡ wrapping paper



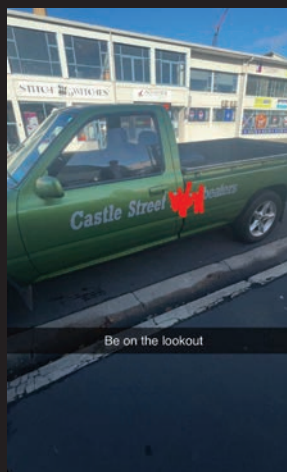
The Great Wall of Cumby



Running from a white van? I would to



Auahi Ora table stabilisers. Works well

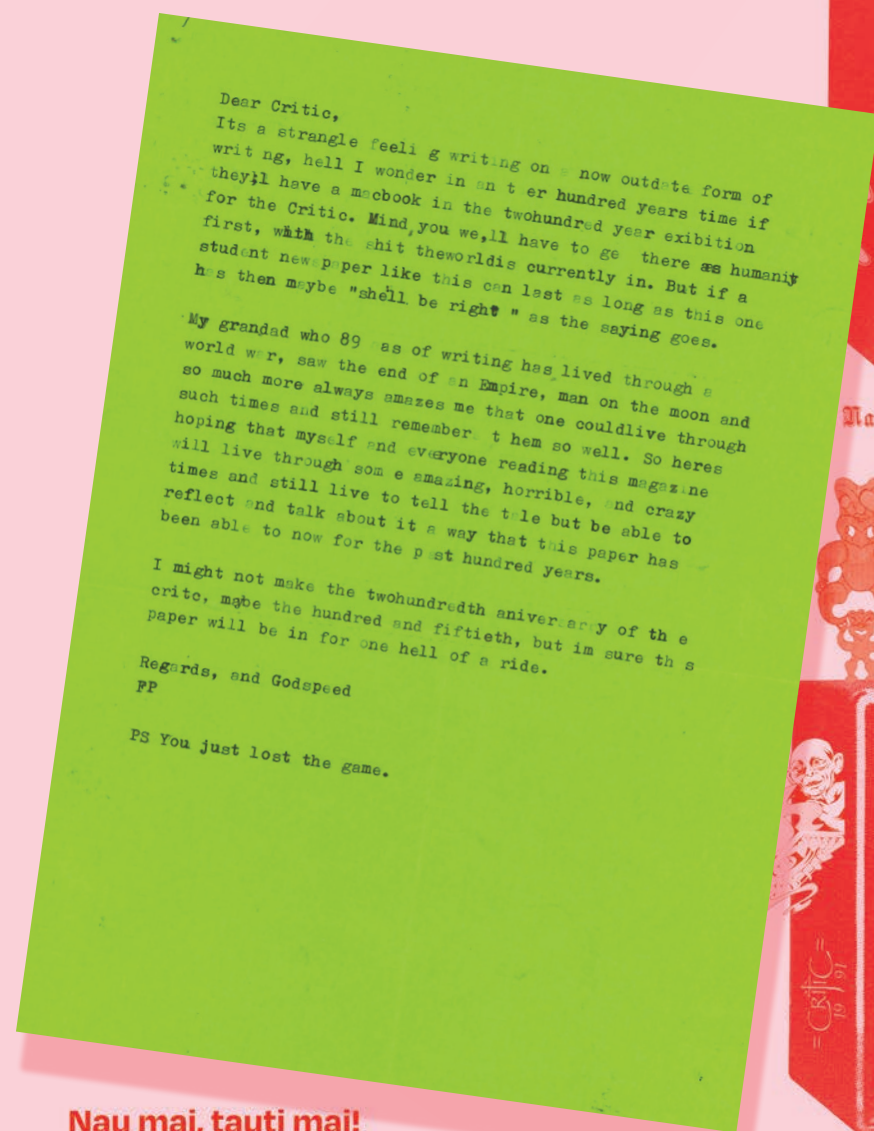


Be on the lookout

ISSUES!

100 years of Critic

Visitors to their **ISSUES! 100 Years of Critic** exhibition are invited to contribute when visiting the gallery by **handwriting or typing a letter**. The winning letter of the week will be featured in the magazine and the author gets a free Critic tote bag! Email critic@critic.co.nz to claim your prize.



Mon – Fri | 9am – 5pm
de Beer Gallery
Special Collections

First Floor
Te Pātaka Kura Pokapū
Central Library



Nau mai, tauti mai!

Join us as we showcase past issues of **Critic Te Ārohi** and pay them out for being totally f#\$%ing ancient.

To commemorate 100 years of Critic, we're proud to announce a Book Project!



A centenary only happens once, and we need your help to make this project happen. Scan the QR code to donate to our Give A Little page.

Every donation, large or small, counts.

