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New Zealanders can take considerable pride in the overall performance of our school system. The latest report from the OECD Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) evaluates the performance of 15-year-olds in reading skills, mathematics and science. New Zealand students rank very highly – with average performances in all areas higher than those in Australia, the USA and the United Kingdom.

The report points out, however, that differences between countries explain only a fraction of the overall variation in student performance. For some time, Otago scientists have been concerned that students from small, rural or provincial schools, as well as from schools in poorer areas (with a "low-decile ranking"), come to university less well prepared to study science. As a result, they often under-achieve in comparison with students from better-resourced schools.

Following discussions with the Minister of Education, Anne Tolley, the University of Otago is launching an innovative Advanced School Sciences Academy. By the time you read this, about 50 talented Year 13 students from Kaitaia in the north to Riverton in the south will have attended their first science camp at the University. They have been nominated by their school principals, for an intensive educational experience involving projects focusing on mathematics, chemistry, physics and biology. The timetable looks fascinating, and includes sessions on science communication and the nature of science. The students will return for a second week-long camp in July. For the rest of the year, they will derive additional support and motivation from a "virtual academy" – an online science community using a password-accessed website and a specially tailored social networking site.

I was pleased to read comments from the head of science at one school, where only three or four pupils take Year 13 sciences. She said: "I am sure the student [selected] will come back and communicate what they have learnt with others. There will be cross-fertilisation of ideas." The principal of another rural school in the Waikato nominated a girl who will be "our only student in 2011 taking a full Level 3 science course".

Financial support from the Government, as well as the University, means that each student is asked to contribute only a \$200 commitment fee. All other costs, including travel, accommodation in a residential college and tuition, will be covered.

The academy involves a teacher development component. One science teacher from each participating school has been invited to come and work with our scientists and experts on science education. These teachers will also be part of the virtual academy. The whole programme will be closely monitored and evaluated, so that decisions can be made about expanding it after a two-year pilot phase.

This initiative builds on more than two decades of experience in science outreach by the University of Otago. Whereas our famous Hands on Science summer camp will continue to introduce school students to a wide range of science options in a fun way, the new academy has a strong work component and a focus on the scholarship science curriculum. I am confident that this programme will assist many more young New Zealanders to achieve their full potential at university.

hwid Skegg Professor David Skegg

Vice-Chancellor, University of Otago



Growing health

Over the past 125 years the Department of Preventive and Social Medicine has gone from being a oneman entity to the University of Otago's largest department.

From its first, relatively narrow focus - mainly concerned with environmental sanitation - it is today a large, multidisciplinary department with a broad public-health outlook, with widely-skilled staff, both medical and non-medical.

Dr Warwick Brunton (Preventive and Social Medicine) has been writing a history of the department which stretches back to the early days of medical teaching at Otago.

The early years

To provide a complete medical degree that would be recognised in the UK, the University of Otago needed to include teaching on public health. So, in 1886, Dr Francis Ogston, from Aberdeen, was employed to lecture in medical jurisprudence and public health — a combination that was not unusual at that time.

While a number of his students went on to do significant work in public health, Brunton says Ogston's major contribution came through his work as the District Health Officer or what is today known as the Medical Officer of Health. This was the first hint of a durable arrangement between the University and the then Department of Public Health. That institutional relationship has continued since 1901. Today's Medical Officer of Health and staff from Public Health South at the Southern District Health Board are still involved in teaching students in the department.

"Ogston's teaching related primarily to environmental sanitation. As the years went by that really became more dated because public health people in Britain were trying to present a scientific image linked with the development of immunology, germ theory, microscopes and laboratories."

His successor as lecturer and then Professor of Bacteriology and Public Health was Sydney Champtaloup, a very able New Zealander who had trained in medicine at Edinburgh and won many prizes.

Champtaloup made a number of significant contributions, overseeing the introduction of the Diploma in Public Health (DPH) in 1914, the first university diploma in New Zealand. He also pushed for the Medical School to move from what is now the Geology Building to its present site opposite the hospital.

When the influenza epidemic struck in 1918 he took a practical public health approach, sending students to help in the wards, while senior students were sent out around the country.

After World War I he was granted study leave and travelled to Britain where he wrote his MD thesis and submitted a DSc thesis at Edinburgh. Sadly, bad health forced his return to Dunedin where he died of tuberculosis as a relatively young man.

In the early years environmental health was a major focus. In 1910, students visit a sewerage outfall. *Otago Witness*, 5 October 1910.

Hocken Collections, Uare Taoka o Hākena, University of Otago, S10-347a.



The Hercus years

Even at this stage the department was still basically a one-man band. When the University advertised the Chair of Bacteriology and Public Health in 1921, there was effectively a toss-up between two strong candidates, with the job eventually going to Charles Hercus, one of the most prominent figures in the history of the Otago Medical School.

Hercus was the first "home grown" professor. He had been an extremely bright and able Otago student and one of the first dental graduates (1911).

Persuaded to take on medicine, he qualified just before World War I and went overseas with the New Zealand Expeditionary Force, serving in Gallipoli and Mesopotamia. Brunton says he was credited with some remarkable public health work, preventing malaria among New Zealand troops in Jordan and, eventually, returned with a distinguished war record.

Hercus joined the Health Department in Christchurch and undertook major research on the incidence of goitre among school children before returning to Dunedin to study for the DPH.

Brunton describes Hercus as "a man of the most extraordinary energy" who turned the place upside down.

"He was profoundly inspired by a British report on preventive medicine so, instead of it being just one subject in the medical curriculum, he was inspired to try to infuse the entire medical course with preventive medicine."

One of his early innovations was to have every fifth-year medical student undertake a piece of original research under guidance. The fruits of that innovation are to be found in the valuable collection of some 3,400 theses or dissertations which are now housed in the Medical Library.

Hercus strongly encouraged research in the Medical School, but, as Professor

of Bacteriology and Public Health, he also pressed for research with a practical public health outcome, Brunton says. "His focus on using research to achieve what we would now call public health gain through policy change became a very key part of the 36 years he spent in charge of the department."

When the government decided to set up the precursor to what is now the Health Research Council in 1937, Hercus was deeply involved, driving a strong public health agenda, especially in the areas of goitre, hydatids and nutrition. That same year he was appointed Dean of the Medical School.

Hercus was also far-sighted enough to see that, in a changing world, New Zealand was a Pacific country and should encourage public health research in the Pacific.

He encouraged the making of what was probably the first health education film made in New Zealand. The 1930s silent film and accompanying script have been unearthed and will be screened this year. Hercus also added his influence to concerns about child health and what was called national efficiency, taking a particular interest in physical education.

"He did some extraordinarily solid work behind the scenes to assist the government to develop a policy and framework for physical education and, more particularly, the teaching of physical education – and the School of Physical Education is the direct result of that," Brunton says.

Related to that was the innovative introduction of a health clinic in 1941 where students could learn more about preventive medicine in action, observing antenatal and postnatal classes, Plunket facilities, school immunisations and the like. Even the wider student population benefited from his attentions with the launch of the Student Health Service in 1946.

All this endeavour did not go unrecognised and, in 1947, Hercus was knighted.

In the 1950s the decision was made to split the department and bacteriology became what was now the Department of Microbiology, with its own chair, in 1954. Sir Charles was left with what was now called the Preventive and Social Medicine Department which he ran until he retired in 1958.



Sir Charles Hercus: "a man of the most extraordinary energy".

Hocken Collections, Uare Taoka o Hākena,
University of Otago, S10-360b.

The waiting room of the Department of Preventive Medicine 1949.

Hocken Collections, Uare Taoka o Hākena, University of Otago, S10-347b.



The last 50 years

After Hercus' retirement, Professor Cyril Dixon, an English academic who had been the Medical Officer of Health in Whangarei during World War II took over the department. Still alive and with an excellent memory at the age of 98, he has been able to supply Brunton with many resources for his research.

When he arrived at Otago, Dixon found a department that was small and rundown with few staff. But he knew the face of preventive and social medicine was changing.

"Dixon brought in a very different perspective," says Brunton. "He was a man concerned a great deal about health systems, about organisation and administration, planning and evaluation – a different sort of focus in many respects from Hercus."

Brunton believes the whole development of health workforce planning, and its impact on academia in terms of training places in medicine and dentistry, go back to ideas Dixon had in the early 1960s.

Under him the department grew to about 10–14 teaching staff and a range of diploma programmes were launched, including in occupational health. He also opened up the DPH to international students – particularly from the Pacific.

"They not only swelled the numbers, but they put public health – classical public health – back into the degree programme," says Brunton. "And there were some quite amazing results with three future Pacific prime ministers and one Governor-General coming through the department as students. There is still a Pacific link that continues from there."

Dixon retired in 1976, but by the time Professor David Skegg took control in 1980 he found a department in difficulty after a three-year gap without a permanent head of department.

"I really wondered whether the department would survive. I remember thinking that we could end up being a unit attached to the Department of Medicine."

The biggest threat to the future of the department was the effort that had been put into teaching the Postgraduate Diploma in Public Health which was set to be phased out.

"For me, I wasn't sorry for the DPH in its previous incarnation to be going, because I saw it as a millstone around the department's neck. A very small staff had to teach across the whole field of public health. They had little time for new research because they were spending all their time in the classroom teaching small classes."

Skegg made building up the research side of the department a priority, along with developing undergraduate teaching, particularly in the key science of epidemiology.

"This was also an area that the Medical Research Council was wanting to make a priority because it was seen as a field of great potential in health research.

"I therefore made it a priority to develop research programmes on things such as cancer epidemiology and multiple sclerosis. Then, when the AIDS epidemic started, I was doing work with WHO and Charlotte Paul and I persuaded the Department of Health that our department should become the national centre for AIDS epidemiology and monitoring."

The AIDS Epidemiology Group was just one of a number of new groups and units that were either started in Preventive and Social Medicine or migrated to the department while he was in charge.

The Hugh Adam Cancer Epidemiology Unit was added, the Dunedin Multidisciplinary Health and



Professor David Skegg:
"I made it a priority
to develop research
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and multiple sclerosis."

Development Research Unit came over from Paediatrics, while the National Poisons Centre and the New Zealand Pharmacovigilance Centre – which was then called the Centre for Adverse Reactions Monitoring – also came under the Preventive and Social Medicine umbrella.

The Injury Prevention Research Unit was launched, while the Ngãi Tahu Mãori Health Research Unit was started in partnership with Te Rūnanga o Ngãi Tahu. The New Zealand Environmental and Occupational Health Research Centre was also set up under a joint initiative with Auckland University, funded by the Health Research Council.

They were eventually joined by the Cancer Society Social and Behavioural Research Unit and, in more recent times, the Centre for International Health, something Skegg had been working towards while head of department, although it did not come to fruition until after he had left.

It builds on the department's longstanding Pacific and international focus, supervising overseas postgraduate students as they undertake research in their own country.

"The old DPH programme for Pacific doctors made a great contribution in its day, but I think that we are able to make an even greater contribution by building up the research capacity in those countries themselves."

Because of all these research groups growing, the department itself also grew substantially. "From about a dozen people in 1980, it had grown to 130 by the time I left. This had never been my intention, but it happened incrementally over the years."

Skegg says it was fortunate that the things he wanted to do were appropriate for the department at the time.

"I had 25 very happy years in that department – it was a happy place to be. You're fortunate if you are in a department where there is a collegial atmosphere, so you collaborate in research and teaching, but also become very good friends."

The department today

Current head of the Department of Preventive and Social Medicine, Professor Jennie Connor says the uniqueness of the department still lies in its population health perspective, in contrast to the rest of the medical disciplines, which focus predominantly on the health of individuals.

Today's department is a major centre for public health research as well as delivering research-led teaching, and services such as the National Poisons Centre and New Zealand Pharmacovigilance Centre.

While part of the Dunedin School of Medicine and employing a number of Public Health Medicine specialists, the majority of the department staff is no longer made up of doctors, in keeping with the multidisciplinary nature of modern public health.

They include statisticians, economists, geographers, psychologists, dentists, and a variety of social and other scientists.

The department's biggest single teaching task comes before students get into medical school with a compulsory paper – Foundations of Epidemiology – which is taught in the Health Sciences First Year course and was taken by around 1,200 students in 2010.

Staff go on to teach components in all years of medical school, and courses such as health promotion, epidemiology and health policy for other undergraduate students.

The Postgraduate Diploma and Master of Public Health programmes attract graduates from a range of disciplines and with a variety of career paths in mind, including some who progress through a PhD to a research career.

Connor says the department's strength lies in having many committed researchers who want to progress their own programmes.

Central to that are the established research units which have fashioned excellent records, but there is also a wide range of research being done by staff in teaching roles – with interests in infectious disease, alcohol-related harm, pharmaco-epidemiology, and healthy ageing among others.

Looking ahead, Connor can see growth in the nascent research units such as the Centre for International Health, established in 2008, and the Centre for Health Systems, launched late last year.

"However, environmental health is one of the areas we need to grow. The biggest global public health issue now is climate change and, in the local and national sense, one of the contributors we need to tackle is transport.

"We also need to better understand the health risks of climate change, and how to mitigate them, because some climate change is happening regardless of changes we make now."

A last look back

One of the things that has struck Brunton when looking back at the 125-year history of the Department of Preventive and Social Medicine is the impact it has had through its teaching



Professor Jennie Connor:
"The biggest global public health issue now is climate change and, in the local and national sense, one of the contributors we need to tackle is transport."

and service roles, expanding from a largely local environment, to a national and now international one.

He also acknowledges the continuing emphasis on practical measures to improve health levels. There is both a science and art to public health.

He says the true impact on health of a department like this is hard to gauge, but every doctor who has graduated from Dunedin, would have received training there

"So, obviously, in terms of what they learned about immunisations, about how to discuss with patients health-promotion issues and what they can do to prevent illness or injury, this department can bask in the reflected glory of what has been achieved in the changing pattern of illness and mortality in this country. You cannot easily put a figure on that.

"Somewhere in the statistics of life expectancy and the changing patterns of disease, improvements in the social, economic and physical environments that affect our level of health as a country, this department has played a role."

MARK WRIGHT

The Department of Preventive and Social Medicine is celebrating its 125th anniversary with two special conferences during the weekend 4-6 March and other events throughout the year. For information, please visit http://dnmeds.otago.ac.nz/departments/psm/125yr_celebrations/index.html

An honour shared

2010 Rutherford Medal winner Professor Warren Tate talks about his research team, his students and the serendipity of science.

Being a world-leading research scientist is one thing. Being able to communicate that science successfully is another.

The combination of outstanding research and exceptional communication – to other scientists, students and the public – has seen Professor Warren Tate awarded New Zealand's highest science honour, the Rutherford Medal.

Unsurprisingly, Tate used the passing wave of media coverage to promote his team's work at the Department of Biochemistry.

"It was a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity so it was important to use it constructively to talk to the public about science," he says. "It's been surreal, but it's nice to get back to being a human being again."

That means getting back to work as Associate Dean of Research in the Health Sciences Division and as a biochemistry professor leading his team in a wide variety of projects, from deciphering genetic codes to investigating potential drug treatments for Alzheimer's disease, HIV and chronic fatigue syndrome.

For Tate, his team deserves to share the honours that have received so much publicity.

"In all of the interviews I've had, people have not been so interested in what has made my group so successful. The key to success in research is building up an effective team."

Some of the members have been with Tate for decades.

Tina Edgar first worked for Tate as an 18 year old, took time out to raise a family and has now contributed for more than 20 years as a highly-skilled research technician.

Senior research fellow Dr Liz Poole works in partnership with Tate to manage the research programmes and co-supervise students. Before doing her PhD in the department 20 years ago, she worked as a hospital virologist, and her earlier experience is now invaluable in developing the research programmes for work on HIV and chronic fatigue syndrome.

Assistant research fellow Katie Bourne takes responsibility for lab engineering a reliable supply of high quality brain protein needed for studying treatments for Alzheimer's. The team is working with a fragment that can protect the brain from deteriorating.

"These people are the really important steel girders of the research team," says Tate.

Students are the dynamic part of Tate's inclusive approach to research.

"It's important to pass on your experience to others. There's a hierarchy, with new students mentored by senior students and the permanent staff. They're trained well and made to feel part of the team.

"I've always made an effort to be a good team leader to mentor, in particular, young researchers and get them started.

"Young people have enormous potential. The system starts off by confining them in lecture theatres and trying to put them into boxes and mould them to be a certain type.

"Then they come to the lab and they are still unique creative individuals, really enjoyable, bright, enthusiastic and full of energy."

Tate believes his students haven't changed much over the years.

"The best ones work very hard. They're totally immersed and put a lot of their own creative abilities into projects. It's more that lifestyles have changed.

"I'm always trying to understand what makes new students tick – how can I relate to each one of them? You have to have mutual respect and open lines of communication, and you have to work on your relationships every day."

Sometimes those relationships are tested. In the dawn of the electronic age Tate acquired computers for the research group.

"I was delighted to find that, for the first couple of weeks, all my students were in using them at night – but was horrified to find what they were doing was playing computer games – but soon they were using them for science and in a far more sophisticated way than I ever could.



"It's easier to pick up new skills at that age. I can only think I'm still in my mid-20s if I don't look in the mirror in the morning."

Tate does see differences in postgraduate study.

"Otago students used to stay on at Otago as a matter of course to do PhDs. Now things have changed and we are losing them earlier. They have the confidence at the end of their honours to look overseas. Last year, three of my top junior students got prestigious scholarships to Cambridge and a current student has an interview with a chemistry Nobel Prize winner.

"When they walk out of my lab virtually every one of my students walks tall and goes away with confidence."

Tate regrets the early loss of students

he calls the engine room of his research group, but takes pride in being part of their Otago experience.

"Our students are incredibly well trained. For those in the know, Otago has got an incredibly good reputation and I'm proud to be part of that and to maintain it and sustain it."

For those who don't feel the need to explore the world, Tate emphasises that

"You couldn't get anyone more loyal to Otago than me. It's a wonderful open society, where you can challenge yourself in all kinds of areas."

it is possible to have a fulfilling career in New Zealand.

"If you have the fire in the belly to want to do science – and being in New Zealand is an important part of it – then the opportunities are there.

"I throw my hands in the air with horror when I hear students saying they're heading overseas and don't expect to be coming back.

"We have to create a perception among our young scientists that they can have an exciting career in New Zealand, whether staying or returning, and scholarship support is getting better all the time."

Long-term funding is always a problem.

"The biggest frustration is the small research economy in New Zealand. There's limited money to go round so you have large numbers of outstanding scientists competing for grants.

"It's a constant worry about keeping teams together. You begrudge the time spent on grant applications rather than research, particularly when only one or two applications in 10 are successful. It's a really tough environment to work in, particularly for young and mid-career researchers."

But the rewards are there.

"No two days are the same. You're never quite sure what the outcomes of your work are going to be. The experimental process is always throwing up new things so you really do feel you're at the cutting edge and pushing the boundaries."

There have been many breakthroughs in Tate's career. He recalls a time when he was deconstructing ribosomes, cell particles that synthesise proteins from amino acids.

"There were more than 50 components in this ribosome and I was reassembling them and leaving one out each time to try to find out what each component did. I felt like a little boy with a Meccano set.

"Finally I created one that was five times better than the one we have in our cells for the function I was looking at. The feeling that we could do better than nature was very exciting – although, of course, nature balances things."

Tate's early genetic engineering experiments discovered a new mechanism for gene regulation – a frameshift – which is still the basis of much of his research and has led to a study of the mechanism in HIV-1 as a potential drug target.

"It was total serendipity. In cases like this you have to be careful to follow it up and not just ignore it because it wasn't what you were expecting."

Serendipity has its part to play in science. Tate happened to be visiting one of just eight laboratories in the US that was a test lab for a key component in the development of the polymerase chain reaction (PCR), which is now used routinely to amplify DNA samples to practically useable levels, particularly in forensics.

Through an ex-student working at the test lab, Tate managed to get access to the component and, on his return, was able

to re-create the PCR technology in his own lab, with students acting as robots to make it work.

Just as Tate believes in the importance of passing knowledge on to his students, he remembers important mentors in his career.

"Longstanding members of the Department of Biochemistry helped me a great deal. Eventual head of department Merv Smith always told it as he felt it – you always got honest advice.

"George Petersen (Tate's PhD supervisor and a 2003 Rutherford Medal winner) was a great role model for me. He had a boyish kind of approach to science and had big-picture vision. Having that dream was critically important."

Tate also learned a lot doing postdoctoral work at Baylor College in Texas where he was mentored by Tom Caskey – "one of the top clinical geneticists in the country".

After Texas, Tate returned to Otago, more than 30 years ago.

"You couldn't get anyone more loyal to Otago than me. It's a wonderful open society, where you can challenge yourself in all kinds of areas.

"The University just fits me like a glove. People do things more than they talk about them and there is enormous depth in the faculty.

"I've loved every minute I've been here. I just wish every day was 48 hours instead of 24 so I could get more things done."

NIGEL ZEGA

Celebrating humanity

With arts education facing funding challenges in the United Kingdom, the University of Otago Magazine welcomes a new Pro-Vice-Chancellor in Humanities and considers the University's liberal arts heritage - and future.

Remember those three-hour periods of frantic silence – exams? According to Professor Brian Moloughney, Otago's recently-appointed Pro-Vice-Chancellor of Humanities, we have the Chinese to thank.

Moloughney, whose research has explored Chinese approaches to knowledge and scholarship, explains that exams were invented more than 2,000 years ago to test students' grasp of Confucian philosophy and ability to apply these principles to real-life problems.

The aim, he says, "was to develop students' judgement, ethics and decision-making skills and to assess people's suitability for public service. This was the purpose of an education." The Jesuits liked the idea and brought the system back to the West. Much appreciated.

Now at the helm of a "thriving" Humanities Division as old as the University itself, Moloughney believes aspects of a Confucian education – "asking the why questions", using philosophy to inform judgement and exploring the complexities and richness of being human – are as relevant today as they were millennia ago.

But things have changed. And, while a liberal arts education was a guiding vision for Otago's earliest academics, its champions remain challenged by the need for an economy-focused, career-oriented education system. So what place is there for regarding the human through the lens of poetry or politics?

The liberal arts tradition on which Otago was founded was surprisingly broad – for reasons of finance as much as principle, explains a former head of the Department of History, Dr Dorothy Page.

"For most of its first 30 years, the University was in dire financial straits," she says.



"... asking the why questions", using philosophy to inform judgement and exploring the complexities and richness of being human - are as relevant today as they were millennia ago.

Professor Brian Moloughney



With few students and a handful of staff, wide-ranging knowledge and multitasking was part of the territory. "The same professor responsible for English literature also taught political economy and constitutional history. Professor [John] Scott, in the medical school, taught both anatomy and physiology and did all his own anatomical drawings."

Otago's first professors included Professor George Samuel Sale, a former gold miner and gold fields commissioner who taught classics and English literature and extolled the virtues of learning Greek. Professor Duncan Macgregor taught mental and moral science, while Professor John Shand covered mathematics and natural philosophy.

To some extent, the divisions between disciplines were arbitrary: more important were students' abilities to organise their thoughts and recognise a good argument – be it scientific or political – when they saw it. Until the mid-1880s, a science degree was not

even available as such, comments Page: "students could gain a BA in physics".

The University's aim was to develop citizens with the intellectual fortitude to conduct themselves in a range of spheres and in public life. In his inaugural lecture, Sale expounded the view that a university education should "enlarge the powers, cultivate the tastes and refine the manners of those who obtain it".

The University's growth brought diversification – and specialisation. New courses were developed and degrees established in science, law and others, and liberal arts fell within the domain of humanities. And, while papers have proliferated, their relevance to graduates facing a competitive job market has been questioned.

So what is the future for arts education?

Moloughney is confident. Previously a lecturer in the Department of History, he returned to Otago to lead a division he sees as going from strength to strength.

"Humanities at Otago is a researchintensive division with excellent staff, very healthy student enrolments and a strong sense of being valued across the University. My role is to ensure this continues to be the case, not to change it."

On one hand, he points out, the value of broad arts training is undergoing something of a renaissance. Liberal arts colleges are growing in popularity and credibility across the United States. The "Melbourne Model" now sees University of Melbourne students undertake generalist undergraduate degrees before moving into professional programmes, such as law, which is taught at graduate level. And, with analytical thinking and communications skills recognised as critical within a rapidly changing economy, the UK's Higher Education Statistics Agency has found philosophy graduates increasingly popular with employers, and US business schools looking to introduce more humanities papers.

Despite this, as the UK government wrestles a recession-sickened budget, its harshest blows to the university sector have been directed at the humanities. Now, UK universities face raising all of their costs for teaching humanities through student fees alone, while science and technology subjects are eligible for ring-fenced funding. The public-versus private-good argument surrounding tertiary education is a familiar one, and the message in the UK is clear: studying science is good for society; studying humanities is not.

It's a them-against-us perspective that Moloughney finds singularly unhelpful.

In fact, he sees the boundaryspanning spirit of Otago's liberal arts "Humanities cultivate people's sense of the past, without which we are socially ignorant. They foster understandings across cultures, without which we face problems of racism. They address large, complex and disputed ideas, enabling people to better cope with ambiguity in their lives."

foundation living on. Humanities papers form part of Otago's Health Sciences First Year programme, in recognition of the broad communications and criticalthinking skills important to medical professionals. Moloughney points to the new Master of Environmental Studies as drawing together the scientific, social and political perspectives necessary to address pressing concerns of our time.

Besides, commerce and technology are part of society; it's only responsible

TRADE TALKS

Rebekah Riley's cherished memories of majoring in philosophy at Otago were the hours spent discussing challenging theories. "I loved going in to David Ward's office and having conversations about Kant. Or in the small fourth-year classes when you could throw ideas around with other students."

Having the time and opportunity to properly engage with ideas is a period Riley looks back on gratefully. "You never do this in quite the same way again."

Nevertheless, it was Riley's interest in being challenged that saw her join the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade upon graduating. She spent two years as then-Minister of Foreign Affairs Phil Goff's private secretary before taking up a post at the New Zealand Embassy in Chile.

Rotating around departments in the ministry, she was confronted with the reality of coping with new issues and information, "needing to get into the detail very quickly, and construct robust positions and arguments." Time was a constant pressure, both for her and those reading her papers. "I soon learned I needed to be much more concise with my writing!"

And in Chile, Riley discovered a country for which she – like many New Zealanders – felt a deep affinity. "We are very like-minded people. They live in a very beautiful country, produce many similar products and there is a real friendliness towards New Zealand. Relationships between us spark up easily and naturally."

All of which feels a long way from the Burns Building, but Riley says her philosophy lectures still spring to mind, sometimes at unexpected moments.

"Rawls discusses the idea of selfrespect, including the importance of self-identity. When I travelled I met people, often without much in the way of material wealth, but who had a sureness of self and a sense of purpose in their life which, combined with the opportunity to do what they considered meaningful, seemed more fundamental to their happiness. My thoughts have returned to this often as I have travelled."

Upon returning to New Zealand, Riley joined the trade negotiations team in the ministry, looking at issues at the interface of trade and the environment. Now, as climate change concerns have stepped up the urgency around how countries make efficient use of their resources, her recent attentions are focused on how trade can support sustainability.

These are, she acknowledges, big questions. "How can trade help ensure that new technologies can be more easily accessed and adopted? How can we encourage the efficient use of fossil fuels? What kind of trading environment would facilitate more efficient patterns of production that use fewer resources?"

to consider their human implications. Indeed, opposing the UK cuts, the Vice-Chancellor of the University of Essex, Professor Colin Riordan, suggested a bit more philosophy education might not have gone astray among those whose "colossal failure of integrity" drove the financial crisis in the first place.

Which is why the apparent devaluing of humanities in favour of those with seemingly more immediate economic benefits in the UK appears, to

Moloughney, both short-sighted and sad. They are disciplines, he says, that are valuable for their own sake and as valuable complements to other studies.

"Humanities cultivate people's sense of the past, without which we are socially ignorant. They foster understandings across cultures, without which we face problems of racism. They address large, complex and disputed ideas, enabling people to better cope with ambiguity in their lives." Page agrees, adding that it's irrelevant whether these skills are developed while exploring mediaeval literature or post-colonial Pacific trading practices. "And don't forget the sheer enjoyment that comes from studying the arts. The chance to be immersed in the world of beauty and ideas is reward in itself, and enriches the rest of one's life."

NICOLA MUTCH

MINING INFORMATION

Sefton Darby grew up in Dunedin, but at the age of 14 was living in Europe when the Berlin Wall came down. And, while Europe's communist states were set on a trajectory to market reform, Darby was thenceforth destined for a degree in politics.

"It made a huge impression on me," he recalls. "I saw that people around the world lived under a variety of political systems, some of which serve them very poorly and some of which they were complicit in developing. I wanted to know why people often sign up for situations that are bad for them."

On completing his honours degree in political studies at Otago, Darby took up a scholarship to study a Master of International Security Studies at St Andrews University. He then landed a role with the British Cabinet Office, with projects ranging from introducing a performance management system for senior civil servants to developing programmes "to address the digital divide in the UK".

Four years later, Darby moved into the Department of International Development, focusing on the oil and mining industries and aiming to

understand "why some developing countries were faring so poorly". He was among the team that launched the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative, a coalition of governments, companies and NGOs promoting anticorruption practices and "getting all the parties talking to one another".

In 2005, Darby jumped ship to the World Bank, promoting the institutional reform needed for developing countries in Central Asia and West Africa to profit from their natural resources. The experience, he says, "was fascinating, exhausting and complex", involving questions that reach into history, economics, politics and psychology.

"There is no magic bullet. There's no single factor that makes people poor." He continues to be compelled by the same questions with which he embarked on his career path, including understanding people's complicity in their poverty. "I would see people complaining about corruption, then getting upset when a family member in a position of authority refused them money."

He reflects on how the functioning of civil institutions, like laws and trade, depend on basic human conditions, like trust between strangers.

And he's in no doubt as to the value of his humanities training. "Never, ever believe any 'facts' at face value. Ask where the information came from. Then check it. And find a corroborating source."

He recalls a programme in Nigeria that was widely reported to have saved a billion dollars. "But when I went to find where this figure had come from, I discovered everyone was citing one another, but there was no actual source. It turned out someone had just made it up."

Now back in New Zealand, Darby ran his own consulting company before moving on to champion best industry practice from within, as the external affairs manager of Newmont Mining Corporation, based in Waihi. He manages the company's relationships with iwi, government and the community, balancing commercial, political, environmental, cultural and social imperatives. He is well trained to do so. Understanding the wider impact of what humans do is precisely, he says, what a humanities education is all about.

Simply spoken

Clinical psychologist, turned author, turned television presenter, turned government adviser, Nigel Latta is a man in demand and yet insists he is no expert.

We worry too much, says well-known clinical psychologist Nigel Latta. We worry about our kids. We worry about our parenting. We worry about global warming. We're anxious we'll catch avian flu, swine flu or the next epidemic the media sensationalise, and we sometimes take what people say on television – those dishing out parenting advice included – far too seriously.

Ironically, Latta plays a prominent part in the parenting advice industry and its attendant media obsession. The irony is not lost on him. Being interviewed in his professional rooms in Dunedin, not long before he, his wife and two sons relocate to Auckland, he appears almost bewildered about ending up where he is: author of internationally-published parenting and forensic psychology books; presenter of two television series; government adviser and in-demand public speaker.

The effervescent Otago alumnus says he craves anonymity, but, at the same time, he acknowledges success has its upsides. Chief among those is an invitation, in 2008, to be affiliated with the Dunedin Multidisciplinary Health and Development Research Unit as someone who can help disseminate the research findings to the wider public, including mums and dads.

All of which is a far cry from his undergraduate degree in zoology, commenced at Otago in 1986. Did this choice of subject represent a deepseated curiosity for behaviour which has manifested itself through his later shift into clinical psychology?

No, he responds, with trademark prosaic frankness – it was the only science you could do at stage two without chemistry.

After graduating in zoology, an inclination to get to Antarctica led Latta to then enrol in an MSc in marine science, but –perhaps remarkably – that's one ambition he is yet to fulfil.

"They said, 'you're a bit late mate, you needed to apply last year'," Latta recalls ruefully. He, nonetheless, went on to complete his postgraduate qualification, despite (or, indeed, assisted by) a short-lived career as a member of the six-piece busking enterprise, Gavin Thornton's Steam Injected Band, which took him to the bright lights of Invercargill, Alexandra and Twizel.

Latta's Otago student experience was one he wouldn't have missed. He hopes both his sons will enjoy a similar experience, not least, he says, because research indicates big personality shifts occur in the years of early adulthood –

and he can't think of a better place to spend those years. In contrast, he says, Auckland University – where he next undertook a MPhil (Hons) in psychology and a postgraduate diploma in clinical psychology – lacked the strong student community he'd enjoyed so much at Otago.

"It was like having an office job. Everybody comes in and does their papers, gets on a bus and goes home again."

Latta's switch to Auckland was prompted by the woman who would later become his wife, but his studies there also set him on the career path which has delivered somewhat more success than his brief foray into street music.

Intent on nailing his psychology master's project quickly, Latta went looking for a short-duration stopping-violence programme he could evaluate. His enquiries led him, instead, to a sex-offender treatment programme, which he studied and later joined as a staff member. Subsequently, his diploma placement at the family-and-child-focused Leslie Centre initiated his interest in children. Thus, the dual planks of his professional career – forensic and child psychology – were established.

Problem kids, Latta reckons, are "interesting", not least because they tend to be kids with whom people have tried several different approaches with little success.

"There's a lot of ideology in the kids' field; it's very political and full of



labelling," says Latta. "That's useful if it comes with a set of instructions, but often it doesn't. Often it's 'let's spend more money and let's get a label for the kid', but someone still has to work out how to stop the kid stabbing other kids with a pencil or eating budgies. Then it just becomes, well, 'what do we do now?'"

Despite his reputation for working such things out, Latta doesn't see himself as an expert.

"When you're working with people and you start to think you're an expert, I think that's quite dangerous. You can have an idea about what to do, but no one's an expert on this stuff. I don't think anyone really knows what to do. I think what it really relies on is a healthy sense of your own fallibility and shortcomings.

"Whenever I start to feel confident, I

worry. I cringe whenever people use that word 'expert' because I'm not. I don't believe such a thing exists. I think we need to believe in experts because it makes everyone feel better, but I don't believe in it myself."

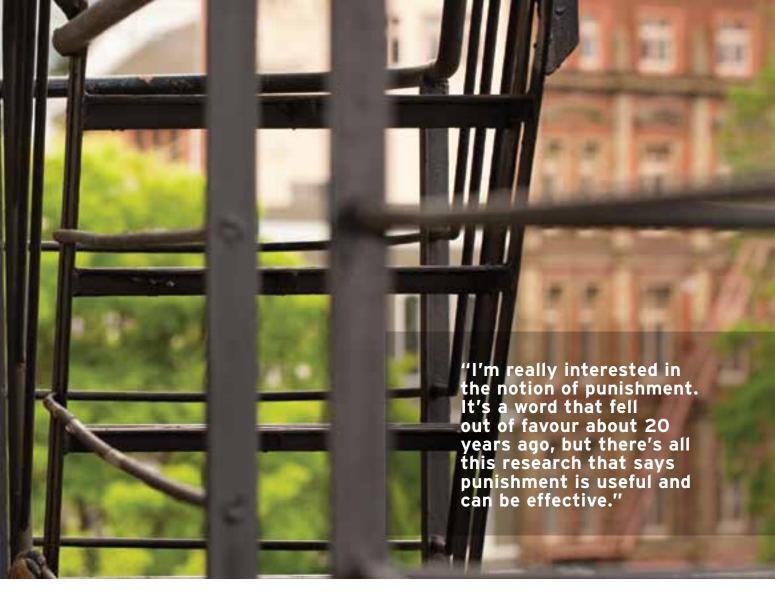
Reconciling this attitude with the persona who writes parenting books might present a challenge, if one didn't realise that Latta genuinely doesn't intend to be taken too seriously. In fact, irreverence and heresy could be called his *modus operandi*.

"I think heresy is quite important, particularly in a very politically-correct, careful, ideologically-bound world. I'm really interested in the notion of punishment. It's a word that fell out of favour about 20 years ago, but there's all this research that says punishment is useful and can be effective. So, I wonder,

why have we stopped talking about punishment?

"We still do, but we call it 'consequences'. Why do we have to nice it up? I think people confuse punishment with being punitive, so they think punishment is being mean to people. Well, being mean to people never works, but punishment does.

"I would love there to be a national conference on punishing people more effectively," Latta continues, "because I don't think we know how to do that. Look at kids in high school or going out to the beach to chuck bottles at the police. What are we going to do about that? We'll have a family group conference, we'll get a bit of counselling and we'll go 'oh young people, can't you express yourselves in more positive ways?""



Many psychologists, he believes, are blighted by the need to be politically correct or, to use Latta-speak, "beige" – which translates as bland to the point of somnolence. In contrast, if there's a colour that one could equate with Latta, it would probably be iridescent purple.

"The public face of the profession is very careful, very buttoned down, very staid and PC. Personally, I don't think that's very good for the profession. There are lots of psychologists who are very different to that – I've met people who are doing amazing things. But everyone gets worried about getting in trouble. God forbid that you should get in trouble because you say something that might offend someone."

Once likely to be thrown by public criticism or bothered by a misquote, Latta is no longer shy of controversy.

He speaks his mind, even about the so-called Anti-Smacking Bill which the National Government asked him to review.

"To be honest, my final view was we wasted a huge amount of time, resources and money debating something that I don't think has really made that much of a difference. What annoys me is we spent \$9 million on that referendum when the multi-agency child abuse centre in Auckland costs about \$2.5 million. We could have had one of those in every major city. Instead, we had that stupid referendum."

So, if Nigel Latta's not an expert, then, what is he? The voice of reason in a crowded room of politically-correct counsellors, psychologists and advisers? He writes and speaks to parents around the country with parenting advice, but insists he's just a normal dad like every other, who has good days and not so good days. Is Nigel Latta something of a paradox?

"I've never represented myself in any way as saintly or perfect, because I'm not," he explains. "I just actually think the business of raising kids is pretty simple. You feed them. Their cells divide. They grow. It was probably a lot harder in the days where you had to worry about them cleaning chimneys or getting the plague. But it's like everything else; it's become hideously complicated. There's a lot of money to be made in making things complex by saying you need an expert to tell you how to do this. Well I say, says who?"

REBECCA TANSLEY

Status update

Within 16 months of starting her first job, Otago graduate Anna-Claire Clendon was named NZ Marketing Magazine's Rookie Marketer of the Year. Not one to rest on her laurels, she is now heading off into the big wide world.

At last count, Anna-Claire Clendon had 350 friends on Facebook. By teenage standards that's a modest number. But the difference is that, at 24 years of age, it's likely Anna-Claire genuinely knows all her friends. She's selective with her social networks, she says, by way of explanation.

Anna-Claire Clendon is also very smart, but that doesn't need explaining. Because rather than just talking about harnessing the power of social media for marketing purposes, as a lot of marketers do, Anna-Claire has done it – with cybersized success.

Fresh in a new job and facing the challenges associated with introducing innovative, high-tech products into a crowded marketplace, Clendon applied the new-media savvy that seems to ooze out of her generation to deftly tap into the shared passion of a virtual community.

In just 16 months the 2009 BA
BCom(Hons) graduate was instrumental
in taking a bright idea from New
Zealand start-up company Enlight Photo
− the orbis™ ring flash − and turning it
into an internationally recognised brand.
She also earned herself NZ Marketing
Magazine's Rookie Marketer of the Year

award in the process and helped Enlight Photo earn an American Chamber of Commerce in New Zealand Exporter of the Year award. Not bad for a graduate in her first "real" job.

Funnily enough, Clendon chose to pursue a BCom in marketing so she'd end up with what she called a "get-a-job" degree alongside her BA in English. But she soon discovered a flair for the discipline. When she and two classmates won a second-year competition with their bar-based campaign promoting safe sex to judgement-impaired young males, the prize of two days' work experience at legendary agency Saatchi & Saatchi sealed her destiny.

"That really brought it home to me that I could do this," says Clendon who, at that point, decided to go on to complete an honours year.

Unsurprisingly for someone who is clearly an A-type, Clendon's university career was punctuated with success in both curricular and extracurricular

Her honours dissertation involved following the consumption habits of four families to investigate how their internal dynamics and daily habits affect their efforts to be more sustainable. She and her Otago team-mates did well in international business case studies competitions that took them around the country, as well as to Singapore and Canada. Clendon also made the most of the exchange opportunities Otago offers, studying for a semester at the University of Amsterdam and the University of California, Berkeley respectively.

Clendon is clearly a citizen of the world. As a child her time was divided between rural life in Thailand, where her father worked in the palm oil industry and where she was educated by New Zealand correspondence school, and Wellington, where she attended a normal primary school.

"I was lucky to have an international perspective from the start," Clendon observes of the contribution her unusual background has made to her development. "And I've always been interested in the way culture affects international business."

After completing her final semester at Berkeley, Clendon returned to New Zealand in late 2008. In a tough job market she jumped at the chance to join the small team at Enlight Photo, a fledgling company with big dreams that presented a great opportunity to develop skills, fast.

Enlight Photo's owner, investment banker-turned-professional-photographer James Madelin, had spent two years developing the orbis™ from his DIY-duct-tape version to a precision product perfected in conjunction with optical engineers and product designers.



The result was an innovative, but simpleto-use, photographic accessory that emulates the ring flash effect of much larger and more complex lighting rigs.

The orbis™ had enjoyed an overwhelmingly enthusiastic reception amongst a niche community of online photographers. Madelin recognised the opportunity to take his flagship product to the wider photography community and turn Enlight Photo into a multiproduct company.

Up until the time Clendon joined enlight, a year of photography at Queen Margaret College in Wellington was the extent of her photographic experience. How quickly that was about to change. Within a year she was addressing international photographic conferences and corresponding with leaders of the global photographic blog community.

With a non-existent marketing budget, she set about working the photographic social networks that existed around the world, ensuring top bloggers and editors got to know the product, and that top photographers' orbis™ experience was communicated globally.

Within 12 months orbis[™] had gone from niche, web-only availability to sales representation in 20 countries around the world, and distribution warehouses in America, Europe and New Zealand. Photographic retailers around the world now compete for territorial sales rights, and the company has launched further products such as the orbis[™] arm and an accessory dubbed the frio[™].

Clendon is in no doubt that her education has played an important part in her career success, not least the skills developed by her degree in English which, she says, give her marketing work depth "and also the communication skills to create campaigns and write compelling press releases".

During her time at the University of California, she deliberately avoided the international student hostels in favour of a more authentic American campus experience in Cloyne Court, the largest student co-operative in the US. Clendon reports that the place is still steeped with a strong sense of its '60s heritage; oncewere hippies kept turning up, she says, to check out their former student haunt.

Clendon gives the strong impression of just soaking up such experiences and, indeed, just days after we met she is set to head off to Colombia for her next adventure. She doesn't know where she'll end up and, despite having some firm career goals, is quite happy about keeping an open mind.

"That's one thing I learned from my time with Enlight Photo," she says. "It's important to be open to the opportunities that come along."

I have no doubt that plenty of opportunities will come along Anna-Claire Clendon's way. In the meantime, I'll content myself with seeing if she'll be my friend on Facebook.

REBECCA TANSLEY

Clendon applied the new-media savvy that seems to ooze out of her generation to deftly tap into the shared passion of a virtual community.

Full circle

University of Otago researchers are taking key roles in the Dunedin-based phase II trials of a vaccine for rotavirus infection, the most common cause of infant gastroenteritis, which kills an estimated halfa-million children worldwide each year.

Otago alumnus Professor Graeme Barnes, a senior principal research fellow at the Murdoch Children's Research Institute in Australia, was instrumental in the identification of rotavirus at Melbourne Royal Children's Hospital in the 1970s and now involved with the development of the RV3 vaccine that is hoped will reduce the incidence of this devastating condition, particularly in developing countries.

Sometimes serendipity seems to intervene in research. In reality, it is more likely that all the relentless attention to detail required of leading researchers means that, when the fleeting moment of opportunity flits by, it is seen and grasped.

Professor Graeme Barnes might argue he happened to be in the right place at the right time to help identify rotavirus and find the key to a new vaccine, but that doesn't tell the story of the painstaking work he and others have put in to get laboratory discoveries into the clinic.

After graduating from the University of Otago in 1965, Barnes was planning to go into general practice, so paediatrics seemed a good option and he was persuaded to go to the Royal Children's Hospital in Melbourne for further training. Research beckoned and Barnes began an MD in the Gastroenterology Department, working under Dr Rudge Townley.

At that stage a research team in the department, which included eminent microbiologist Dr Ruth Bishop, was grappling with high rates of unexplained severe gastroenteritis in infants.

"We had so many kids admitted with acute gastroenteritis and in only 10 or 15 per cent of them would you find a cause," says Barnes. "Nobody really knew what was causing it."

Barnes secured a fellowship for his MD study in children with acute

gastroenteritis and was able to show that it was the small intestine that was being badly affected, but the cause was still unknown. He returned to Dunedin in 1973 as a lecturer in paediatrics.

Meanwhile, Bishop enlisted the help of University of Melbourne microbiologist Ian Holmes who used an electron microscope to examine further biopsy specimens gathered by Geoffrey Davidson, Barnes' successor. Rotavirus was found in the majority of them.

"Knowing what the virus looked like meant it was possible to do faecal tests, so you didn't have to do biopsies anymore," says Barnes. "The next step then became to find out how common rotavirus was."

That question was answered by a 12-month study that found well over 50 per cent of all children admitted to Royal Children's Hospital with gastroenteritis had rotavirus, climbing to more than 72 per cent in winter.

"Clearly, it was a very important pathogen in the Australian community and this was also confirmed in Toronto, Boston, Dunedin and elsewhere very quickly."

Not surprisingly, when Townley resigned as Director of Paediatric Gastroenterology in 1975 Barnes was asked to put his hat in the ring and was appointed to the position.

The Otago connections continued with Keith Grimwood doing his MD on the rotavirus project, while recently retired Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Health Sciences) Professor Don Roberton also



spent time in Melbourne investigating rotavirus immunology [see next page].

Several oral rotavirus vaccines have been developed, but the first was withdrawn due to an association with intussusception, or bowel obstruction – a rare but serious side effect. Two other companies have since introduced successful oral vaccines. They are licensed in more than 60 countries and have already greatly reduced admissions in developed countries.

In his current role with the Murdoch Children's Research Institute, Barnes has been focusing on developing a vaccine better suited to developing countries. Central to that was the discovery of an unusual strain of rotavirus at Melbourne Royal Women's Hospital that produced no symptoms, but gave infected babies immunity. That provided the basis for the RV3 vaccine that will undergo phase II trials in Dunedin [see sidebar].

The vaccine's potential is such that the World Health Organization (WHO) and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation-supported Program for Appropriate Technology in Health, in Seattle, are funding its development, with further support from the NMHRC in Australia and HRC in New Zealand.

Existing vaccines can't be used in the early days after birth. Unfortunately, in many developing countries, that is the only time babies are in contact with health workers, explains Barnes.

"If they are gone a day or two later you've probably lost them. What we really need is something that we can give earlier than currently available products."

Barnes says RV3 could be manufactured by companies in developing countries – for example, Biopharma in Indonesia, which makes all vaccines for Indonesian children and for use by WHO and UNICEF elsewhere.

"It has the potential to be a really good oral vaccine because it has the characteristics of being asymptomatic and it's come from newborn babies. What better could you have if you are seriously thinking about giving neonatal doses of vaccine?"

Otago's recently-retired Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Health Sciences) Professor Don Roberton was just one of several researchers to come under the influence of Graeme Barnes early in their careers.

After training at the University of Otago as a paediatric specialist, Roberton had planned to do further studies in the UK, but Barnes convinced him to go to the Royal Children's Hospital in Melbourne instead.

Roberton developed an interest in the causes of diarrhoea and other gastric and intestinal problems in children and began his MD studies there, examining ways of diagnosing rotavirus.

"If we could identify it simply and easily as the cause of gastroenteritis when children are admitted acutely to hospital, then we could start to understand the epidemiology of it in the population."

That research led to further training in immunology and paediatrics, with an emphasis on laboratory-based immunology and vaccine research.

Roberton applauds Barnes' achievements in the rotavirus field, from the initial discoveries to the development of an exciting new vaccine.

"The real need is in the developing world, particularly in the Asia-Pacific region, the Indian subcontinent and in Africa. There needs to be a vaccine that can be manufactured cheaply and be made available to all children."

Roberton says the Dunedin-based phase II trial, partly funded by the major health research funding agencies in both New Zealand and Australia, is an excellent example of a collaborative study of international importance being undertaken here.

"These are important areas for study and, from the University staff point of view, we've got a very strong Department of Paediatrics and Child Health. This is a highly clinically-relevant study and it is a clinical trial as well, so it assists us in developing our expertise further.

"This work has been internationally recognised and Graeme has been superb. Otago has every reason to be proud of him as an alumnus and the achievements he has been able to make in regional and international health over many years."

MARK WRIGHT

"This work has been internationally recognised and Graeme has been superb."

Professor Don Roberton



THE DUNEDIN TRIAL

This year's phase II trial in Dunedin, which is being co-ordinated through the Department of Women's and Children's Health, will focus on the immunogenicity of the RV3 vaccine to see if it will provide babies with the necessary protection.

Senior clinical lecturer Dr Pam Jackson says a phase I trial in Melbourne is examining safety data and, because it is a vaccine developed from a human neonatal strain of rotavirus, it shouldn't cause the side effects other animal-strain rotavirus vaccine types have.

The trial will involve 93 participants randomised into three different groups, each subject receiving four oral doses - three vaccine and one placebo. They will still receive their usual routine immunisations.

Recruiting will happen antenatally, providing parents with information and, before the baby is born, seeking consent for the collection of cord blood. Researchers will seek their consent again before the vaccine is given.

Jackson says parents will need to collect faecal specimens after each vaccine dose and there will also be three blood samples to see if the babies are producing protective antibodies

"We have a very good relationship with the maternity unit and there is a wonderful history of research within the department. Antenatal recruitment has been done for many years."

Indonesia will also host a larger trial looking at challenges faced in developing countries, such as greater exposure to parasitic and infectious diseases as well as vaccine

"Nanny state" and free choice

Far from constraining freedom of choice, Professor Janet Hoek argues that the so-called "nanny state" creates a safe environment, protecting the vulnerable and redressing inequalities.

"Another example of nanny state interference" – we will have all heard or read assertions like this, typically prompted by proposed public health initiatives. Further explication of such responses commonly reveals that "nanny states" are inhabited by tobacco Nazis, the food police, alcohol wowsers and, of course, the original settlers, the interfering general do-gooders.

These soubriquets applied to public health groups highlight how powerfully language can shape our response to social and health debates. Once a caring figure, the state's "nanny" has been reincarnated as a dark and malevolent harridan who seeks to constrain choice, undermine freedom and limit individual autonomy. This mutation of the metaphor has had a powerful influence on how we discuss important public health and social problems, and what we see as the most effective responses to these.

Although the regulation of marketing activities is often held to be the antithesis of free choice, it may, paradoxically, promote free choice. Regulation, or what the WHO's Ottawa Charter describes as healthy public policy, creates environments

that promote and enable freedom of choice. Thus, rather than constraining personal freedoms, regulation corrects unbalanced information, moderates commercial discourse and helps achieve free choice. Consequently, regulation is not the antithesis of individual liberty, as so often proposed, but rather the counterpoint that provides for free choice.

However, suggestions to remove aspirational branding from tobacco packages, cease influential alcohol and food marketing practices because these promote and reinforce unhealthy behaviours, or introduce traffic-light food labelling that consumers can actually understand and use invariably threaten vested interests and elicit the most strident "nanny state" responses.

Unfortunately, "nanny state" allegations have never prompted debate of the evidence that supports or detracts from mooted proposals. Nor has the *ad hominem* that often accompanies "nanny state" accusations and diverts attention away from analysis of the logic that links interventions to specific health outcomes. Attacking those who promote solutions as wowsers (or worse) contributes little to the public dialogue needed to explore

solutions to problems affecting our health and social well-being. Only by recognising the "nanny state" moniker as mere rhetoric, a strategy to stifle debate by supplanting evidence with ideology, will we be able to evaluate the evidence that should underpin any policy development.

Those using "nanny state" rhetoric do so when regulation, particularly of marketing activities, would disturb the inappropriately labelled "free market" and challenge their vested interests. Instead of intervention, these voices propose greater "individual responsibility". However, calls that we should be free to pursue the libertarian dream, no matter what the personal or social costs might be, imply a level of knowledge and risk awareness, understanding and acceptance that is more assumed than established.

It is much easier to call on people to exert greater individual responsibility than it is to examine the factors that make it so difficult for them to do this. We should, therefore, test carefully any claims that demand the former without considering the latter.

The food, alcohol and tobacco industries have all rehearsed the "individual responsibility" reasoning in recent months. In their submissions to the Māori Affairs Select Committee Enquiry into the tobacco industry, Imperial Tobacco stated: "The risks associated with smoking are universally known, and ... smoking is, and should continue to be, a matter of informed

Professor Janet Hoek:

"Calls that we should be free to pursue the libertarian dream, no matter what the personal or social costs might be, imply a level of knowledge and risk awareness, understanding and acceptance that is more assumed than established."

adult choice". British American Tobacco made a similar claim: "Smokers are well aware of the serious health risks associated with smoking".

These claims overlook the fact that large retail displays advertise tobacco brands directly to children, the new generation of smokers on which the tobacco industry's profitability depends. These brands and their highly evocative names and imagery are meticulously researched to offer aspirational benefits that resonate with particular groups. While it is a tribute to the marketing skill of these companies that the average age of smoking initiation is just 14, this statistic must surely raise important questions about the myth of "individual responsibility" and the role of the

so-called "nanny state".

Put simply, the tobacco companies' view of individual responsibility relies on children aged less than 15 having the knowledge of smoking's harms, the understanding of its addictiveness, a comprehension of the diseases caused and the ability to estimate the likelihood they will be affected by these diseases. The assumption that children have this knowledge, and evaluate and draw on it to make a fully-informed decision about whether to engage in a highly addictive behaviour

is, in every sense, a truly incredible proposition.

While tobacco is, of course, an unambiguously harmful product, it is disturbing to see the arguments that defined this industry's stance on public health now repeated by those who reject measures that would reduce obesity or the risky consumption of alcohol. Just

as tobacco marketing creates enticing symbolic benefits, so too does marketing for alcopops and energy-dense and nutrient-poor foods. Arguments that these industries simply provide products to satiate consumers' desires ignore the role marketing plays in stimulating and reinforcing these desires, and relocate responsibility for harm onto consumers themselves.

In situations such as these, where "the market" has generated demand, but failed to foster a society of fully-informed individuals, a "nanny state" represents an alternative to loosely fettered commercialism. Indeed, exploring the "nanny state" metaphor in more detail, reveals not the dark, brooding, malevolent, wicked witch seeking to constrain and deny, but an altogether more humane fairy godmother who creates a safe environment, protects the vulnerable and redresses inequalities.

Too often, however, political leaders decline to adopt regulatory solutions or show leadership in public health not because the evidence base is undeveloped or wanting, but because the personal risks of drawing on it appear higher than the social costs of overlooking it. It is time to review the full complexity of the "nanny state" metaphor and reject its reduction to a narrow ideological definition. This implies exploring the potential of proposals dismissed as "nanny statist" and dispassionately evaluating the merits of interventions where the government assumes a protective role and actively promotes the well-being of its citizens.

PROFESSOR JANET HOEK Department of Marketing

Acknowledgements: Professors Jim Mann, Peter Crampton, Andrew Bradstock and Phil Gendall gave me helpful feedback on an earlier draft of this piece and I'm grateful for their insights.

Little miracles

Cure Kids Professor of Paediatric Research Brian Darlow has dedicated his career to improving the outcomes for sick and premature babies.

"Find a job you love and you will never have to work a day in your life." – Confucius.

This quote from China's famous philosopher is particularly apt for the career of Christchurch paediatrician and Cure Kids inaugural Professor of Paediatric Research Brian Darlow.

While conceding that his work has been challenging, Darlow says he has always loved caring for pre-term, low-birth-weight babies and their families. Undertaking research to improve outcomes for these babies has been both fun and enormously rewarding, he says.

Darlow's primary research interest is in neonatology – the medical field concerned with the care of newborn, sick and premature babies – but, specifically, freeradical disease in the newborn and the longer-term outcomes of premature births.

Over more than two decades, his research has contributed greatly to the understanding of outcomes for neonates worldwide and this was recognised in 2007 when he became the first holder of the Cure Kids Chair in Paediatric Research.

"In the 25 years I have been a clinical neonatologist in Christchurch, there have been many advances in the management of high-risk pregnancies and neonatal intensive care. These have led to lower mortality rates and a better quality of life for affected babies. Most of these changes have been the result of high-quality research – basic science research and clinical and applied research."

Darlow has been a long-time advocate of treatment guided by high-quality research. After gaining his medical degree from Cambridge University, England, and working as a house surgeon on a paediatric ward, he travelled to Papua New Guinea in the late '70s where he got his first taste of combining research and treatment.

He worked as a paediatrician in the mornings and recruited children to a study on malaria treatment during the rest of the day. He developed an immediate passion for research.

"It [Papua New Guinea] was a wonderful place to be. The research was hard work, but useful for the community and led to six papers being published."

After further training in England, Darlow moved to Christchurch in 1982 to a job as a consultant paediatrician with special responsibilities in neonatal medicine and a senior lecturer position at the University of Otago.

His research began to focus on the condition of acute retinopathy of prematurity, which can cause blindness in pre-term babies. "Oxygen is like sunlight. It can be good for the body, but it can also cause damage. Foetuses are in a low oxygen environment in the womb so have low protection against such damage. They gradually develop more as they mature. But babies born at 26, 27 and 28 weeks are often given oxygen after birth and this can cause a range of problems, including acute retinopathy of prematurity."

In the mid-'80s Darlow did a piece of work for the Paediatric Society about retinopathy, realising no one knew how common the condition was in New Zealand. It was to be the start of a careerlong research project.

"That one study is still providing me with work decades later," he jokes.

Darlow enrolled every very-low-birthweight newborn treated in neonatal units across New Zealand in one year (1986) in an audit of their care. He also made sure every baby had eye examinations to assess retinopathy.

This was the first time a national sample of very premature New Zealand babies had been done. The results provided recommendations on a screening protocol – which remains in use – and contributed to the international knowledge and treatment of acute retinopathy of prematurity.

The study also produced a cohort of children whose outcomes Darlow followed at seven to eight years of age. He is now studying them in their early 20s.

He found that, while a number of these young people have challenges



such as physical problems, the majority rate their health, self-esteem and social functioning as equal to their peers.

Over the years, Darlow has been involved in a number of large international neonatal trials. One of the largest looked at the best way to use a new treatment for babies with very immature lungs and breathing problems.

These babies lack a natural lining fluid that helps the lungs expand. The drug, Surfactant, was known to be effective, but was not available in New Zealand at the time, partly because it was expensive.

Darlow co-ordinated New Zealand's involvement in the trial of 6,000 infants worldwide, making Surfactant available here for the first time. At the end of the year-long trial, prescribing Surfactant had become established practice.

Both this study and Darlow's earlier research into retinopathy laid the foundation for development of the Australia and New Zealand Neonatal Network. This group has been instrumental in trialling and implementing better ways of caring for neonates in both countries.

Another component of Darlow's research work has been a fruitful working relationship with Professor Christine Winterbourn, of the University of Otago, Christchurch's, Free Radical Research Group.

For almost two decades the pair have investigated various aspects of free radicals – highly unstable chemicals often resulting from oxygen exposure – and their impact on premature babies, particularly their lungs.

The Cure Kids Chair in Paediatric Research was established with a \$1 million donation from the charity, Cure Kids, to the University of Otago's Leading Thinkers Initiative, money that was matched by the Government under the Partnerships for Excellence scheme.

Darlow says the vision for the chair was to establish the academic, clinical and research strengths of the University's Christchurch-based Department of Paediatrics. It has enabled the appointments of a paediatric gastroenterologist and a paediatric infectious disease specialist, and pays the salaries of two part-time research nurses in the neonatal intensive-care unit.

He says this has greatly increased the capacity to undertake and co-ordinate multicentre randomised controlled trials and contributed to free radical research.

In April 2010 Darlow retired from clinical work and his role as head of the department, a position he has held since 2001. Symptoms of heart disease and the insertion of a stent forced him to look at how hard he was working.

"I was probably doing 80 hours a week and, while I loved clinical work, I couldn't continue to do the acute call work into my 60s."

He continues in earnest with his research work; including following the cohort of very-low-birth-weight newborn children into their 20s.

"I have developed particularly close relationships with many of the families who were part of our 1986 study and who we are now studying as young adults.

"I often run into people who say I cared for their child when they were in the neonatal unit and they just want to update me on how things are now. It's a really lovely thing."

KIM THOMAS

To make a donation or bequest to the University of Otago, please contact the Office of Development and Alumni Relations.

Tel 64 3 479 8834 Email leadingthinkers@otago.ac.nz

Drug hope for stroke victims

The lives of stroke and head injury victims might be drastically improved as a result of a discovery by University of Otago and UCLA scientists. They have found a drug therapy that could unlock paralysed arms and legs, restoring mobility by up to 50 per cent.

Otago's Dr Andrew Clarkson (Departments of Psychology, Anatomy and Structural Biology) and colleagues found that, when tested on mice, the drug - a class of compounds called "extrasynaptic GABA inverse agonists" already known to enhance cognition - re-activated neurons in the brain responsible for limb function.

Human trials could potentially begin within two years.

Drug treatment of the mice was begun three days after the stroke event -

equating to about three weeks in human terms – when damaged areas around the stroke site had settled into a state of dormancy.



Dr Andrew Clarkson: "When the compound is given, the dormant neurons fire up again and that leads to telling the limbs to work."

After six weeks, the mice consistently regained an extra 50 per cent of gross motor limb mobility, in addition to the 10 to 15 per cent gain in motor function which normally occurs in mice without the drug treatment.

"When the compound is given, the dormant neurons fire up again and that leads to telling the limbs to work," Clarkson explains. "We now know this works on gross motor skills and, after further research, we hope to know if the compound would also lead to greater use of fine motor skills associated with speech, for example.

"This also provides hope for those with traumatic head injuries - the brain mechanisms of repair are similar so there is potential for this to work for them too."

A new sporting supremacy

High-profile sport has become a weapon in the hands of global marketing organisations doing battle for world supremacy.

New Zealand's All Blacks and the Rugby World Cup are no exceptions, according to a new book by former Otago PhD student Jay Scherer, now at the University of Alberta, and Professor Steve Jackson, of Otago's School of Physical Education.

Their book, Globalization, sport and corporate nationalism: the new cultural economy of the New Zealand All Blacks, notes how, in just 15 years, the national game has been radically transformed.

Once a grassroots activity, it is now a professional global media commodity, increasingly controlled by offshore transnational corporations such as News Corp, the International Rugby Board and sponsors like Adidas.

A central tenet of their book is that corporations are gaining control over access not only to broadcast media through subscription television, but also to important aspects of culture through intellectual property rights.

Their concept of "corporate nationalism" highlights how companies draw upon and often gain ownership of a nation's symbols, icons, history and memories as part of national and global branding strategies.

Perhaps the best example of this is the increasingly intense debate over the ownership and commercial use of the Ka Mate haka – the focus of two chapters.

Ultimately, the authors raise important questions about the future of the national game within the new global economy: "As rugby and the All Blacks are transformed by these economic imperatives it is becoming increasingly difficult for ordinary New Zealanders to access premier events featuring the national team."



Professor Steve Jackson: "... it is becoming increasingly difficult for ordinary New Zealanders to access premier events featuring the national team."

Avant-garde theory

A decade of questioning aspects of the avant-garde movements has led to a new book from Dr Cecilia Novero (Department of Languages and Cultures). Anti-Diets of the Avant-Garde: From Futurist Cooking to Eat Art discusses the role of food in art and literature, and raises new ideas in critical thinking about the movements.

Novero began by researching how the avant-garde represented material culture. She then looked at how the depicted material items functioned – not as everyday objects, but as part of the works.

"The avant-garde were moving away from the figurative and looking for other ways of constructing art, so why do we find everyday items such as food in absurdist or abstract art?" asks Novero. "How does that work in a philosophy of non-representation? If avant-garde is nonrepresentational, what happens when it deals with material objects such as food?"

Novero argues that the avant-garde movements used food to represent temporality.

"Temporality is key. Through visceral material aspects of the everyday, the avant-garde movements deal with their own temporality, existing in the present and producing things for the future. They look backward and forward at the same time though food."

Novero arrived at her thoughtprovoking theory about the avant-garde movements after years of researching documents, archives and exhibitions, and meeting and interviewing primary sources including artists.

"My study brings together the visual arts, political and national understandings of food and food consumption, and critical theory in its broadest sense."

Novero is now moving on from food to studying how animals feature in art and visual culture.



Dr Cecilia Novero: "My study brings together the visual arts, political and national understandings of food and food consumption, and critical theory in its broadest sense."

Sustaining tourism

Growing concern about CO₂ emissions of long-haul air travel may not stop UK and European tourists coming here, but could result in changes to itineraries and the way the experience is marketed.

Professor James Higham (Tourism) and former student Dr Scott Cohen have researched two European markets: the UK, New Zealand's largest long-haul market; and Norway, which is a European leader in political initiatives to reduce CO₂ emissions.

Higham says the two markets are contrasting. While UK people are aware of climate change, they don't want to compromise their air travel lifestyles. In Norway, short-haul budget air travel is seen as unsustainable, however, the dream trip to New Zealand seems intact.



Professor James Higham: "The tourism industry in New Zealand is facing times of change – and must be responsive."

That said, the way Norwegians think about long-haul destinations is changing.

Travel to New Zealand would be for longer periods, possibly including Australia or the Pacific Islands, and perhaps linked

with study or work experience, not just holidaying.

"The tourism industry in New Zealand is facing times of change - and must be responsive," says Higham. "We may need to see Australia as a collaborator, rather than as a rival destination, so that the two are marketed collectively, not competitively in key long-haul markets."

Higham says New Zealand must also provide visitors with low carbon experiences. The national cycleway concept, for instance, fits well with a "slow tourism" future, with longer lengths of stay and reduced energy demands.

"As a long-haul destination, and in times of carbon constraints, it is more critical than ever that the industry pursues the highest standards of environmental sustainability with a single-minded focus."

Cost-effective health care

Department of Public Health researchers in Wellington have received a major programme grant (\$4.9 million) from the Health Research Council to undertake intensive investigation of the effectiveness of health interventions.

Professor Tony Blakely is leading the five-year study - The Burden of Disease Epidemiology, Equity and Cost-Effectiveness Programme, or BODE³.

"New Zealand is behind other countries like the UK in determining the likely gains, costs and cost-effectiveness of different treatments and interventions in the health system," he says.

"The over-riding objective of this longterm study is to enable the health system and district health boards to improve prioritisation of health funding and decide



Professor Tony Blakely: His study will provide new methods ... to help policy-makers cope with budgetary issues, without losing sight of equity.

which health-care interventions are the most effective and efficient, whilst keeping an eye on possible equity impacts."

He says there is also a risk that as new technologies and treatments become available, socially marginalised groups may not have the same access to these as wealthier sections of the population, possibly leading to widening health inequalities. BODE³ will have three different objectives. One, to develop robust cancer disease cost models allowing rapid assessment of cancer control interventions.

Two, the adaptation of Australian research, so policy-makers in New Zealand can assess preventive or public-health programmes with all diseases and injuries.

And, three, the development of epidemiological and cost-effectiveness modelling to quantify impacts for different ethnic groups, and outcomes with particular health interventions.

Blakely says BODE³ is a major international study as it will develop innovative assessment methods, providing new methods - nationally and internationally - to help policy-makers cope with budgetary issues, without losing sight of equity.

Seabirds and nutrient recycling

What might seem common sense is often taken for granted without the benefits of scientific analysis.

Associate Professor Stephen Wing (Marine Science) and Associate Professor Russell Frew (Chemistry) have a Marsden grant to study the role of seabirds in recycling nutrients around sub-Antarctic islands.

It's part of understanding connectivity in food webs, systems ecology and potential systems management, says Wing.

An earlier collaboration with Frew on species' interactions in Fiordland helped inform development of the Fiordland Marine Management Act 2005, so the researchers know their work can translate into positive action.

Their new initiative uses novel geochemical markers to track nutrients and iron through the food web, from the sea to fish to birds and large marine mammals and back to the sea.

"The usual questions about birds and marine mammals are about how many there are," says Wing. "But we want to know how they fit into the whole ecosystem. What do they feed on? How does natural recycling of nutrients contribute to productivity?"

Conservationists are asking what would happen if seabirds' numbers were substantially reduced. How is the food web affected by fishing, changing climate or species introductions?

Pigs introduced to the sub-Antarctic islands as food for castaways are now so prolific they are endangering seabird breeding grounds.

"Common sense tells us seabirds have an important part to play in island ecology," says Wing. "If that's true, why is the government allowing large sections of the birds' nesting habitat to be ravaged by pigs? We hope that shining a scientific light on this issue can initiate policy change."



Associate Professors Stephen Wing and Russell Frew: "We want to know how they [seabirds] fit into the whole ecosystem... How does natural recycling of nutrients contribute to productivity?"

Politeness and politics

The craft of carefully considered correspondence may have largely been supplanted by casual emails and texting, but there's still a lot to learn from a well-written letter.

Dr Jon Hall (Classics) takes a fresh look at ancient letter writing in his book Politeness and Politics in Cicero's Letters.

Some 900 of Cicero's letters to high profile Romans have survived, providing a picture of political life towards the end of the republic. For Hall, they give new insights into the social manners that shaped aristocratic relationships.

"The style is effusive, and many scholars tend to dismiss this as flattery and hypocritical fawning," says Hall. "My take is that that kind of language is a necessary part of Roman diplomacy." Roman society was acutely aware of hierarchy and status, and courteous language was crucial, even when delivering thinly-veiled death threats.

After the assassination of Caesar, Brutus and Cassius wrote to their



Dr Jon Hall: Cicero's letters give new insights into the social manners that shaped aristocratic relationships.

opponent Mark Antony, suggesting: "You would do well not to think how long Caesar lived, but how shortly he ruled as a dictator."

Although egalitarian societies such as New Zealand no longer show such deference towards their leaders, toplevel international politics still requires elements of the decorum and protocol so evident in Cicero's correspondence, says Hall.

It was always important to follow conventional linguistic etiquette, even negotiating with people you did not like or trust

It was equally important to not place too much reliance on polite assurances of support, but seek other means of establishing the truth - a lesson that could just as easily be applied today.

Accounting for promotion

More women are entering the accounting profession; social, educational and economic changes have removed traditional barriers to career progression; and yet relatively few women are represented at the highest levels of this profession.

While 38 per cent of New Zealand's accountants are female, disproportionately few are partners. Dr Rosalind Whiting (Accountancy and Business Law) has co-authored a study that attempts to find out why.

"The accounting profession has traditionally been criticised for gender-based discrimination in promotion decisions, particularly when those concerned are mothers," she says. It is client-focused, deadline-driven and demands long hours.

So, Whiting and her colleagues set out to find out whether gender or family structure did, in fact, influence promotion to partnership prospects. In an experimental survey, partners of accountancy firms in New Zealand, Australia and Scotland were asked to assess the probability of promoting several case study "candidates".

Contrary to previous literature, results indicated that women's partnership prospects are not compromised simply on the basis of gender, being married, in dual career marriages and/or being mothers.

However, Whiting says the female case study "candidates" in the survey had managed their careers and home lives so they were already at a level to be considered for partnership. Once at this level, they appeared to be treated equitably with men. It is reaching this level where the problem lies.

"The lack of women at partnership level does not appear to simply be because of

discrimination, but because of their failure to reach the position where they can be considered. This is where further work is needed."



Dr Rosalind Whiting: "The lack of women at partnership level does not appear to simply be because of discrimination, but because of their failure to reach the position where they can be considered."

"Footprints of humanity"

An archaeological investigation of ancient campsites in the remote Papua New Guinea highlands is throwing new light on when humans can be truly regarded as "modern" in their thinking and behaviour.

Led by Otago's Professor Glenn Summerhayes, the investigation has shown that, as far back as 49,000 years ago, groups were regularly moving back and forth through rugged territory to exploit rich plant resources in the Ivane Valley, 2,000 metres above sea level. They made stone tools, hunted small animals and gathered nuts from the local Pandanus trees.

The campsites, which had been buried by volcanic ash, were occupied during a relatively warm phase of the last Ice Age when New Guinea was joined to Australia as part of the continent of Sahul.

Summerhayes says the stone tools found - waisted axes - indicate that these people were deliberately modifying the valley landscape, probably to clear forest to promote the growth of useful plants such as Pandanus.

"Our findings paint a picture of a highly mobile society that quickly adapted to, and survived in, a radically different environment to the coastal regions they had recently arrived from," he says. "It is remarkable that this is occurring around 15,000 years before other modern humans would colonise Europe."

As well as using tools for agro-forestry, analysis of starch residues on the waisted axes suggest that yams were being brought to the valley as food supplies from the lower altitudes where they grew.

"These are unique footprints of humanity," Summerhayes says. "All this is unprecedented evidence of careful,



Professor Glenn Summerhayes: "It is remarkable that this is occurring around 15,000 years before other modern humans would colonise Europe."

intentional colonisation over thousands of years, rather than people just wandering around foraging and moving on."

Harbour data collaboration

A Department of Chemistry community involvement project is ticking all the right boxes for the Division of Sciences' outreach programme.

Researchers and students are working with Dunedin high school teachers, pupils and parents to sample and test the water in Otago Harbour, starting a long-term database to track its quality.

The Healthy Harbour Watchers collaboration began in 2004 when Otago zoology graduate and science teacher Andrew Innes won a fellowship for a year's study at the Department of Marine Science, taking a paper co-ordinated by Associate Professor Barrie Peake (Chemistry).

They realised the value of establishing experiments high school students could undertake and based Healthy Harbour

Watchers on practical work Peake had developed over years of teaching water chemistry.

Now hundreds of young Dunedin scientists have been sampling the



Associate Professor Barrie Peake (centre right) and Healthy Harbour Watchers leader Andrew Innes (right) with two Dunedin secondary school students.

harbour's water and learning testing techniques at the Department of Chemistry, mentored by staff and students.

The results are forming the first longterm database on harbour water quality, says Peake. "There is no other source for this information and, the longer the project continues, the more valuable it is."

Innes recently won a conservation award with the project, which is spearheading outreach programmes by the Department of Chemistry and the Division of Science, with some of the experiments being received with enthusiasm by schools in the North Island.

"It's a marvellous mix of people who are out there doing some real chemistry in the environment," says Peake. "It fills the criteria of outreach really well and has already had spin-offs into various other projects for senior high school chemistry students."

Genetics and ethical choice

As testing foetuses for genetic abnormalities becomes more informative and easier, making decisions about the results gets harder.

Dr Ruth Fitzgerald (Anthropology) and Associate Professor Mike Legge (Biochemistry) have been studying the ethical implications of reproductive and genetic choice for a decade. Now they have a Marsden grant to extend their research nationally with Auckland anthropology Associate Professor Julie Park.

Medical and bioethical professionals may argue the finer points of moral reasoning and well-intentioned pressure groups may make persuasive statements, but the individual response to impairment, or potential disability, is often at odds with what may appear to be mainstream thinking.

"Public and private reactions to questions of choice and care are often quite different," says Fitzgerald. "We're gathering the real-life experiences of people who live with disability and we're finding many different views."

One of the key questions is defining terms - "we need nuanced understanding of the labels used in these debates".

The researchers will build on the work they have done so far and approach new communities for their opinions, with a view to eventually producing a book discussing the issues.

"Academically we are trying to analyse a new type of ethical thinking, taking into account lived experience and using a different type of language from that used by bioethicists.

"Practically, we want to understand what it is like to live with the experience

of genetic difference and we hope that we will be able to contribute to democratising the way in which people make ethical decisions in New Zealand."



Dr Ruth Fitzgerald and Associate Professor Mike Legge: "We hope that we will be able to contribute to democratising the way in which people make ethical decisions in New Zealand."

Heart monitor breakthrough

Researchers from the University of Otago, Christchurch, have implanted the first heart monitor which gives daily updates of pressure changes in chronic cardiac patients.

It allows patients and doctors to get accurate daily observations of left atrial pressure, which is a key determinant of symptoms in heart failure.

The technically innovative trial has already provided impressive results.

In a study published in the leading American Heart Association journal Circulation, the monitoring device was associated with a 67 per cent reduction in the frequency of patients' elevated left atrial pressure readings and a reduction in hospitalisation for heart failure.

Lead investigator Associate Professor Richard Troughton says the implanted



From left: Dr Wendy Chan, Associate Professor Chris Charles, Associate Professor Richard Troughton, Dr Iain Melton, Associate Professor Miriam Rademaker.

sensor is a significant advance in the monitoring and treatment of heart failure.

"In the past, monitoring of chronic heart failure has relied on less accurate tools, such as weight. Medication doses tend to be adjusted infrequently – usually at the time of hospital admission or clinic visits, and there has been no mechanism to guide daily dosing of medications."

Patients from Christchurch, Auckland, Australia and the US took part in the trials.

The Canterbury research team (including Christchurch Hospital staff) led the study of this novel device worldwide and cardiologist Dr lain Melton implanted the first devices.

The team included Troughton, Associate Professor Miriam Rademaker, Associate Professor Chris Charles, Dr Melton, Dr Ian Crozier, Dr Jay Ritzema and Dr Wendy Chan.

The remote sensor device will be tested further in a large international study.



From Kai to Kiwi Kitchen

New Zealand Culinary Traditions and Cookbooks

Edited by Helen Leach, November 2010

This food history anthology from University of Otago Emeritus Professor Helen Leach, author of the 2009 Montana Award shortlisted book, *The Pavlova Story*, covers early Polynesian cooking and colonial cookery to the present.

It opens with Leach's three Macmillan Brown Lectures, broadcast on National Radio in 2009. The second part presents essays by a number of contributors from a major Marsden Fund research project that looked at Kiwi cookbooks. The essays explore several themes, including the adaptation of British and Māori culinary traditions in the 19th century and the fate of the Māori tradition in the 20th, external influences on New Zealand cookery (previously thought to be predominantly British until after World War II), the impact of changing technology on methods and recipes, nutritional advice in community cookbooks and the transition from modernism to postmodernism, as seen in the recipes of Aunt Daisy and Lois Daish.



India in New Zealand

Local Identities, Global Relations

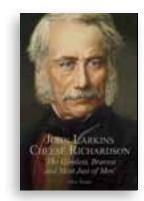
Edited by Sekhar Bandyopadhyay, September 2010

Indian people in "bicultural" New Zealand have long been an invisible minority, rarely mentioned in our history books.

This volume is a second contribution to remedying this historical silence, following the publication of *Indian Settlers: The Story of a New Zealand South Asian Community*, by Otago's Jacqueline Leckie.

The first section introduces the context, briefly tracing the history of Empire and migration, which saw a few hundred adventurers from Gujarat and Punjab settling here in the late 19th century. Now Indians constitute the

second-largest Asian-Kiwi group in New Zealand's population (having more than doubled in number between 1991 and 2001). This increasing diversity has initiated a fresh debate on this country's changing national identity, with the emphasis shifting from its bicultural foundation to greater recognition of ethnic minorities within the nation-space. The second section critically addresses the issue of a distinctive and uniform "New Zealand Indian" identity and rethinks diasporic identity. In the third section, the Indian diaspora in New Zealand is looked at from a global perspective.



John Larkins Cheese Richardson

"The Gentlest, Bravest and Most Just of Men"

Olive Trotter, October 2010

The Richardson Building on the University of Otago Dunedin campus is enduring testament to the life of one of the region's founding fathers: John Larkins Cheese Richardson.

His influence on our University was remarkable: he was Chancellor when the University opened its doors to students in 1871 and it was largely his advocacy that ensured the University of Otago should open its doors to women - becoming the first university in the Southern Hemisphere to admit women to all its classes.

Richardson settled in New Zealand in 1856 after a military career in India. "The old Major", as he was known, soon became politically active, first being elected to the Otago Provincial Council and serving as its Superintendent during the gold-rush years, then becoming an MP and Speaker of the Legislative Council.

A witty, cultivated man much in demand as a public speaker, Richardson was progressive on Māori land issues and, in the 1870s, was commissioner enquiring into British and Māori accounts of the wars. Legislation and other measures that he promoted, including attempts to control the rabbit nuisance already threatening pastoral farming, revealed a far-seeing mind. Intelligent, warm and conscientious, Richardson's death in 1878 evoked great public mourning. This is the definitive biography of an important figure in Otago's history.



The Radio Room Cilla McQueen, November 2010 Time of the Icebergs

Poems by David Eggleton, November 2010

These books are by two of the South Island's acclaimed poets.

Poet laureate Cilla McQueen, of Bluff, travels space and time, throwing "thought-lines" from her present-day corner of the world to the ancient Celtic islands of her ancestors. Her word-ware is as polished and intelligent as ever, and demands multiple readings to uncover each subtle layer. These are words to be visited again and again, by one of this country's most talented and awarded writers.

Dunedin-based David Eggleton's poems are about the world we live in, tracing a dystopian present where "Google tells Google that Google saves". As he says, "I think of it as a collection for browsing and discovering things: soundscapes, seascapes, landscapes, contemporary politics and contemporary people, histories, traditions and other things besides".

For further information: Otago University Press Email university.press@otago.ac.nz or visit www.otago.ac.nz/press

Books by Otago alumni

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Becoming an Entrepreneur, by Norman Evans, 2010.

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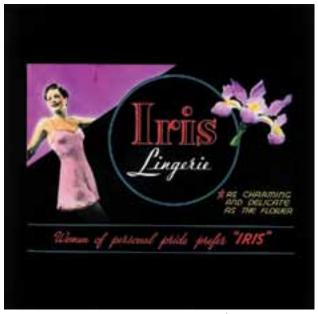
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All at Sea: a collection of personal essays, by Geoffrey Bradley, Papanui Press, 2010.

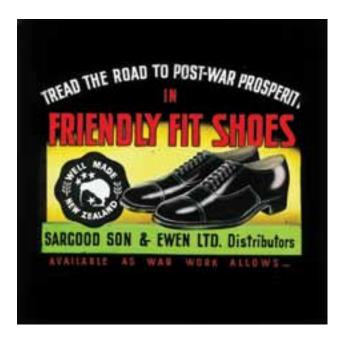
Alumni:

if you have published a book lately email the editor at mag.editor@otago.ac.nz

Light infused



Images: Auckland Slide Company, Hocken Collections Uare Taoka O Håkena, University of Otago. S0501004, S0501008, S0501013, S0501019.





The sheer beauty of light shining through colour has long been known to swell the heart - from stained glass in places of worship to the magic lanterns that enthralled 19th century exhibition-goers.

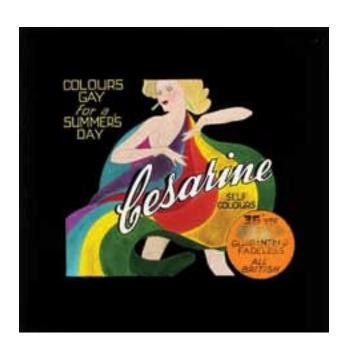
It's perhaps only natural, then, that such loveliness would end up being used to sell things.

Drawing upon the various forms of hyalographs, or magic lanterns, that had been evolving since the 1600s, pioneering photographers developed a format where positive images could be printed onto glass as "lantern slides" and projected onto a wall or screen for viewing.

They revelled in the brilliance and contrast of the colours, discovering in their work that "unsuspected beauties are readily apparent". What's more, their work could be enjoyed by entire rooms-full at once. The technology was embraced from the teaching of medicine to the promotion of tourism. The slide evening was born.

And where could such luminescence be better appreciated by a wide audience than in a cinema?

While magic lanterns became the precursors to (and were replaced by) filmmaking, single image lantern slides remained



the staple of cinema advertising for decades to come.

Now, a shoe-box sized container of such advertisements from around 1930 to 1950 resides in the Hocken Collections.

If advertising is a way of projecting the concerns and aspirations of an audience back at itself, then this collection tells us of a world where modesty and practicality meets a touch of glamour.

Products featured include such sumptuous necessities as cigarettes and air cell blankets. Domestic skills are taken for granted: clothes are not advertised, but fabric is. And love that shameless gender stereotyping – so much better than the self-conscious irony we endure today. Gumboots are advertised as "A man's boot for a man's job", while a lingerie manufacturer demurely suggests that "Women of personal pride prefer Iris".

But, although the slides are labelled as having been produced by the Auckland Slide Company and Screens Advertising Limited, little is known about these companies. And, as with much commercial art, the designers - who maximised the drama of colour and contrast for this medium - are anonymous. Art history students looking for a dissertation topic might like to take note.

NICOLA MUTCH

http://paperspast.natlib.govt.nz/cgi-bin/paperspast?a=d&d=EP19350911.2.181.2

¹Making of Slides and Transparencies on Ilford Lantern Plates, (undated c.1940), Ilford Ltd, Ilford, London, p1.

HOCKEN GALLERY EXHIBITIONS

Until 5 March

Bringing it Home: Pathways from Home Science to Applied Science, University of Otago 1911-2011

Consumer and Applied Sciences courses at the University of Otago have their origin in early 20th century concerns for social progress, education of women and health of families. This exhibition celebrates the founding, building, student life and developments in changing times of Home Science and Consumer and Applied Sciences.

18 March - 30 April

Sweet Honey in the Rock: Joanna Langford

Installations and a video work by Langford who was the 2010 University of Otago Frances Hodgkins Fellow.

Appointments



Professor **Peter Crampton** (above) as the University's Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Health Sciences. Professor Crampton was previously the Dean and Head of Campus at the University of Otago, Wellington. He also becomes the Dean of Otago's Faculty of Medicine. Professor Crampton succeeds Professor **Don Roberton**, who has retired after five years in these roles.

Professor **Hugh Campbell** to the University's new Chair in Sociology and as head of the new Department of Sociology, Gender and Social Work. Professor Campbell is a leading rural sociologist who was previously director of the University's Centre for the Study of Agriculture, Food and the Environment.

Margaret Morgan as the new director of Quality Advancement at the University. Ms Morgan was previously director of policy and programmes in the Division of Health Sciences. In December she was also re-elected as a general staff representative on the University Council.

Vice-Chancellor Professor David
Skegg and Professor Warren Tate
(Biochemistry) have been appointed
to New Zealand's newly established
Science Board. Deputy Vice-Chancellor
(Research and Enterprise) Professor
Harlene Hayne joins the new Innovation
Board. The boards will be associated with
the Ministry of Science and Innovation
and will allocate funding in their
respective areas. Professor Kurt Krause
(Biochemistry) has been appointed to the
Marsden Fund Council as convenor of the
Biomedical Sciences panel.

Achievements

The outstanding work of five Otago researchers has been recognised at the Royal Society of New Zealand's 2010 Research Honours: New Zealand's highest science and technology honour, the Rutherford Medal, was awarded to internationally renowned molecular biologist Professor **Warren Tate** (Biochemistry) for his outstanding achievements in molecular biology and molecular neuroscience (see page 10).

Professor **Frank Griffin** (Microbiology and Immunology) received the top award for achievement in technology - the Pickering Medal - for his deer disease-related research.

Dunedin Multidisciplinary Health and Development Study director Professor Richie Poulton was one of the two latest recipients of the Dame Joan Metge Medal awarded for excellence and building relationships in the social science research community. He was also recently elected as a Fellow of the Royal Society of New Zealand.

Professor **Stephen Robertson** (Women's and Children's Health) received the Health Research Council's Liley Medal, which recognises research that has made an outstanding contribution to health and medical sciences.

Professor **Keith Gordon** (Chemistry) received the New Zealand Institute of Chemistry's Maurice Wilkins Centre Prize for Chemical Science for a significant contribution to chemistry.

Emeritus Professor **Brian Robinson** (Chemistry) received a Marsden Medal from the New Zealand Association of Scientists in recognition of a lifetime of outstanding service to science.

Professor **Sally Brooker** (Chemistry) was awarded the 2011 Royal Society of Chemistry Australasian Lectureship, an award given in recognition of exceptional research.

Professor **Brett Delahunt** (Pathology and Molecular Medicine) won the

Wellington Medical Research Foundation's 50th Jubilee Medal for his distinguished achievements in medical research.

College of Education Dean Professor **Helen May** was made an Honorary Fellow of the New Zealand Educational Institute in recognition of her pioneering work in early childhood education and leadership in the sector.

Emeritus Professor Sir Alan Mark (Botany) received the 2010 Charles Fleming Award for Environmental Achievement. The award honours those who have achieved distinction in the protection, maintenance, management, improvement or understanding of the environment.

Tony Zaharic (Biochemistry) won the 2010 Otago University Students' Association Teacher of the Year award, the third time he has received the honour in four years.

Associate Professor **Catherine Day** (Biochemistry) won the New Zealand Society of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology's Life Technology Award.

Professor **David Fergusson** (below, Psychological Medicine, Christchurch) received the University's highest research honour, the Distinguished Research Medal. Professor Fergusson is the director of the acclaimed Christchurch Health and Development Study, which has closely tracked the progress of 1,265 people born in Christchurch in 1977.



Fellowships/scholarships

Department of Physics Research
Fellow Dr **Ashton Bradley** and Dr **John Reynolds** (Anatomy and Structural
Biology) have gained new, five-year
Rutherford Discovery Fellowships
to investigate ultra-cold atomic
superfluids and improving brain function,
respectively. The fellowships, which are
administered by the Royal Society of
New Zealand, have been established to
support promising early-to-mid-career

Associate Professor **Tony Poole** (below, Medicine) gained a two-year James Cook Research Fellowship allowing him to focus on investigating the crucial roles that cell structures known as primary cilia play in health and disease.



Four up-and-coming Otago health researchers were awarded four-vear Sir Charles Hercus Health Research Fellowships to assist them in completing advanced postdoctoral health research: Dr Haxby Abbott (Surgical Sciences) will investigate osteoarthritis treatments; Dr Anita Dunbier (Biochemistry) will study anti-oestrogen therapy response in breast cancer; Dr Anna Pilbrow (Medicine, Christchurch) will explore how family history contributes to susceptibility to heart disease; and Dr Shieak Tzeng (Surgery and Anaesthesia, Wellington) will study how smoking affects the regulation of blood flow in the brain.

UK study scholarship successes

Four recent Otago students have gained prestigious scholarships for postgraduate study at the University of Cambridge or the University of Oxford.



Politics graduate **Iona Mylek** (BA (Hons) 2009) (above with the Governor-General Rt Hon Sir Anand Satyanand) is one of three New Zealand candidates to be selected as a 2011 Rhodes Scholar at Oxford. Ms Mylek intends to study for a master's in global governance and diplomacy followed by a Doctor of Philosophy degree. She is particularly interested in investigating how non-governmental organisations influence efforts to eradicate global poverty at a political level.

Ross Haines, who completed a BSc (Hons) in mathematics and statistics, will undertake doctoral study at Oxford after gaining one of the three Woolf Fisher Scholarships awarded nationally this year. In his research he will use advanced statistical techniques to investigate how the English language has evolved over time.

The Rutherford Foundation last year awarded three scholarships to undertake PhD study at Cambridge, two of which went to Otago students. Chemistry graduate **Jake Howe** (BSc (Hons) 2010) and Physics student **Michael Price** will study ocean circulation and optoelectronics, respectively.

Professorial promotions

Eleven leading University of Otago academics are to be promoted to full professorships. The new professors are: Robert Aldred (Mathematics and Statistics); Tony Ballantyne (History); Margaret Baird (Microbiology and Immunology); Ewan Fordyce (Geology); Andrew Geddis (Law); Murray Rae (Theology and Religion); Sarah Romans (Psychological Medicine, Wellington); Richard Walter (Anthropology); Vernon Ward (Microbiology and Immunology); Mark Weatherall (Medicine, Wellington) and Elisabeth Wells who becomes a Research Professor (Public Health and General Practice, Christchurch).

New Year Honours

Dame of the New Zealand Order of Merit (DNZM): **Alison Holst**, for services to the food industry.

Companion of the New Zealand Order of Merit (CNZM): Dr **Semisi Ma'ai'i**, for services to the Samoan community.

Officer of the New Zealand Order of Merit (ONZM): Dr Warren Bell, for services to forensic science; John Holdsworth, for services to business and the community; Associate Professor John Ormiston, for services to medicine; Associate Professor Jean-Claude Theis, for services to medicine.

Member of the New Zealand Order of Merit (MNZM): Lindsay Brown, for services to the community; Associate Professor John Carter, for services to the community; Dr Edward Gane, for services to medicine; Dr Rex Thomson, for services to education and sport.

The Queen's Service Medal (QSM): Lois Aitkenhead, for services to the community; Margaret Arnold, for services to women and the community; Alison Broad, for services to the community, Dr Joe Williams, for services to the Cook Islands community.

A word from the Head

The beginning of a new year is always a busy time in the Alumni Relations Office as planning gets underway for the upcoming alumni events programme. These occasions are a very important aspect of our work as they provide not only a great opportunity to celebrate Otago links, but also to talk about aspects of the life of the University that continue to have meaning for alumni long after graduation.

One topic that always arouses interest is the efforts made by the University to encourage able young people to begin tertiary studies and to succeed through to graduation. One such initiative is the Otago University Advanced School Sciences Academy, through which students selected from small, rural and low-decile schools come to Otago to join in activities and lectures designed to strengthen their learning prior to enrolling at university. Many alumni have commented favourably on this programme as an attempt to provide a level playing field for students from schools where science may be underresourced.

Feedback from alumni has also indicated a strong desire to see a consideration of equity introduced into the terms of the scholarship funded by donors to the Alumni Appeal. In response to this, approval is being sought for an amendment to the regulations to include deserving students from low-decile schools who, without financial support, may struggle to continue on to tertiary study.

Alumni recognise that Otago gave them the tools to build successful lives and careers and it is a deeply-held belief that the same advantages should be accessible to succeeding generations, whatever their background.

Annual Appeal

Once again Otago alumni have shown their generosity with an outstanding response to the 2010 Alumni Appeal, launched in October. As in previous years, donors were able to choose to support scholarships for students beginning their first year of study, or one of four cutting-edge research projects shedding light on some pressing contemporary issues: peace and conflict, the seismic cycle of the Alpine Fault, dental health, and how to develop innovative businesses that will make an effective contribution to the New Zealand economy.

For the first time, more than half the alumni population were sent the Appeal material by email. This has proved effective, enabling us to make savings in printing and postage costs as well as reducing our carbon footprint. Alumni have appreciated the alternative to receiving paper copies and the response rate has reflected their approval. A sincere thank you from the University to all who have contributed.

Georgina Beasley, a 2010 Alumni Scholar: "The Alumni Scholarship has



opportunity to come to Otago where I have had a simply amazing year. I cannot thank the donors

given me the

strongly enough for their generous support ... This has been a hugely beneficial learning curve for me."

For further information visit www.alumni.otago.ac.nz/supportotago



Alison Finigan: Head of Alumni Relations

Fundraising networks

The University's interests in the US, UK and Malaysia are promoted by three formally-constituted alumni boards or foundations, the members of which dedicate long hours to raising Otago's profile abroad. The University is grateful to these alumni volunteers for their generosity in devoting time and effort to supporting their alma mater in New Zealand.

The University of Otago in America, Inc comprises a board of 10 alumni committed to raising funds to support scholarships and research. The UOA, Inc is a qualified tax-exempt organisation under the US Internal Revenue Service, so all donations are tax deductible.

In October last year the board approved seven grant proposals from Otago for funds totalling over \$US90,000, raised from US donations received throughout 2010. Projects supported include scholarships for undergraduate students from low-decile schools, projects in geology, physical education and energy management, and travel awards for students accepted for study at US partner universities under the Otago Global Exchange programme. This generous allocation will make a significant difference in key areas of Otago activities.

Further fundraising is underway, with the launch in December of the first Alumni of the University of Otago in America, Inc Appeal campaign. The board's annual appeal will raise awareness of, and support for, the University.

Two of the Board's stalwarts, Allan Portis and Andrew Howells, stepped down in June and were replaced by Dr Annmarie Oien and Chris White, who are profiled in the Alumni News column on page 47. The University thanks Allan and Andrew for their outstanding contribution to the work of the board. Contact: Jennifer Schreiber, Secretary 157 South Crescent Drive, Beverly Hills, CA 90212 Tel 310-859-1203 Cell 310-867-3016 Email jrschrei@pacbell.net

The Otago University Trust UK

provides a tax-effective vehicle for Otago supporters living in the United Kingdom. The trust is registered as a charity with Inland Revenue, enabling it to reclaim tax on contributions made by UK taxpayers. The Charities Commission oversees the trust.

The three trustees - Sir Paul Beresford, Dr Neville Bain and John Zinzan – are part of a larger committee made up of Otago alumni dedicated to supporting research and scholarships at Otago, and promoting the University's interests among alumni resident in the UK. The committee regularly organises special events for alumni to celebrate their Otago links. These events are always very well attended and usually take place in interesting and historic locations, such as the State Rooms of the Speaker's House in the House of Commons, which was the venue for the 2010 London Alumni function.

The trust also assists the University in the administration of the UK Alumni Appeal and last year transferred a sum of £59,530 being the proceeds from the Appeal and other trust activities. Thanks to the generosity of UK alumni, funding for research and scholarships has been given a significant boost, notably with

the establishment of a new scholarship to support outstanding students from Southland Boys' and Southland Girls' High Schools to study science at Otago. The Elman and Alfred Poole Scholarship was made possible by a very generous donation from UK-based Southlander Dr Elman Poole.

Contact: Dr Neville Bain High Trees Weybridge, KT13 OJX Tel 01932 856451

The University of Otago Foundation for Malaysia was established in 2002 to provide support for the University's activities related to Malaysia and Malaysian students studying at Otago. The foundation also provides opportunities for alumni to interact with the University. Foundation members are honoured guests at Otago alumni functions held regularly in Malaysia and provide valuable liaison services in the organisation of these events.

At the annual general meeting of the foundation in Kuala Lumpur in 2008, members proposed the establishment of a prize to be awarded annually to a Malaysian student who has made an outstanding contribution to the wellbeing of Malaysian students on campus. The prize was awarded in 2010 to Tuang Wern Bock, the two-term president of the Otago Malaysian Students' Association, whose record of service to her fellow students made her a very worthy recipient.

Contact:
Ong & Wong Management Accountants
Suite C6-5, 6th Floor
Megan Avenue II
12, Jalan Yap Kwan Seng
50450 Kuala Lumpur

Court of Convocation Election

Thank you to all those alumni who voted in the recent Court of Convocation election. We extend our congratulations to Oke Blaikie, LLB (Otago, 1968), Lorraine Isaacs, BA (Otago, 1966), MA (Otago, 1967) and Michael Sidey, BCom (Otago, 1973), who have been re-elected as the court's representatives on the Council of the University for the next four years. They will be part of a team who worktogether in the governance of the University.



Oke Blaikie is a retired judge who currently lives in Nelson. He was first elected as a Court of Convocation representative in 2006.



Lorraine Isaacs is a Dunedin-based freelance television producer. She has served as a Court of Convocation representative since



Michael Sidey is an investment banker who currently lives in Christchurch. He was first elected as a Court of Convocation representative in 2004.

Further information about the Court of Convocation can be found at www.alumni.otago.ac.nz/CourtofConvocation

Alumni events 2010



Invercargill







Upcoming events

Preventive and Social Medicine 125th anniversary celebrations and conferences, 4-6 March

For further information please go to http://dnmeds.otago.ac.nz/departments/ psm/125yr_celebrations/index.html

Rugby World Cup School of **Physical Education events**

A Technologies in Sport Exhibition will be hosted by the School of Physical Education in conjunction with the Technologies in Sport: Performance, Bodies and Ethics Symposium and international rugby games being played in Dunedin during September and October 2011. A website publicising this community event will go live in March.

Aguinas College jubilee reunion, 23-25 September 2011

Register your interest at alumni@otago.ac.nz

Dominican Hall reunion, September

Please email alumni@otago.ac.nz for more information.





Hayward College 21st anniversary, 27-29 January 2012

Register your interest at alumni@otago.ac.nz

University of Otago, Christchurch 40th anniversary, February 2012

For further information, telephone 03 364 0038, or email virginia.irvine@otago.ac.nz











Reunions

BDS Class of 1961

21– 23 March 2011, Dunedin Contact Henry Zelas *henzel@es.co.nz*

MB ChB Class of 1961

29 April–1 May 2011, Napier Contact Brian Linehan *bjl@tranmere.co.nz*

MB ChB Class of 1962

6–9 March 2012, Queenstown Contact Allan *allan.viv@paradise.net.nz*

MB ChB Class of 1972

30 March–1 April 2012, Nelson Contact Karen McLean karen@encore-events.net.nz

MB ChB Class of 1997

October 2012, Dunedin Contact Rochelle Phipps rochelle.phipps@gmail.com

For assistance in organising reunions contact Lizzy Lukeman at 64 3 479 8487 or email *lizzy.lukeman@otago.ac.nz*

For information about regional alumni networks in your area visit the Alumni and Friends website www.alumni.otago.ac.nz/regionalgroup

Alumni news delivered via RSS feed

To subscribe to the Alumni and Friends News RSS feeds visit www.alumni.otago. ac.nz/alumninews and click the orange RSS icon located beside the heading.

Alumni events 2011

This year Alumni events will be held in:

Oamaru

Timaru

Palmerston North

Melbourne

Sydney

Malaysia (tbc)

Toronto

USA

London

Confirmed dates will be posted on the Alumni and Friends website www.alumni.otago.ac.nz/Page.aspx?pid=516

Alumni news

Brendan Donovan - filmmaker

BA (Political Studies, 1988) BCom (Information Science, 1989)

Brendan Donovan's first feature film, the comedy/drama, *The Hopes and Dreams of Gazza Snell*, was released nationwide in December last year. An unusual coming-of-age story, the film stars Robyn Malcolm and William McInnes and was greeted with an enthusiastic pre-release press response. View the trailer for the film at www.gazzasnell.com

Since graduating in 1990, Brendan worked in graphic design in Wellington, then in the advertising industry in New York. While there he directed commercials and ventured into filmmaking. On returning home in 2002, he directed the critically-acclaimed television drama series, *The Insider's Guide to Happiness*, and the follow-up, *The Insider's Guide to Love*, for which he won a Qantas Award for Best Drama Direction. In 2008 he won a second Qantas Award for directing *Aftershock*, a tele-film about an earthquake hitting Wellington.

Brendan has returned to Otago in recent years to address design students.

Judith Mikami

BA (Political Studies, 1993) BCom (Marketing, 1993) DipGrad (Design, 1994)

Judith Mikami, who lives in Okayama, Japan, was recently appointed as chairperson and CEO of KEA Japan Ltd. KEA – or Kiwi Expatriates Abroad – is a global organisation of more than 25,000 members, facilitating networking opportunities for social and business purposes amongst Kiwis living offshore. Judith is keen to make contact with Otago alumni living in Japan.

Email judith@keanewzealand.com

As well as being the CEO of Kea Japan Ltd, Judith publishes a magazine, Furusato Ichiban - Bringing the Best



THE UNIVERSITY OF OTAGO MAGAZINE IS AVAILABLE ONLINE AT:

www.otago.ac.nz/news/otagomagazine/

and is sent – by post or email – to Otago alumni and friends wherever they are in the world.

Please email database.alumni@otago.ac.nz

- to update or change delivery address
- to read the Magazine and other alumni communications electronically
- to receive an email notification when a new issue of the Magazine is placed online
- to receive just one "household" copy of the Magazine

Hometowns in Japan to You, and hosts a radio show.

Dr Annmarie Oien

BSc (Hons) (Physics, 1990) PhD (Physics, 1996)

Dr Annmarie Oien, an expert in the Lockheed Martin Corporation for Apollo Root Cause Analysis (RCA), was appointed to the board of the University of Otago in America, Inc in June 2010. At Lockheed Martin, Annmarie is responsible for facilitating high-impact Apollo RCA events, mentoring others for event facilitation, advising on RCA tool selection for the problem at hand and developing tools to assist facilitators in events.

The University of Otago in America, Inc is delighted to welcome Annmarie Oien to the board and members look forward to working with her on projects related to supporting Otago.

Chris White

BCom (Economics, 1996)

Chris White, elected to the University of Otago in America, Inc board in June 2010, is an Otago graduate who has been putting his finance skills to work in the US for the last 10 years. He is a founding member of Greenstone Value Opportunity Fund (GVOF), a fundamental long/short hedge fund that invests in deep value and distressed securities.

Of his new role on the UOA, Inc board, Chris says, "I feel very fortunate to have had help from friendships formed at Otago University. It's rewarding now to be able to give back through the UOA."

Dr Daniel Wilson

PhD (Biochemistry, 1999)

In 2010 Dr Daniel Wilson was one of 21 young researchers to be awarded the European Molecular Biology Organization (EMBO) Young Investigator Award. Daniel heads a junior research group at the Gene Center (University of Munich, Germany) investigating how the synthesis of proteins in the cell is regulated. The EMBO Young Investigator Award provides €15,000 per year, in addition to the benefit of services and resources, including access to an extensive network of other EMBO researchers and attendance at specific scientific meetings and workshops.

Dr Nick Fancourt

MB ChB (2007)

Dr Nick Fancourt has been selected for an International Fulbright Science and Technology Award to complete a PhD in the United States. He aims to study towards improving health and development outcomes for children from New Zealand and abroad, particularly those from low socio-economic backgrounds.

Otago Medal for Alumni Service



Professor Murray Brennan (above right, BSc (1962); MB ChB (1964); MD ChM (1983); Hon DSc (1997)) was awarded the University of Otago Medal for Outstanding Alumni Service by the Vice-Chancellor, Professor David Skegg, at the 2010 US alumni function. Professor Brennan, one of the world's most respected medical professionals who, until recently, chaired the Department of Surgery at the Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center in New York City, is a foundation member of the board of the University of Otago in America, Inc and has served as its president since 2008. He was awarded the medal in recognition of his long record of service to the University. An inspirational leader, he has worked tirelessly to foster links between the diverse groups of Otago alumni living in the US.

Keep in touch

Address for correspondence

Development and Alumni Relations Office University of Otago PO Box 56 Dunedin 9054 Physical address

Alumni House 103 St David Street Dunedin Tel 64 3 479 4516 Fax 64 3 479 6522 Email alumni@otago.ac.nz Web www.alumni.otago.ac.nz

Alumni story

Postgrad to post-conflict

Mark Wolfsbauer completed an assignment last year with Volunteer Service Abroad (VSA) in Bougainville, an autonomous region in Papua New Guinea that is recovering from over 10 years of conflict. In this article he explains how the University of Otago was instrumental in helping him to achieve his goal of working in post-conflict environments.

When I first began drafting this article I was sitting on my deck in Buka, Bougainville, Papua New Guinea, surrounded by lush tropical vegetation and an expansive view of the Pacific Ocean. I had been posted there through Volunteer Service Abroad to work with the Division of Planning as a policy and planning adviser, providing support to it and other divisions in the Autonomous Bougainville Government.

My work in Bougainville primarily concerned the provision of strategic advice on Bougainville's development priorities. As part of this work I conducted a series of public forums throughout Bougainville to canvass the public's opinions on restoration and development in Bougainville. These comments, and the community's ideas on how to address them, were presented in a

report to the Autonomous Bougainville House of Representatives in March 2010. This same report also influenced advice to the incoming government on Bougainville's development priorities for the period 2011–2015.

It was an exciting time to be in Bougainville and I really enjoyed my role. The job represented, for me, the final achievement of a long-term goal to lend a hand in post-conflict regions. I would like to share two stories on how the University of Otago helped me get here.

Firstly to the decision about where to get my tertiary education. A friend of mine visited Dunedin in 1999 to check out what it was like to study at the University of Otago. While he was there he took the opportunity to watch the Highlanders get amongst it at Carisbrook. In the midst of a typically raucous game, a full can of Speight's took flight and connected with his head.

The can left quite an impression on him because he came back to Napier and used that story to convince me that we should both enrol for the year 2000 ... and thus began five years at the University of Otago.

Coming forward to 2003, I found myself sitting in front of the Political Studies Department desk during Orientation Week, trying to convince the staff there that I needed their postgraduate qualifications in order to get where I was going. Problem was I had picked a Commerce degree as a back-up plan and had only one graduate political studies paper under my belt. But, as luck would have it, the person sitting behind the desk was the then head of the department, Professor Marian Simms.

To this day I am grateful to Professor Simms for taking the time to listen to me and for seeing that this was a means to an end. Despite having only just taken up her post as head of department, she went into bat for a complete stranger and convinced the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Humanities) to make an exception.

I am proud to say that I did not waste this opportunity. Two years later I graduated with a Master of Arts degree which led to a position as a policy analyst with the Ministry of Education and eventually my role in Bougainville.

I would like to thank the staff at the University of Otago's Political Studies Department and especially Professor Marian Simms for going against the grain and giving me an opportunity to prove myself. I honestly believe that if I hadn't been given that chance, I would not be here now witnessing the shaping of Bougainville's future.

Ka pai.



Otago alumnus Mark Wolfsbauer worked as a policy and planning adviser in Bougainville, consulting on development priorities for 2011-2015. Location: Carteret Islands.



... the OUSA presidents?



Alexander Aitken (1919-1920)

The Otago University Students' Association (OUSA) was formed in 1890 with William Spencer, already holding an MA and BSc, elected the first president. Every year since then Otago students have chosen one from amongst their numbers to represent them. But what has happened to some of these often high profile, sometimes controversial, OUSA presidents since leaving the University?

Sir Peter Buck (Te Rangi Hiroa) (president 1903) became a doctor, Member of Parliament and anthropologist of world renown. He was the University's first Māori graduate and the first New Zealand-trained Māori medical doctor (featured in the *Otago Magazine* issue 8, June 2004).

As well as being a Rhodes scholar **Colin Gilray** (1907) was an outstanding athlete. He was a stalwart of Otago rugby who had made himself unavailable for the All Blacks' first tour of the UK, but later played in a test match against Australia.



Philippe Sidney (Sid) Cabot (1925-27)

He won two Oxford blues and four caps for Scotland. During War World I he was awarded the Military Cross. In civilian life, he initially practised law, but found his niche in education, becoming the headmaster of Dunedin's John McGlashan College and later Scotch College, Melbourne. He also held the positions of Deputy Chancellor and Chancellor of Melbourne University 1954–58.

A veteran of the Gallipoli landing and Battle of the Somme, **Alexander Aitken** (1919–1920) became the greatest mathematician of his era, possessing an astonishing computational brain. In a psychological test in England in the 1920s, he is reputed to have taken just 30 seconds to multiply 987,654,321 by 123,456,789 and produce the correct answer*. After leaving University he taught at Otago Boys' High School then completed a PhD at Edinburgh University, where he remained. He wrote several books and became a

(* 121,932,631,112,635,269)



Wilfred (Mick) Borrie (1938)

mentor to a number of other renowned mathematicians.

Philippe Sidney (Sid) Cabot (1925-27) also played one test for the All Blacks – in 1921. He went on to found University Sport New Zealand and the New Zealand University Students' Association. He became a clinical psychologist and later had his own management consultancy firm in London. At the time of his death in 1998 he was the oldest living All Black.

Another president featuring in sporting legend was William Hawksworth (1934) who was a wicketkeeper for the Otago cricket team. With Roger Blunt, he still holds the New Zealand first-class record for the last wicket –184 runs – against Canterbury in the 1932–33 season.

Douglas Kennedy (1937) was New Zealand's Director-General of Health at the time of his death in 1972 and his OUSA successor, **Wilfred (Mick) Borrie** (1938), became an Emeritus Professor of

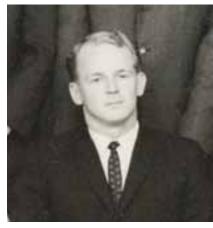


Frank Holmes (1947)

the Australian National University and recognised as one of the world's leading demographers.

Frank Holmes (1947) pursued a distinguished career as an economist and academic. He held professorial positions at Victoria University Wellington, chaired a number of advisory councils including the New Zealand Planning Council, the New Zealand Council for Educational Research and the Asia 2000 Foundation, and held several prominent directorships. In 1975 he was knighted for services to economics and education, was granted an honorary Doctor of Laws degree from the University of Otago in 1997 and an Honorary Doctor of Commerce from VUW in 2004.

Miles Hursthouse (1949) completed his medical degree in 1950 and became a GP in Nelson, also practising anaesthetics and obstetrics. In the mid 1960s – and hankering for a change – he travelled to Australia to undertake postgraduate study and was admitted to the then new Australasian College of Dermatology. He returned to Nelson to set up practice as a dermatologist and a part-time appointment at Nelson Hospital, retiring in 1989.



Murray Brennan (1964)

After graduating from Otago, Graeme Rea (1959) spent two years at Oxford as a Rhodes Scholar. Returning to New Zealand, he completed a law degree at Canterbury University. Five years in private law practice in Christchurch was followed by positions with the Asian Development Bank in Manila, the International Monetary Fund in Washington DC, and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, which was set up in London after the collapse of the Soviet Union to help the countries of Eastern Europe and Central Asia to develop market economies. He has now retired and lives in Auckland.

US-based cancer surgeon Dr Murray Brennan (1964) has also had a distinguished career (*Otago Magazine* issue 24, October 2009). Among his many achievements, he is a former president of the American Surgical Association, has been awarded the American College of Surgeons' Distinguished Service Award and was granted an Honorary Doctor of Science degree by the University of Otago in 1997. He is now president of the University in Otago in America, Inc and has recently been awarded the Otago Medal for Outstanding Alumni Service.



Bruce Robertson (1968)

Paddy Finnigan (1967) practises law in Auckland and, together with now Judge Phil Recordon, brought the High Court case (Finnigan & Recordon vs NZRFU Inc) that stopped the All Blacks' planned 1985 tour of South Africa.

Bruce Robertson (1968) practised law in Dunedin, is a former president of the New Zealand Law Commission, Judge of New Zealand's High Court and recently retired as from the Court of Appeal. He served on the University of Otago Council for 19 years and, in 1990, he was granted an Honorary Doctor of Laws. In 2010 he was made a Knight Companion of the New Zealand Order of Merit (*Otago Magazine* issue 26, June 2010).

Auckland-based barrister and mediator **Nigel Dunlop** (1975) is a past president of the Canterbury District Law Society and Council member of the New Zealand Law Society. He chairs a number of tribunals, mediates for statutory bodies including the Health and Disability Commissioner and Department of Building and Housing ("leaky homes"), and undertakes investigations in the public sector.

Also a lawyer, **Alistair Broad** (1976) practised commercial law in Dunedin



Philip Chronican (1978)

before working with Howard Paterson in farming, commercial property, hotels and biotechnology. He is now in business on his own account and managing the Paterson estate assets.

Philip Chronican (1978) has pursued an outstanding career in banking and is currently the ANZ Banking Group's CEO, Australia. Prior to that he held senior positions within the Westpac Banking Corporation.

Ross Blanch (1986–87) completed a BA in History. Following some time with the Otago Museum and a brief foray into the world of commercial radio, he has returned to the OUSA where he manages the association's recreation facilities.

Jon Doig (1988) was the first Phys Ed School graduate to be elected president. He has since worked for the Hillary Commission, sportscotland (Scotland's national agency for sport) and is currently the chief executive of the Commonwealth Games Council for Scotland Ltd, based at the University of Stirling.

Based in Europe, **Helen Jamieson** (1991) is pursuing a theatre and digital performance career, and is the project manager of UpStage, a web-based



Kirsty Graham (1992)

platform for cyberformance (live online performance).

Following her term as OUSA president, **Kirsty Graham** (1992) was elected NZUSA president. She then joined the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade and has had two diplomatic postings abroad: to Washington DC and as New Zealand's deputy permanent representative to the United Nations. She is currently on leave from MFAT to take up a position as senior director for international policy at Pfizer Inc's corporate headquarters in New York City.

Grant Robertson (1993) also became co-president of the NZUSA and is now the Labour Member of Parliament for Wellington Central, winning his seat in the 2008 elections. He previously held positions within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade and the University of Otago. He was also an adviser to former Prime Minister Helen Clark and former Minister for the Environment Marian Hobbs.

After working in the environmental team of a large London law firm, **Rachel Brooking** (1997) took up a position with New Zealand's Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment, and



Ayesha Verrall (2001)

is currently on maternity leave from her position as an associate of the Dunedin firm Anderson Lloyd Lawyers.

Ayesha Verrall (2001) is training in infectious diseases with the Royal Australasian College of Physicians. Since leaving Dunedin, she has worked at Wellington Hospital and with the Housing and Health Research Programme (University of Otago, Wellington). She has recently completed a Diploma in Tropical Medicine and Hygiene in Peru and is currently living in New York undertaking research with Amnesty International USA. Later this year she plans to move to Singapore to take up a post as senior fellow at National University Hospital.

Since leaving Otago **Andrew Cushen** (2004) has completed an MA (Hons) at Auckland University and is now working in the public policy team at Vodafone.

Renee Heal (2007) is based in Wellington, working as a Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade adviser to the Minister of Trade and Minister Responsible for International Climate Change Negotiations. In December she will take up a diplomatic posting to Buenos Aires, Argentina.

