

OFF | CAMPUS

VOLUME 15 ISSUE 1 MARCH 2010

THE MAGAZINE OF MASSEY UNIVERSITY'S EXTRAMURAL STUDENTS' SOCIETY

Pressure at the Door

President Ralph Springett on the ramifications of the Tertiary Education Strategy

Future Directions

William Muirhead chats with Vice-Chancellor Steve Maharey about Massey's response.

Congratulations EXMSS Scholars

EXMSS Shuttle Voucher



WELCOME

To all our new and returning students, we wish you all the best for the year ahead. 2010 marks 50 years of distance learning at Massey University, where we are committed to providing an environment to allow you to discover and excel.

If you have any questions or want to find out more about what's on offer here at Massey email: contact@massey.ac.nz

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www.massey.ac.nz

Te Kunenga ki Pūrehuroa



MASSEY UNIVERSITY



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Earning and Learning

Hello and welcome to the first edition of *Off Campus* for the year. There are a few changes in 2010. Budgetary changes mean we are now publishing *Off Campus* at the beginning of each semester instead of quarterly. There are changes at Massey too. Funding constraints have led to a new hardline with enrolment dates and threats to open access; the traditional door to university for mature students.

I have always advocated for life-long learning. It is a simple fact of living and working in the modern age that we NEED to learn throughout life to maintain relevant skills and knowledge. The implication of the recent Tertiary Education Strategy that we should all have our studies out of the way by age 25 is short-sighted and uninformed.

I started work with the local county council in 1984. My calculator was a mechanical adding machine and there was only one computer screen (green) in our large office. Files were

collections of paper and they were stored on shelves in folders (made of cardboard).

Twenty-six years later the working world is a vastly different place and I need an entirely different subset of skills to maintain my employability. The continual development of technologies and adaptations of economies mean that the employment skills and qualifications we acquire today may well be redundant in another twenty-six years. Earning and learning have always been close bedmates.

Despite intimations of gloom, I would like to congratulate you on your decision to study. What better thing can you do for yourself? Dieting never works and exercise only leads to more exercise but the acquisition of knowledge leads to permanent benefits. Once your eyes have been opened, your perspectives will never be the same.

I'm interested to see Massey's roll-out of a pilot digital delivery option in 2010 (p17). What do you think of the prospect of read-

ing your study notes on a screen? Do you applaud the saving of trees or do you prefer paper? *Off Campus* will be following up the pilot's findings in the July issue but I would also be interested to know (and print) what you think.

2010 marks 50 years of the extramural mode of delivery. The first extramurals were education students; teachers having been drafted into schools after the war to accommodate the baby boom needed to upskill (while teaching) and so extramural studies were born. Interestingly one of the early battles EXMSS waged was the extension of extramural studies to 300 level. Many academics of the time distrusted distance education and were uncomfortable granting degrees to students they might never meet. So while students could study 100 and 200 level papers it was not until the mid-70's that they could actually complete their degree extramurally.

Congratulations for the first 50 years, Massey and here's to the next!



Calling all Extramural Musicians



Are you a star wanting to be discovered? This could be the opportunity you were waiting for! The Extramural Students' Society and Massey University are calling for auditions from prospective musical performers for the upcoming Graduation ceremonies to be held in Palmerston North, May 10-14th.

Two acts are required for three performances over two days. In return they will receive \$150 per performance, funding for travel costs, if they live outside Palmerston North, accommodation and meals.

Prospective performers are invited to send a video of (or link to) of their act (no more than 5 minutes duration), along with bio or CV to Murray Kirk at murray@exmss.org.nz.

Notice of Special General Meeting

All EXMSS members are warmly welcomed to the EXMSS Special General Meeting. The meeting will be held on Wednesday 7 April 2010 at 12pm in the Student Lounge of the Students' Centre building at Massey University, Palmerston North. Lunch will be provided.

In accordance with the EXMSS Constitution, section 6, subclause (r), the following notice of proposed change to EXMSS constitution: Cultural Object – Constitutional Change

Following our April 2009 meeting it was decided that the following Object would be suitable for inclusion in our constitution.

To maintain a commitment to honour and affirm the principles of Te Tiriti o Waitangi in all activities of the Society in protection and in partnership with Maori.

Recommendation:

That the EXMSS executive ratify the Object and forward it to the agenda of the 2010 AGM for inclusion in the constitution.

Any enquiries regarding the meeting may be directed to Thérèse McCrea at the EXMSS office. Call 0508 439677 ext 81184 or email Therese@exmss.org.nz.

NZ Federation of Graduate Women: Hawke's Bay Branch

The Hawke's Bay Branch of the NZFGW offers a small study award to assist women undertaking extramural study towards a first degree.

Applicants for the award must:

- be women, resident in the Hawke's Bay region,
- have completed at least one year's successful extramural study,
- apply on the application form provided,
- and submit a completed hard copy of the application form by Thursday 15 April 2010.

The award is \$200–\$300. Successful study means having already passed a minimum of two 100 level papers.

The application form is available from the EXMSS office or may be downloaded from the EXMSS website.

Up until 14 March 2010, any enquiries about the above grant or the application process can be made to:

Rosalie Sutherland
Ph. 06 835 0761
roselyn@xtra.co.nz

QUICK QUIZ:

- 1 What country has borders with Oman and Saudi Arabia?
- 2 Where in the human body would you find the mandible?
- 3 What is the capital of Haiti?
- 4 Who is the new Minister of Tertiary Education?
- 5 In rugby, what number is worn by the openside flanker?
- 6 What is the main ingredient of the cocktail known as a Black Russian?
- 7 The 1978 film *Midnight Express* was set in what country?
- 8 What (still active) rock band formed in 1973?
- 9 Who is the President of Venezuela?
- 10 Who wrote *The Hunting Of The Snark*?

ANSWERS: 1 Yemen 2 In the face. It is the jaw bone 3 Port-au-Prince 4 Steven Joyce. He has replaced Anne Tolley 5 7 6 Vodka 7 Turkey 8 AC/DC 9 Hugo Chavez 10 Lewis Carroll

LETTERS AND CONTRIBUTIONS ARE WELCOME

Send to:

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Palmerston North 4442

Email: Murray@exmss.org.nz

Deadline next issue: 28th June 2010

Fifty for 50 Short Short Story Competition Winners

Over the Summer Semester, EXMSS ran a Fifty for 50 short story competition to celebrate Massey University's 50 years of extramural study in 2010. EXMSS events coordinator Thérèse McCrea described the response as very good with over 40 entries received, despite the summer holidays.

The three winners each receive a 12-month subscription with Advantage Computers' 'Worry Free Online Backup' service. The first placegetter also receives a gift pack to the value of \$200. Second and third placegetters receive book vouchers to the value of \$80 and \$50 respectively.

The entries were judged by Dr Thom Conroy, lecturer in Creative Writing in the School of English and Media Studies at Massey University. Dr Conroy is the 2009 People's Choice Winner of the Sunday Star Times Short Story Competition and a recipient of the Katherine Anne Porter Prize in Fiction. His short stories have appeared in Sport, Landfall, Kenyon Review Online, and the New England Review.

Congratulations to the following three winning entries (with Dr Conroy's comments).

FIRST PLACE

The Writer's Confession
by Rean Fadyl

My new story and me sat on the back step sharing a cigarette. As we watched the sun dip down behind the Waitakeres, my story explained the origins of her name. Her voice, the smoke, the fading light were just perfect. But I felt guilty because I knew her end.

This story's blend of lyricism and quiet metafiction made for a gentle yet startling read. The Writer's Confession took on genuine emotion in a smart way without over-reaching: a perfect balance.

SECOND PLACE

JETLAG
by Marama Salsano

On my first day in Scotland, I prepared a hangi; peeled spuds, chopped cabbage, and text Mum for her steamed pudding recipe. Down by the Loch, I lounged alongside other Kiwi meatworkers, NZ-Scottish Association members, and the curious public. Together, we drank beer, ate, and sang *Whakaaria Mai* to bagpipes.

JETLAG impressed me as a story that presented a unique and precisely rendered moment of cross-cultural harmony.



THIRD PLACE

The Big Day
by Wendi Langman

Exam day. I had completed the preparation exercises, but nothing could have prepared me for this. Approaching the final phase I urged myself "just one last push!" Moments later the midwife claimed triumphantly "It's a girl!" I smiled. A beautiful baby and an aegrotat pass. All in a day's work.

This story's surprising mix of two very different sorts of triumph captured something essential about the challenges and the rewards of extramural student life.

All entries have also been published on the EXMSS website, exmss.org.



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Library Help

Welcome to the Library. This semester we have a revamped web page – 'The Library for Extramural Students' – to help you with getting the books, articles and other material you need for your study. This page has links to all the key Library information you'll need for studying by distance. You can find it on the Library home page under 'The Library for' – you might find other 'Library for' pages useful too, particularly those for undergraduates and postgraduates.

If you need specific course-related items, you can request them online, by email or phone. Books will be couriered to you free of charge, including a freepost label for their return. Note that we've finally had to increase the fines this year (now 30c per day/\$3.00 for short-term or recalled books) so please login to MyLibrary to keep an eye on your due dates – we'll email reminders too. Print journal articles are photocopied and posted to you. You can check your eligibility for the Distance Library Service and other details on 'The Library for Extramural Students' page.

We can also help when you need to find further information on an assignment topic. You now have full access via the internet to all the same searching tools as we do, so you can choose the most relevant material for your assignment. Many journal articles and some books are also available in full text online, so you can read them immediately instead of waiting for us to send them out. Our 'How to Find' pages show you how to get started with a search, with short video demonstrations to set you on the right track. Librarians are also on hand if you need help with your searching. We'll talk you through the steps of getting to the relevant information.

If you're studying overseas or have other special circumstances (such as no internet access), please get in touch with us – we can make arrangements to suit your situation.

If you need help, or would like to give us feedback on 'The Library for Extramural Students' page, please contact us on library@massey.ac.nz (subject line 'webpage feedback' if applicable) or phone 0800 MASSEY (0800 627 739) and ask for the Library.



Joy Green, Tutor, School of English and Media Studies

What do you teach?

Creative Writing, Academic Writing, Creative Processes, Communication in the Sciences and occasional drama papers

Why are you interested in these areas?

Because I think they are important; they are all concerned with communicating something effectively, whether in an academic, professional or creative context, and since I believe many – if not most – of the world's problems have their roots in the inability to communicate, what could be more significant than giving people the tools to overcome that inability?

What are you researching now?

I'm working on my thesis, which looks into the elements that influence the pulling together of a collection of poetry – thematic connection, the kinds decisions that influence what is included and excluded, and how individual creative pieces can be tied together to create a cohesive, emotionally affecting and meaningful whole.

What's the best thing about being an academic?

Not having to wear a suit and high heels to work is appealing. More seriously, though, I get a greater sense of purpose and achievement working in academia than I found in my corner of the corporate world. More than anything, though, it's energizing being the conduit through which students 'get it', where 'it' is the thing I'm most passionate about.

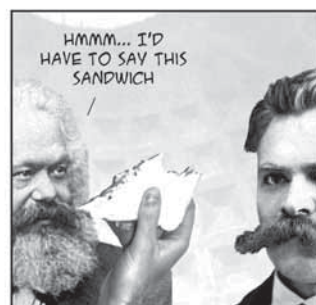
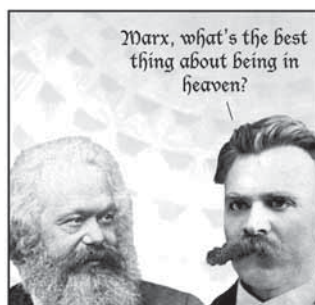
What's the worst thing?

Marking, and the way it leers at you from your desk and reminds you it needs to be done NOW.

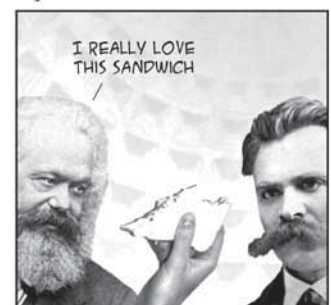
What are extramurals like to teach?

Eager is the word that springs most instantly to mind; they take control of their own learning and aren't afraid of demanding everything they need from their tutors to facilitate that learning – as they should.

DEAD PHILOSOPHERS IN HEAVEN



By Matt Russell & Nick Gibb



THIS WEEK: NEITZSCHE AND MARX DRIFT APART

Future Directions

By William Muirhead

The Government's closing the coffers and universities are facing swelling enrolment numbers with no extra funding with which to feed or clothe them. William Muirhead sat down with Massey Vice Chancellor Steve Maharey to discuss Massey's response to the dawning of a new tertiary era and how it would affect our extramural population.

Until 1990 or so, universities were funded by governmental block payments, requested by university councils every three years or so and happily supplied by a series of largely uninterested Governments – a funding method that one can view either as sweetly archaic or as an example of shameful socialist largesse. Then, under 1991's National Government, the infamous “bums-on-seats” approach was introduced, which put the onus on universities to support more and more of their own weight by snatching up as many Equivalent Full Time status (EFT) enrolments as possible.

What's more, because some seats are bigger than others, there was also incentive to enrol more heavily in some (cheaper) programmes than others. And this Pokemon approach to managing enrolments (“School of Accountancy – I choose you!”) led to what current Massey Vice Chancellor Steve Maharey describes as a “very perverse education system”. It was a beautiful time of open enrolment and hysterical marketing initiatives.

Well, all that's about to change again, but not because the Government is seeking to shift the burden of university back to itself (i.e. the taxpayer) – the inverse, in fact. In accord with last year's Budget, which capped future university funding at current levels, regardless of burgeoning enrolment numbers and the subsequent demand for additional resources, staff and infrastructure, the recently published 2010-2015 Tertiary Education Strategy makes it perfectly clear that, from here on in, universities are expected to fend for themselves more than ever.

The impact to you, the student? Well, it's going to be tougher to get into courses and easier to be kicked out – technically,

“excluded” – from them. Enrolment “closing dates”, a term which for years has been highly euphemistic, now means what it says. Students who have spent years enrolling a few days late with no particular concern have been finding out they're now too late to study in semester one. And the “Unsatisfactory Academic Progress Regulations” (<http://Tinyurl.com/ydmabgt>) – which govern college and university exclusions – will, after many years of erratic observation, be rigorously monitored and acted upon.

Has Massey been diligent in informing students that the winds of change are shifting?

“As much as we could [be],” says Maharey. “We sent out literally hundreds of thousands of letters, I think, in the end, advising people that life has changed and that it was important to enrol early and be prepared for differences and so on. So within the constraints that most of the universities didn't even have a full year's warning of [the Government's financial capping] – and some universities didn't know anything about it at all, by the way, so students are just going to be totally surprised when things change on them – I think we've tried to get into a groove of telling people.”

But Maharey does not agree that students who were feted by the university when it needed their EFTs and now, when it doesn't, should feel exploited when they're suddenly expected to pass papers and enrol on time. He argues persuasively that the reverse applies – any exploitation was surely of those students who were allowed to throw good money after bad in programmes they were essentially not cut out for.

“I think this has been true through the whole bums-on-seats period. Universities got very used to enrolling people, receiv-



Vice-Chancellor Steve Maharey
“Extramural has some vulnerability in this debate”

ing the money, having no accountability for what happened to that student – other than they've enrolled and they're in the course – personally I think that was wrong.”

Which is exactly the sea change university students, new and returning, should be preparing themselves for next year? While strictly speaking 2010 will see no new policies, just active adherence to old ones, it's also a harbinger of greater change in 2011.

“Yes, this is a fundamental shift in the access that students have had to the university,” he agrees. “Because we can't grow, we have to allocate student places in a fair and proper way, and at the moment what we're doing is trying to prepare them by applying the rules in a much more rigorous way than we have before. That might have to get very rigorous this year; but not until the following year will we have moved into the capped environment and that's when the new policy really does kick in.”

“What will [Massey's enrolment] criteria be? If you look at Auckland, it's almost entirely grade average, with a 5 per cent reservation for people that might not make that but are non-traditional; Maori, Pacific

Island students... I don't think Massey can do that. I think what we're moving towards, which the working party is still working on, is a process that will take into account people's grade average but will also give weighting to other factors, like the age of a person, the occupation of the person, the ethnic background of the person."

It's this weighting of enrolments which is of most concern to non-traditional students. A recent story in the Manawatu Standard, "Massey to start out soft on student cuts policy", quotes Maharey as identifying "mature students, new entrants and students taking extra time to complete their degrees" as those to be most affected by the policy change. When two out of these three criteria basically describes the majority of extramural students, what message is this sending out? "If I was an extramural student reading that," I said to Steve, "I could imagine myself thinking the message was 'Don't bother.'"

"We aren't saying anything like that at all. We would prefer to carry on with the [current] mix of students, which is currently 61% mature students. But what [the Government is] saying is they're going to be rating [universities] on whether they are co-operating with this policy."

"The National Council of Women wrote to me on this very issue, saying they don't like the notion that mature students will be blocked out. And I wrote back and said it's not us that are doing this – in fact, we'd love you to go and see the Minister and reinforce the notion that mature students should have the opportunity to study. But we will have to comply with this (the Tertiary Education Strategy), because our funding is tied to it."

At least the final 2010-2015 TES demonstrates a softening of resolve when it comes to one particular aspect of the draft document (condemned by EXMSS President Ralph Springett on his blog as "disjointed, misguided and visionless" as well as, more succinctly, "a dog") – its "singular focus on full-time youth enrolments." Maharey himself describes the final strategy as "a little bit better than the previous one." But even the final document is barely able to restrain its ambivalence over mature and part-time enrolments; "Although we are committed to retaining broad access to tertiary education," it grumbles, "in a constrained fiscal

environment, we will need to give priority to the following groups of learners and types of study."

Priority one: "increasing the number of young people (aged under 25) achieving qualifications at levels four and above, particularly degrees". Though it should be noted that "increasing the number of Maori and Pasifika students enjoying success at higher levels" also number amongst the seven priorities.

"The pressure on the universities, if the cap remains, is going to be very high to reallocate to school leavers," says Maharey. "[But] we have to be fair. And that's what I tried to explain to the Manawatu Standard when they said we were going to be "soft". It's not about being soft, it's just our student population is a very diverse one.

some vulnerability in this debate," Maharey agrees. "A lot of people don't understand what extramural is."

"It's very easy to say, if you're prioritizing, [would you favour] a school leaver getting started on their qualification, or do we want to spend money on a 65-year-old at the end of their career doing the BA they'd always dreamed of? If you ran that in the public arena, the public would say, "Pay for that young person; give them opportunity they'll have for the rest of their life. Sad that [other] person can't do it, but..."

"Now, I don't agree with that at all. The majority of people doing extramural are doing it to respond to their employer's request that they retool, so they're doing a couple of papers a year to retool as they go through. So the majority of people are doing

"...even if the Government policy is suggesting a new bias, we're saying to the Government we're happy to bias that way, but not to the extent we lose the flavour of the university, and block out students who have historically been highly successful."

That's been a very successful position for Massey to occupy, and our belief is in lifelong learning and opportunity – and even if the Government policy is suggesting a new bias, we're saying to the Government we're happy to bias that way, but not to the extent we lose the flavour of the university, and block out students who have historically been highly successful."

He means Massey's extramural population, amongst others – a mode of learning he describes as having been "nothing less than a revolution". And it's somewhat ironic that that group's enrolments might come under threat in what should be a year of celebration – Extramural Studies' 50th Anniversary.

In a country like New Zealand, all verticality and little width, with a still significant rural population, distance learning represents a singular and incredibly valuable tool. But when faced with the prioritization of the Tertiary Education Strategy, the idea of "lifelong learning", of which Massey is the preeminent national provider, begins to look increasingly under threat. "Extramural has

exactly that. It's lifelong essential learning. And the others are doing things – history, or something which makes them a better informed person – which, if you're living in a society that isn't just about jobs, but about an intelligent, informed kind of society, really do lead to that."

There are several criteria on which distance learning falls short of the Government's goals for tertiary education. Most distance learners are mature; many are taking longer than the minimum time to complete their qualification; some are studying out of interest, for fun or for self-improvement while many are retraining and retooling without intending to complete a degree. That last point at least has been de-emphasized in the final policy, thanks to consultation with universities and the lobbying of student representatives. It's a slight victory, but may transpire to be an important one.

"I'd want to stress that Massey is the distance university for this country," Maharey asserts. "It is going to remain the distance university for this country and it intends to

champion distance education. So students reading this shouldn't think for a second that Massey intends to roll over and say, "We should just comply with this by going just for first year school leaver students." Our game plan rests very heavily on remaining the pre-eminent supplier of distance learning, and we'd like to grow it."

His message for extramural students is at once encouraging while also acknowledging that in many ways the ultimate outcome is out of his or the other universities' hands.

"The [distance] cause needs to be championed – and I think [EXMSS] and extramural students could do well—not to stick a finger in the eye and cause antagonism to politicians who might not even have thought of this—but to simply begin to get it more well known what distance learning is actually doing..."

"I hope what your readers do is not panic, not worry, but certainly start making it their business to talk about how important this is to them." *(If you would like to comment please log onto the EXMSS website - <http://exmss.org> - Ed)*

As a concept, Maharey is perfectly content with capping – "The core message I think is fine. We want to say to people there is now a pool of people who can come each year to a university, and we want to make sure that they succeed and have a great experience with their qualification and get through – that's ok, we can live with that."

"We're essentially being asked to work

this out in about a twelve month period. Now that I think is a recipe for groups, who perhaps don't fit a very narrow mould, finding their access is not where it ought to be, and I'm against that."

"Within twelve months, are we going to sort this out? No. It takes a lot of dialogue with, say, professional groups or Maori, to say, "Well, where should we put our emphasis?"... "I think if [the Government's current strategy] stays in place for more than a year or two [it] will have very adverse results."

If current practice continues, students who don't succeed – or haven't had a good Year 13, for instance – are simply removed from the system.

For Maharey and his Vice Chancellorial ilk, the path is clear – find a way to make this work, and do it fast. The vibe I got from Maharey was basically a sense that "this is happening; we have to do the best we can in the time we've got."

"Personally, what I'd love," he says, "is for this university to be the one university to, in the first year, continue with some of the open entry. Once you've had your first year, we'll find out – as it used to happen – whether you've got the aptitude for this particular course or university study in general," while immediately acknowledging that "I don't think the Government would pay for it."

The strategy that has come through from Government is, in Maharey's view, "a blunt instrument". It also contains several inher-

ent contradictions. For a document which places such emphasis on "completion" and "success", there is almost no mention for pastoral care or support for struggling students. This, again, is for the universities to worry about, but the Government has made little provision in terms of time or direction for getting that right.

"There are mixed messages, aren't there?" agrees Maharey. "One message would suggest that you're going to end up with a system where success will get you in and success will then be largely guaranteed. But it does, for example, say that Maori must have an opportunity in here. Now we know that 1,200 or so Maori qualify each year through NZQA to come to university. Now that's not many, and if we stuck with that we simply wouldn't have Maori at universities. So clearly, Massey's approach, which is to target older Maori and give them an avenue into university study is going to continue and therefore pastoral care and so on will be important. So I think there are very mixed messages here at the moment."

Massey's negotiations and enrolment planning will continue through much of this year. Meshing Maharey's stated priorities with those of the Government will be difficult, but it seems obvious that Massey is, at least at this stage, committed to the preservation of some of our unique diversity and atmosphere in the face of financial and temporal pressure. Watch this space.

The write way to a cleaner planet (AND FREE PENS!)

Pilot launches range of pens made from everyday waste

If you want to be more environmentally friendly it's as easy as picking up a pen with Pilot's new line of BegreeN writing instruments – the world's first full earth-friendly range—distributed exclusively in New Zealand by Croxley Nutech.

No longer just a humble ballpoint, the BegreeN range is composed of at least 70 per cent recycled material.

That means the next time you

scramble for a pen, you can also make an everyday commitment to being more environmentally friendly.

The new range helps people 'green up' without breaking the bank. Anyone can make a small step and have a positive influence on the environment: children going back to school, students starting university, office workers or anyone at home scribbling this week's grocery list.

Manufactured in Japan, the BegreeN range is currently available from leading stationery retailers nationwide and

your local university campus bookstore in single and multi-packs. The RRP for single pens starts at \$2.95

EXMSS is happy to support this initiative and has 200 pens to give away to students. If you would like to trial a BegreeN pen, email Murray Kirk at Murray@exmss.org.nz.





Pressure at the Door

The pressure at the door is massive but huge enrolment numbers are bittersweet for Massey University. Growth matches Massey's 2020 strategy, however the university is not allowed to take them all. The tertiary sector is directed by the Ministry's Tertiary Education Strategy (TES) and reigned in by the funding allocator, the Tertiary Education Commission (TEC). So what direction does this offer our university? The university sector should focus on full-time youth students, keep the enrolments within an agreed cap and tighten their belts. Pretty clear advice, but easier said than done for an organisation that takes years to change direction. Choose to subvert the advice offered by the Ministry and the TEC may choose to use their rather painful funding-stick.

Universities will be required to produce a 3% profit as they have in the past and continue to attract research money, so with maximum student numbers the areas where savings can be made will be in teaching efficiency, service rationalization and asset management. This has implications for staff, infrastructure and students. Clearly the importance of someone with the interests of students at heart, and effectively imbedded in the system, is growing. Quality issues such as digitization of resources and availability of lecturers are things students need to be able to speak up about.



Quality issues such as digitization of resources and availability of lecturers are things students need to be able to speak up about.

Alarming, also imbedded in the Tertiary Education Strategy is the notion that part-time adult students are somehow less deserving of access. The adult learner pathway is understood to be highly productive and its availability goes some way to addressing New Zealand's obligations to Te Tiriti o Waitangi in the education sector. If the TES drives us into a capped environment with punitive measures for institutions that have poor completion statistics (perhaps due to part-time study) then we will see a decline in access for many marginal groups.

I am concerned for New Zealand's young

students as well as for extramural students. Through the TES, it seems that the Government is advising New Zealand's youth to get into debt even though many will not fully understand the consequences. Already one generation (1990 – 2010) is required to carry a ten billion dollar millstone. It is only now that we are seeing families having to make socially questionable choices: a house? or children?

But perhaps National's education experiment will have an up-side. Students entering the system will have increased pressure to succeed. Failure may result in exclusion and debt. Our Government expects more completions and fewer "lazy students who studied year after year without going into the workforce." Better value for money for the taxpayer dollar seems to be the mantra. Those who get their degree will surely be an elite group – a notion that fits well with National's principles.

However, I struggle with the direction New Zealand is taking with tertiary education. If the environment has to be capped then all groups should have an equal chance of entering the system. If the consequence of borrowing to study is future financial hardship then prospective students need the tools to make an informed decision at the outset. Pressure at the door may work on the Japanese subway but for New Zealand's tertiary education sector I would suggest a more educated approach.



Shuttle Vouchers

If you have enrolled in a semester one or double semester paper that has a contact course you will receive a shuttle voucher with this magazine. You can use this voucher any time throughout the year to assist your travel (with SuperShuttle) to Massey campus. If your voucher is missing please contact Anne Moretti (Anne@exmss.org.nz) at the EXMSS office to request one.

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EXMSS Scholarship Success

by Peter Hawes

Every year the Extramural Students' Society offers scholarships to current and prospective extramurals. This year, 11 scholarships to the value of \$10,500 have been awarded. "All applicants continue to exceed our expectations," says Anne Moretti, secretary of the EXMSS scholarship committee. The EXMSS scholarships are awarded annually and application dates are signaled in the November edition of *Off Campus*. Scholarship details can also be found on the EXMSS website, exmss.org. Congratulations to the following EXMSS scholars!

Neihana Matamua, Ngai Tuhoe Bicultural Achievement Scholarship

This Bicultural Scholarship is not Neihana's first academic success, although startlingly different from its predecessor. This one, he hopes, will take him into the health system, there to search for answers to the problems of nutrition among his people. The first took him to Japan, to play rugby. They say he was good; fullback, fast, clever; an age-grade rep for New Zealand. It might have been 'move over Mills'; but it wasn't. Injury gave him pause for thought then marriage and children changed his sense of values. He took the births as a sign; kids need an income – yours: get one.

He took a year off study and rugby and signed on as a factory hand with Carter Holt Harvey in Levin, his home town. He worked his way up the ladder at uncarpentry speed until he was 'almost a manager.'

Four years ago he left CHH and lit out to Australia where he worked under contract to – Carter Holt Harvey.

Then: 'Two years ago they asked me to return. I did.'

He is now divorced from the mother of his children but determined not to lose contact; they stay with him often, he is first in queue for their appearances in school performances and on the sporting field.

And this situation kick-started a long-held aspiration; to study. 'My decision was motivated by several reasons including wanting to create a better future for my children, wanting to work in an area I am interested in and wanting to make a positive contribution toward my people and culture.'

Baldly, he wants to tackle the fat. He's Maori, he's concerned and he's surrounded by BIGGG. 'I've got several non-Massey diplomas – in Exercise Science (2) and Sports Diplomas (2), and I'm interested in the practice and theory of sport. That made

me increasingly aware of the importance nutrition played as my studies in sport progressed. At the completion of my BSc in Nutrition I've decided to become a registered nutritionist and work in the field of research in Maori health.'

He explains the dilemma as he sees it: 'Food for Maori has cultural significance, it plays a role in customary practices and is important to one's identity as a Maori. Food is intimately intertwined with what it means to be Maori...'

Carter Holt Harvey has been greatly supportive of Neihana's ambitions. 'They have invested a lot of time in me, they've allowed me to study – they've told me to study.' And to his present partner 'my main emotional support' he sends his fervent thanks – 'thanks Tash.'

He has gained his wish of having the 'stressing about the financial side of my studies' alleviated – the road seems clear ahead.

Kelly Iles Second Chance Award

Born in the environs of Rotorua, Kelly reached 7th form then left school so emphatically she ended up in Queensland. 'I only came back last year and while over there I had all sorts of jobs.' 'What sorts?' 'Oh, radio work, cheerleading, the beauty industry...' Yep, that's all sorts.

'I want to get into the corporate world and so I came back to have my daughter and to study.' She then says a wise and realistic thing: 'I never had the inclination to stay in one place, I wouldn't have lasted at university if I'd gone there when I was younger.'

Now she's in her second year of a Business Psychology degree. I ask her the difference between business and general psychology and her answer smacks just a

tad of the Machiavellian: 'You can read the minds of your employees before they leave.' But there is no cynicism in her next statement: 'I'm committed to achieving this goal for my daughter and I intend to teach her that education is the key to success. It took me a lot of years to learn this but now I see the sky is the limit.'

Frankly I'm not quite sure I know what the beauty industry is or does; I'm not, alas, the type that is invited through those glamorous parlour doors, but it is obviously akin to the sociology and psychology industries because Kelly was amazed, in her first semester, at how much she knew. Shrewd beauty and sociology are blood brother/sisters. For her first assignment in the summer school paper Managing Human Resources, she got an A.

She works on, at the rather bizarrely named "Mount Skin & Body" salon whilst



studying such papers as Memory and Cognition and learning how to read the minds of employees bent on leaving. If anyone can get them to stay, I'm sure it's Kelly.

John Bourke Scholarship for Disabled Students

Every reference to John Bourke mentions the buoyancy of his spirit, his openness and warmth, his supportiveness to fellow sufferers of his injury – often not as afflicted as he is himself. Through his studies and his (horrendous) experience he is dedicating his life to others in his situation. To many he has the qualities of a saint, but I know he isn't. He can't possibly be, because he was born in Greymouth – and as anyone Westport-born (like me) will tell you, saints don't come from that dreadful place.

John moved up to Wellington with his mum and went to school there. "Since I was 22 I went every winter to Indonesia, surfing. And in 2005 I lost control and headbutted a sandbank, quite hard."

The result was tetraplegia, leaving him with no motor or sensory function below the shoulders. He needs 24-hour care and assistance.

"But I've never felt bitter about it, I'm not quite sure why. I suppose because it happened while I was doing something of my own accord."

He spent the six months after the accident in Burwood Hospital. His mind turned to the six months after that and the six months after that and...

Exactly two lots of six months later he began his extramural career. He took two papers, Knowledge and Reality, for which he received a B, and Headlines in History – C+. Substantial numbers of As have crowded the results columns of his subsequent 16 papers.

"I've got 18 of the 24 papers I need now, but I'm not quite sure how to bring it all together. I'm hoping something will come into mind this year."

But back to Burwood; and fairly certainly Issues in Rehabilitation will feature at the finish line of his degree because "upon completion of my BA I hope to pursue post-graduate study and/or employment in the field of spinal cord injury rehabilitation." He can remark, without the faintest smidgin of self pity, ghoulishness or sarcasm that he is "quite fond of working in spinal research." The positivity of his inner balance is astonishing. Perhaps he IS a saint.

He helps – he loves helping, he can't help helping – he helps at the Spinal Trust and at the Burwood Academy of Independent Living, he teaches others the computer skills he has acquired.

In his newly imposed world, bodily support couples with financial support. "My sole income is compensation payments through ACC, which at \$301 a week doesn't cover my weekly living expenses let alone my uni-

versity fees." The disabled scholarship is taking as much strain off his family—who are funding his study—as off John himself. He thanks EXMSS on behalf of them.

He lives and studies out of Tasman where he lives with, I am delighted to report, his fiancée. Together they are going to his next scheduled on campus course in April – and, he informs me strenuously, "we got the hotel out of the *Off Campus* magazine. It was the first place we looked."

All right, maybe saints can be born in Greymouth. But only one.



Charlene Tipene Regional Scholarship

Charlene was born in Palmy North but had little chance to settle. Her father was in the SAS which took him and his family "everywhere." She then managed to get several hurried years in at Victoria University – mainly because it was expected of her. "I was a good student, everybody knew what they thought I should be – for most of them it was a lawyer." The rot set in year two, papers were changed, classes were unattended, a close family member died. She left, to take up "administrative, sort of help-desk-support jobs". She had a good job in police administration but after a year it "got boring, it wasn't challenging."

It was the birth of her son in 2007 that put her on the path she is now following. "Watching him inspired me. I realised that psychology was my thing."

She signed on for a Bachelor of Science in Psychology, having already completed a Certificate in Early Childhood learning and begun Sign Language classes at her Community Education centre. (Any particular reason? No; simply to broaden her field of knowledge – which is why she is taking Nga Tirohanga Rua o te Taha Hinengaio (Bicultural Perspectives in Psychology). "I have Maori blood, but also European. I don't see myself as one or the other."

At first it was tricky maintaining the necessary balance but "by the end of semester

two in 2009 I had a good routine and was managing well. Since November I haven't been able to wait to get back into study."

She feels she's at a point in her working life "where I am no longer satisfied with just having a job and am looking for a career. I have 12 years' experience in a number of jobs, I know my strengths and more importantly, I know what I want to do. If I have to be away from my home and family I want to be doing something rewarding. I can achieve this through completing my Psychology degree."

After which she will become a Developmental Psychologist and help to make herself, and us, better people.



Christine Kirkwood **Regional Scholarship**

Christine, a lifelong resident of Wanganui, now lives in the brand-new city of Whanganui without an F. She is the solo mum of two 'awesome kids', whom she sustains by her part-time work on a community newspaper. 'This scholarship has given me the help I needed to pay for my extramural papers, it's removed a huge burden.'

She left school at 16 and worked in Farmers. Three years later she left Farmers for a pharmacy where she worked the next 11 years then 'took a break for kids'. And now her 'ten-year-old son and eight-year-old daughter have embraced my wish to study, they support me and it's funny to have them congratulate me on my achievements as I finish each assignment.'

Her partner led the way into the educative world; he went to Training College 'and showed me how hard it was to do.' They are now separated but Christine followed along, attending Massey and its associated Training College at the same time. 'Stepping back into the world of study at the age of 37 was a scary step! I managed to get an A in one of my first essays, a real accomplishment for me and encouraged me to continue.'

Her goal is to complete a Diploma of Arts in Communication, inspired by her work at River City Press where, in the age-old manner, she took her chance when a journo called in sick and she did the job. Well. Certainly well enough to be asked to write further articles. 'It made me think I could be a writer.'

(She is certainly a multitasker; while we speak her daughter burns her elbow on Christine's coffee cup and running repairs are carried out as we carry on.)

She had attended a weekend writing course and knew if she was to succeed she needed more study but study cost money and money came with work, which subtracted study time. Which of course is where the wonderful world of extramural comes into play. Everything can be done at the same time, especially by an acknowledged multitasker. So she signed on Massey's dotted line. 'I did it for ME! The last five years have been for the kids, then they'll grow up and leave, so I wanted something for myself out of all this.'

The day a week the kids spend with daddy is study day; down with the blinds, off with the phone and on we go. 'It's so nice to know you ARE bright enough to do it; I started with a C+ then up to As where I've stayed most of the time. I didn't know I could write poetry or essays, but I can. I constantly surprise myself. I'll go on to a degree in Communications I'm sure. And I'll never fail because I'M PAYING!'

The ultimate inspiration.



Hanna Brookie **Academic Excellence**

I began with an 'interest' paper – at my husband's suggestion in 2004 – in Creative Writing. Even as I followed the enrolment process my life was changing – I am Swedish, I met my husband in Russia – we went back to his native land in 1995 which I have never regretted. Our first child was born a year to the day of

our wedding, then two more. Then, in 2005, another.'

There was a year of crisis – 'I lost my father. Then I considered starting nightschool but I soon realised I had to do it properly. So I enrolled at Massey and what I had taken on as a hobby to add intellectual stimulation to my life as a fulltime housewife and mother quickly became a passion and a major part of my life.'

'I welcome the flexibility extramural study offers me, which enables me to continue pursuing my goals with minimal disruptions for my children. Further, I enjoy the independence and discipline...'

Hanna has 24 papers, all in variations of A; 12 A+s for example – and a B, so stark and isolated I forbore to mention it in case it occasioned wrath. The papers, in the main, treat of Literature – 20th Century Lit, Victorian Writing, Five Classic novels, Fiction etc – or history; The Napoleonic Wars, Literature and Society in early Modern England – or both; Love and Revenge in Shakespeare's England, Historical and Comparative Linguistics. With some surprises; Modern NZ Politics, Introductory Social Anthropology. And this year she has enrolled in Resource Conservation and Sustainability.

So eminent a whakapapa of achievement could not possibly go unnoticed; it didn't. She has won the R.G. Frean Prize in English, Bennet's University Book Centre Prize for English, the Massey University Undergraduate Scholarship for 2007 and 8, and the EXMSS Scholarship for Academic Excellence in 2009.

Although living just down the road from Massey she continues her studies extramurally; 'I welcome the flexibility extramural study offers me, which enables me to continue pursuing my goals with minimal disruptions for my children. Further, I enjoy the independence and discipline...'

Hanna, who will graduate this year, is already casting round for educational paths to follow: 'I will either continue on to postgraduate studies in English or choose the graduate diploma of (secondary) teaching. Dollars to donuts, there's a PhD not far away.'



Stephen Greally Regional Scholarship

Stephen is now a police officer. From the following list of papers he's doing this year, have a guess what he used to be: Airport Planning, Aviation Strategic Management, Design of Airways and ATS... yep, he was a pilot.

He was born in Helensville. His father was a secondary teacher of languages specialising in French – which is as Irish as his heritage. Stephen went to Silverstream for five years, very successfully, and was setting fair to becoming a university student. So he didn't do it. He pulled out of formal education and went off to be a cop. Then he found that all decent jobs needed a degree, and further found that an aviation degree was the best kind to have. If you wanted to be a pilot. Which by then he did. And thus he embarked upon the degree above, whilst at the same time reverting to the police force, his major love and where he is now and where he is 'pretty settled'.

So, that's straightforward enough, isn't it? He is now 'in the position I like to be', which is officer in charge of the counties Manukau Mobile Police station—a 'problem solving unit' in South Auckland. It is a 'pro-active force' which takes the victim out of crime by forestalling the efforts of the baddies before they act. 'It's problem-solving, rather than reactive.' The new government has given the police force 300 new cops; this is one very effective way of deploying some of that number. As a senior sergeant, he was District Shift Supervisor in Counties Manukau. He provided command, control and supervision on any of the given 24 hours of the days of the week – and has been doing five papers a year as well.

And his grades have been going up, from overall B+, to A to A+ this year. His motto, as an ex-airman, is obviously 'Ever Upwards.'

Ask him about his hairiest moments as a flier and he'll tell you about the time in 1993 when his freight plane was so iced up, it stalled at 9000 feet over the Kaikouras. The plane went into a left-hand dive, and heated itself enough by its airspeed to shuck off the ice. On this occasion, freight decreed he was not to die. 'I had a cigar later; it was an interesting night.'

Boy Zone Stuff!



Rosemary Atkins Regional Scholarship

Rose, born in Hamilton (but never mind), attended a number of schools in her youth, all of them boys' schools. Her father was a principal, specialising it seems, in X-Y chromosomalality.

He had come to NZ in 1962 – to compete against the NZ croquet team. Which he successfully did. He met and married, he was quickly absorbed into the public school network and decorous years later Rosemary – known as Rose – ensued.

Since 1986 Rose has taught in a plethora of educational sectors, from Playcentre through to tertiary at Massey. And her immense worth has been well recognised – she was entrusted with the writing and editing of a new year 9 and 10 social studies course for the Correspondence School, has been a facilitator on the Ministry of Education's Exemplar project in 2003, provided professional development to social studies teachers implementing NCEA level 1 to 3 courses, revising the Ministry's online NCEA level 1 social studies exemplars in 2004, has written and edited for the NZQA and taught a social studies curriculum paper in the Graduate Diploma programme at Massey in 2000.

Among other things.

One of which is the compilation of quiz questions! What three sporting items lie on the face of the moon as we speak? What did Daktari stand for in the eponymous TV series?

Oh, and in the midst of such undertakings is the study required for the MEd thesis that she will complete this year.

Her intentions then are, through workshops, journal articles and assessment resources for teachers, to 'inform the wider teaching community about what effective assessment practices in social studies looks like.' She feels that assessment is an under-researched area.

There's a grave risk of hubris in the teaching of teachers of course, she has to be careful to practise what she preaches, but there's no doubt she is a high achiever. In fact, with nary a smidgin of ego she says 'I have no idea what a C essay looks like.'

I don't think she knows much about B essays either, my own speciality.

But it's not all work and no play, Rose is still a player of hockey and hubby is the coach of the Massey Premier team and the under-17 Manawatu team. 'He tried to get our three daughters interested in touch and cricket, failed, so studied netball coaching.' And why hockey? 'There's far fewer injuries in hockey.'

All hail Rose, academic achievement in full bloom.



**Avon Lookmire
Academic
Excellence**

Among Avon's 38 papers are Te Unga Whaakaara, He Tirohanga o Mua, Te Kawenataa o Wiatangi, Te Reo Rangatahi, Te Kakano o te Reo...and she's Pakeha. Also included are Religions of India, Greek History and Medical Systems of China... if she's gonna 'catch' your baby – as, evidently, midwives say these days – she'll be doing it in your language and your culture.

Her English father came here at age nine, her mother, already here, is Scottish with that treasonable smidgin of Frenchness going back to the days of Mary Queen of Scots.

Her fascination for birth began with her sisters. She herself emerged in hospital, they at home in their beds. 'The fascination is on one hand having a body in pain and the other, having the same body at the same time, in ecstasy.'

'It was my opportunity to give others an amazing birth. There isn't a lot of us, we're a special breed. Home birth is not common.'

In 2007 she graduated as a Massey Scholar in a BA in Social Anthropology. By then she was on a mission: 'My commitment to midwifery extends into the wider community, where I have been a labour support person to many family members...'

Her dedication to the role, she will tell you, began as 'a committed mother of two young children whose pregnancies and births provided the initial inspiration for a career in midwifery.'

She has a husband – a cabinet maker—who supports my passion for midwifery and has taken time out from his own work to care for our children full-time while I pursue my study.' '...a scholarship such as this will make a big difference to our family.'

'Let,' as King Lear might have said, 'copulation thrive! At,' may have added a cabinet maker, 'a rate of knots.'



**Penelope Bilton
Academic
Excellence**

Born Taihape. Which, academically speaking, is often the end of the story. But not in this case.

At age ten Penelope took her parents to Auckland – or perhaps vice versa, and by 1977 had graduated from Ak University with a Masters in mathematics! Part of the postgradual impetus was; 'not wanting to be a 19-year-old teaching 18-year-olds.'

Well, the problem solved itself; she became a mother. Five times. Multiplication, it's the name of the game. Employment was within the family walls, she homeschooled her children, every one.

A single parent since 1997 she resolved this year to 'retrain in order to enter the workforce. My circumstances mean I will not be eligible for a student allowance or loan and I have limited financial means.'

In 2001 she returned to university fare, moving to Massey – a city she likes because 'there's less traffic and it's a friendly place to walk my dog – although remaining an extramural; 'I've been able to achieve my goal by fitting in around family responsibilities and not having to worry about child supervision. Attending

contact courses has been great, meeting fellow students, usually mature students like myself, has been stimulating and the EXMSS staff have always been very helpful and encouraging.'

Study is a hobby, a stimulant and an interest outside the kids, who, now ranging in age from 30 to 17 have flown the nest in the main. The 17-year-old – as is the new tradition – has stayed home with mum.

Enthused by her dearly beloved topic, Penelope then launched into a compelling description of the uses and abuses of statistics, 98.07331 percent of which went straight over my head. I have written down 'linear regression' and 'outlier' in my notes but alas no explanation is writ beside.

But statistics are in good hands and the reliability of those hands has been acknowledged – Penelope has been a marker of stats papers and employed in other consultancy work by the university and in 2006 was a student moderator in the Mathematics in Industry Study Group held at Massey Albany.

'My goals are to achieve proficiency as a statistical analyst and consultant. The initial objective was to seek employment after completing the Masters but...'. Yep, there's a 100 per cent probability quotient – within a margin of error of 3% – that a PhD is just over the horizon.

PS: Statisticians are, according to Penelope, excellent cooks as they are good at following recipes.

CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL EXMSS SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS

Recipient	Region	EXMSS Scholarship
Christine A Kirkwood	Whanganui	Regional Retention Scholarship
Charlene M Tipene	Feilding	Regional Retention Scholarship
Kelly M Iles	Papamoa	Second Chance Student Scholarship
John A Bourke	Upper Moutere	Scholarship for Disabled students
Neihana Matamua	Palmerston North	Bi-Cultural Achievement Scholarship
Daniel M Boyd	Hawera	Trade to Tertiary Scholarship
Stephen Greally	Auckland	Academic Excellence Scholarship
Penelope Bilton	Palmerston North	Academic Excellence Scholarship
Hanna Brookie	Palmerston North	Academic Excellence Scholarship
Rosemary Atkins	Palmerston North	Academic Excellence Scholarship
Avon Lookmire	Palmerston North	Academic Excellence Scholarship

Massey Pilots New Digital Delivery Option

During semester one this year Massey University will be running two pilots studying the possibilities of digital delivery of study materials; a signal of future directions in the provision of distance education.

The first pilot looks at the distribution of administration guides to students taking internal papers. The study involves 150 papers and will extend the use of the new web environment, Stream. The second pilot is concerned with the digital distribution of study guides and books of readings for eight extramural papers. Study materials will be made available as pdf files and the pilot will examine how the advanced pdf reader A.notate might be used. A.notate has multiple study tools and allows students to highlight text and images, add notes and save them for later printing using a standard web browser.

'There are three key reasons for these pilots,' says Ingrid Day, Assistant Vice-Chancellor (Academic & International). 'Firstly, it is about improving student access and experience. The digital delivery option means students will have the dimension of enhanced usability, e.g. search, find

and replace. This will enormously enhance Massey's capacity to offer distance education to a wider group of students and in fact, other universities are already going this way. There are also issues of environmental sustainability – print uses an awful lot of trees.'

These pilots are already paying dividends to the university and to students. 'An early benefit of the administration guide pilot is the development of a consistent template for the guides,' says Ingrid. This means that students only have to find their way around the guide once. At the moment there's a wide variety of level, appearance and content of guides but a consistent template means that in the future, important dates, for example, will be on the same page for all papers.

'The success of these pilots will be measured using robust evaluation,' says Ms Day. Student feedback by way of focus groups and questionnaires will be a critical component in the assessment and will, take place throughout the pilot.

So is digital delivery the way of the future? 'To a degree the pilot can't fail,' says Ms Day. And students support the innovations. 'Students are saying to us, "Bring it on!"' But Massey is still proceeding cautiously and it is hoped the pilots will highlight any



Professor Ingrid Day, Assistant Vice-Chancellor (Academic and International)

roadblocks before the digital delivery option is extended.

And what about those who prefer printed materials? 'There will still be print,' says Ms Day. 'It'll never be "nope, you can't get print."' Those who need print will get it. The work will be in defining what counts as need. 'What we don't want to do is pull the rug from under students but common sense would say it won't be sustainable to do both.'

The results of the pilots will be collated in May and Off Campus will follow up developments in the next issue.

EXMSS joins forces with Ako Aotearoa

At the end of last year, Dr Peter Coolbear, Director of Ako Aotearoa, signed an agreement with Ralph Springett, President of Massey University's Extramural Students' Society (EXMSS), to fund a student-led project aimed directly at finding out what tertiary learners at Massey University think of the quality of their tertiary education experience.

Titled 'Review It', the tool builds on EXMSS's current 'Rate It' tertiary paper rating system and will provide an online information forum for students to research future paper choices. The evaluation tool is carefully moderated and seeks to recognise teaching excellence as well as supporting continuous quality improvement.

The initiative is part of what Dr Coolbear describes as Ako Aotearoa's "next critical steps to develop the debate with tertiary learners directly about their key issues concerning the quality of their education."

The EXMSS team expects that 'Review It' will deliver improved decision-making capability for students concerning paper choice and improved satisfaction in the choices they make.

Ako Aotearoa is excited about the project's potential to provide a model of an appropriately managed, learner-led evaluation tool which may in time be available to the whole tertiary sector. We see the value of this in providing robust learner-perspective information that can be triangulated

against provider-driven evidence supporting quality improvement.

We look forward to updating you as this 'Review It' project progresses.



Seasonal Rituals



In Germany, seasonal changes, unlike the slow seasonal fades I remember from Wellington, are dramatic cuts marked by rituals, almost always involving expenditure and extensive junk mail drops.

The outdoor Christmas market in Münster, a high point of the year for most of the city's residents, resembles colonies of miniature Russian izbas (log hut) which sprout up overnight in the cobblestoned pedestrian areas around the cathedral, town hall, and university. From the izbas traders sell seasonal trash, trinkets, and snacks. The city becomes wall-to-wall people as busloads of tourists join the locals in touring the markets and congregating in clumps to drink Glühwein (very sweet mulled wine) in the freezing cold and "enjoy" the atmosphere. In four weeks it is all over. Izbas are disassembled on the 23rd and on the evening of the 24th the entire city and its environs become eerily still as everyone flees the streets and public spaces to sit down to Christmas dinner en famille.

Firmly entrenched rituals also carry most people past Christmas and into the New Year. The "same procedure as every year" an English catch phrase, imported in its entirety into German, has its origins in a German New Year ritual. On December 31st

almost the whole of Germany sits down to watch "Dinner for One", a British production which has been screened every New Year's eve for the last forty or so years. The black and white comedy sketch features ninety-year-old Miss Sophie's annual dinner party. Since all Miss Sophie's friends are long dead her elderly butler, James, is forced to impersonate each guest, a task which includes consuming each guest's toast, with foreseeable consequences, dramatized with perfect timing as James goes about his butler duties. As the dinner progresses James repeatedly asks "The same procedure as last year Miss Sophie?" to which he receives the reply "The same procedure as every year, James."

Early January also has its set rituals. Epiphany, literally "three kings' day" in German, on the 6th of January is the perfect opportunity to make good New Year's resolutions to go on a diet. A resolution which will have been supported by an early January junk-mail drop advertising fitness clubs and miracle weight loss regimes. All the surplus Christmas goodies can be gifted to the three kings. Children impersonating Caspar, Melchior and Balthasar (the three kings) with the aid of towels and blackened faces ring doorbells and at opened doors sing a traditional song of blessing on the house. The child-kings in return are given sweets and donations for children's charities. At the

close of this little ritual the children chalk on the doorposts C+M+B (Christus mansionen benedicat / Caspar + Melchior + Balthasar). This is one of the few traditions that do not involve a junk mail campaign to sell associated festival paraphernalia.

But the advertising for Carnival more than makes up for this lack. By mid-January carnival preparation is seriously underway, in the Catholic regions at least, where Carnival is considered the carefree season before the rigours of lent. The protestant regions don't participate. Officially the season begins on 11.11 at 11.11am. However the rituals of Christmas and New Year usually put a damper on preparations during November and December.

Pseudo-militarism dominates February, as marching bands in Napoleonic costumes and mini-skirted, military-jacketed female dancing and marching troops in high three-cornered hats practice routines to be displayed at the Carnival parade. Then in one long extended weekend from Altweiberfastnacht (old women's fasting night) beginning at 11.11 a.m. on a Thursday, until the following Monday when the season reaches its high point with the parade, carnival is celebrated and folded away for another year. And then Easter is just round the corner.

All this weight of tradition can sit heavily on the pocket. Easter and its associated season, spring, bring the rituals of the compulsory overseas Easter holiday (known as keeping up with the Schmidts), first-communions, chocolate eggs, bunny decorated tableware for the Easter brunch, and shrubs, flowers and trees for the garden.

There is no escape from the endless round of rituals and advertising campaigns marking the changing of the seasons, which is why I far prefer the slow Wellington fades. Winter was often no more than donning an extra layer of clothing. Christmas was a laid-back summer event, of which I always boast here. I exaggerate the joys of a New Zealand Christmas to friends and acquaintances. Yes, we all sit on the beach at Christmas and barbecue. I don't mention the sometime raging winds and the fickle weather.

A Bad Example

The sun is setting and a warm breeze rustles the dry leaves of the poplars that line the road to the local tavern. It's been a long hot day and I've worked up one hell of a thirst. I push open the door and march in. A guy with a black t-shirt and a thick red neck sits at the bar, his hairy fingers surrounding a pint of bitter.

"Good evening," I say as I pull up the stool next to him.

"What's so good about it?" He scowls back at me.

I order a beer and pick up the daily paper. The front page story is about a 12-year-old boy arrested for stabbing a man in Palmerston North.

"The little bastards are getting worse all the time. They're out of control!" chips in my sturdy drinking companion.

"The only thing more disturbing than the amount of violent crime committed by children is the amount of violent crime committed against them," I reply.

"I don't care what Sue Bradford and the rest of them think, all they need is a good clout around the ear!"

"That sort of behaviour is part of the problem. True, the anti-smacking bill is about as popular as a cold cup of sick but it is at least a noble effort to stem the tide of violence towards children. Personally I think the wrong attitudes have been entrenched into our culture so deeply we can't even recognise them...our obsession with rugby for a start!"

My fellow drinker just about chokes on his beer. "Don't start knocking our national sport!" he splutters.

"I don't know if you saw it on the news but one of the world's leading scientists and educationalists, Lord Winston, of the Human Body fame, criticised New Zealand for glorifying the wrong people...rugby players in particular."

"Interfering old Pom! Who asked him to poke his nose into our business?" mutters my thickset mate.

I think he's got a good point - we seem to idolise the wrong people for the wrong reasons. I wish the All Blacks well in the forthcoming World Cup, but at the risk of being hung for treason I was relieved to see

the All Whites get through to the finals of the soccer World Cup. It's knocked the wind out of the Rugby Union's sails and offers kids an alternative to organised thuggery.

"Poofers!" barks back my booze buddy, starting to get agitated.

"I mean, you've got to love a legend like Colin Meads," I continue, "but wasn't he the first All Black to be sent off for kicking someone in the head?...And we give him a knighthood!?"

"Now just a minute..." My chum's hooded eyes take on a nasty glint.

"It's fortunate we've balanced things up with the likes of Sir Peter Jackson, a true inspiration to kids. A man of creativity, capable of great concentration and organisation. Virtues that are vital to youngsters and can turn violent inclinations into works of art. It's a real pleasure to see kids lost in the realms of their imagination with nothing more than a pencil and paper or a toy truck in a sandpit. Frustrations and anger are forgotten as they explore the wide open vistas of the mind. Education is everything. Alan Duff may be guilty of many things but he exposed the underbelly of macho posturing in 'Once Were Warriors' and should be congratulated for championing the campaign to put 'Books in Homes.' Without Margaret Mahy, Joy Cowley and other talented female writers, artists, musicians and scientists this country would be lost. It's no wonder girls are higher achievers within the education system, they have so many wonderful role models. Unfortunately boys have to overcome the barriers of an ingrained mentality where you must be 'a bit soft' if you like poetry, theatre, or any sport other than rugby or league. You've got to be hard and show no emotion, drink lots of piss and bash the kids if they answer back!"

"You better watch your..." My robust friend clenches his fists.

"But it's not just the parents I blame, there's also an American influence insidiously creeping into our culture, disguised as art. The recent blockbuster movie 'Avatar' for example. What starts out to be a beautiful film of special effects, (created here in NZ at the Weta Workshop studios - the



best aspect of the movie) deteriorates into a predictable Hollywood fiasco. Where the good ol' boy overcomes his disability to show the simple natives how to kick arse, triggering off explosions, inciting mayhem, and encouraging misplaced heroics based on hatred and revenge. In short, a litany of mindless murder and destruction set to the worst soundtrack I've ever heard in my life! Pretty much a sad metaphor for what the USA has perpetrated on our planet."

My pal is silent. My throat is dry, but I'm not finished.

"Whatever happened to gentleness, reason, understanding - love? I want kids to grow up listening to each other, living in a peaceful world where it's okay to be caring, sensitive, kind. Is that too much to ask?" I take a gulp of beer to wash down the lump in my throat. A big meaty arm covered in tattoos reaches towards me and falls across my shoulders. I look into the bleary eyes of my barside buddy. A big smile breaks across his bristly face revealing a row of yellow teeth.

"You know, you're right, mate," he slobbers. "What the world needs now is love, sweet love. That's the only thing there's much too little of..." He starts to sing, tears streaming from his eyes. He clenches me to his chest and bellows in my ear. "I love you, man! You're the best friend I've ever had!" His lips pucker up for a big sloppy kiss. He lurches forward as I instinctively recoil and we fall off our stools and crash to the floor, beer glasses flying. Within seconds our collars are grabbed by a well-built bouncer and we are flung into the street. The publican's words ring in our ears: "Bloody troublemakers! There's no fighting in my hotel! You should be ashamed of yourselves! You're both old enough to know better! What would your kids think of you, eh?"

VSM: Voluntary Student Membership Bill

On 21 August 2009, the Education (Freedom of Association) Amendment Bill, sponsored by ACT MP Roger Douglas was pushed onto the parliamentary agenda. The bill, in its current form, does two things. Firstly, it prevents any requirement or compulsion for students to be members of a students' association. Secondly, it prevents any requirement or compulsion for students to pay anyone any money which will be received by a students' association in lieu of fees. In short, the bill establishes voluntary membership of students' associations (VSM) prevents future students from being able to choose to return to a compulsory system, and prevents tertiary institutions from paying any money to students' associations for services provided to students (the current arrangement at the already voluntary Auckland University Students' Association).

Under VSM, students will consciously have to make a choice to pay the association fee and join the students' association; currently they don't. Up until 1989 it was compulsory to join a student union and it is mostly still the case. Since then under section 229A of the Education Act 1989, enrolled students have to be a member, but can be exempted by conscientious objection (where fees are paid to charity and the student foregoes services), or by hardship (where students do not pay fees but are still members, able to use the services provided); the current system is default in, opt out.

Roger Douglas wants students to opt in, default out: "I think they should make a firm decision if they want to join the union or not". And if they don't join? "They are making a conscious decision that they can look after themselves."

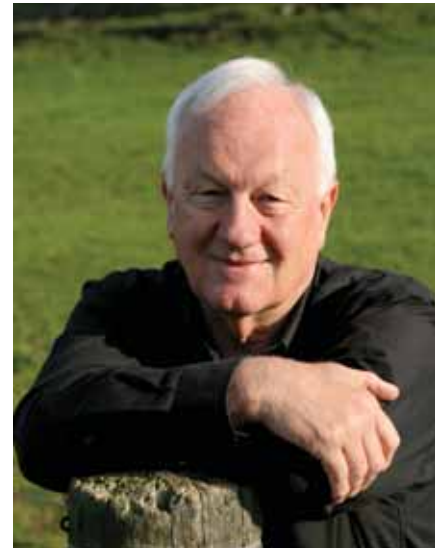
But will VSM really constitute 'a firm choice'? In defaulting out, enrolling students make no choice about disassociation from student unions, let alone a conscious decision as to whether they can provide their own advocacy and representation should they get into strife. With the majority of new students entering study falling into the 18 – 24 age range, a large number will fail to consider the vested benefit in joining a

students' association, regardless of however much associations promote their services.

Will VSM reduce the burden on students' strained pockets? Currently Massey's Extramural Students' Society (EXMSS) members pay just \$40 subscription fees per annum, the lowest fees of any student association, in exchange for access to well over \$40 worth of services, advocacy, representation and hardship relief. Under VSM, students' association fees and institution levies alike will increase significantly. As association membership will no longer be universal, services which benefit students universally will need to be taken over by tertiary institutions. The burden of this is expected to result in a reduction in quality, but regardless of whether quality is maintained or not, the student services levy charged by the institution will be hiked. At Massey University levies have doubled to \$60 this year alone; Canterbury students will pay a \$600 levy this year, even if they study part-time. Students will pay more for less under VSM – and will have no say about the services they fund even if they opt for association membership.

And is the bill even necessary? ACT maintains that compulsory student membership of students' associations violates freedom of association. But under current incorporated societies legislation, it is possible for any member of a students' association to bring forward a motion at a special general meeting to wind up an association and/or make membership voluntary. Indeed, three student associations have become voluntary, all but Auckland returning to compulsory membership after further referenda. Victoria University's last referendum had 70% of voters supporting compulsory membership with a 51 per cent participation rate. Under the proposed Education (Freedom of Association) Amendment Bill, students won't even be able to collectively decide to go compulsory, as allowed for under s229b of the Education Act 1989.

Student democracy does not fit with Douglas' ideology, he considers referenda undemocratic, and believes Parliament should place individual choice first by dictat-



Act MP Sir Roger Douglas

ing how students organise themselves and denying them the freedom to associate in the way they think is most appropriate: "If 51% vote for compulsion, the other 49% who don't want compulsion, well, bad luck. I don't care whether it is 95% to 5%; the 5% shouldn't be compelled. Why the hell should they be?"

New Zealand University Students' Association (NZUSA) co-president David Do believes students should not be denied the option to vote for the collective association membership: "We think students should be able to decide for themselves," he says. "This bill is very harmful to students. It will harm the quality of education, the quality of the experience of tertiary education by reducing many of the services that students

The Education (Freedom of Association) Amendment Bill passed its first reading in Parliament on 23 September 2009 with a 64/58 vote split. National and Peter Dunne supported ACT in sending the bill to the Education and Science Select Committee. Submissions on the bill will be accepted up until the 31 March. <http://Tinyurl.com/ydhs3v8>

use on a daily basis. The current law is fair, it allows for choice. Services do remain on campus, paid for and supported by students. The question is whether students control how much they pay, how it is spent, or what services they want”.

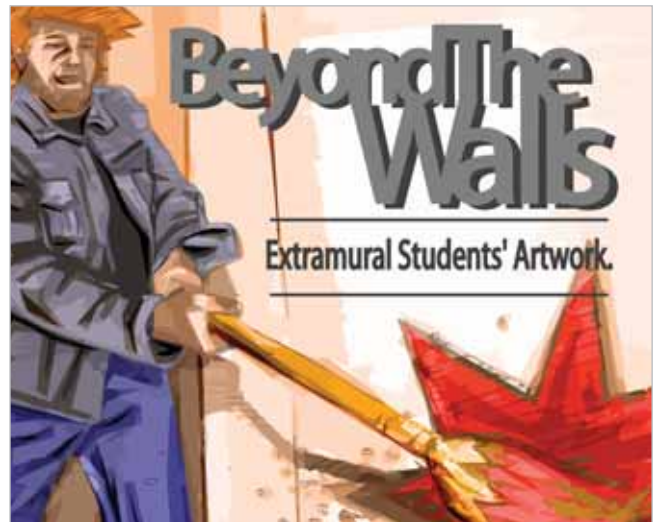
EXMSS President Ralph Springett points out that while service provision is important, students’ associations provide a framework for student engagement: “A big part of what we do is providing a united student voice on campus. If we do not have universal membership then we will struggle to speak on students’ behalf with authority.” Under the current system students’ associations are required to act upon the interests of all students, pursuing a majority line if there is a conflict in student opinion. This situation allows them to maintain a democratic authority which they would not have in representing a subset of students under voluntary student membership. “This voice enables us to help every student on Massey-wide issues and hundreds of students each year with advocacy and hardship issues. Under voluntary student membership, having an independent person you can contact about your major being axed will disappear; you will have to deal with Massey yourself.”

EXMSS members pay just \$40 to join EXMSS, the lowest fees of any student association. These fees constitute 95% of the association’s income. As well as student representation and advocacy, students get a free phone line to contact lecturers, a free shuttle during contact courses, the *Off Campus* magazine, a moderated online community with free blog hosting, and local area representatives throughout New Zealand.

The passage of the Education (Freedom of Association) Amendment Bill threatens representation, advocacy and other services provided by students’ associations nationwide as numerous students will act instinctively, opting to keep the voluntary membership fee in their wallets. For ACT, that’s not a problem, but for students who need essential support services it is.

The case history for government enforced VSM is not good. Most Australian universities have been under VSM since 2005, it has been a disaster; jobs were lost, and one students’ association went into liquidation, others became dependant on the institution for funding and to prop up services. As a result student engagement and advocacy services were hamstrung, it became impossible for associations to act independantly. Indeed, in at least one university, a students’ association was paid ‘cash for no comment’ to prevent criticism of the university for substandard service provision.

David Do wants to preserve services, advocacy and representation by students’ associations, and avoid the negative aspects of the Australian VSM legislation at all costs: “We [NZUSA] would encourage Massey extramural students to use their democratic right to make a submission and to make themselves heard—saying that you believe that student representation is important, should be preserved and that this bill will threaten that”.



Beyond the Walls Art Exhibition

EXMSS proudly invites submissions from all extramural artists for our second annual *Beyond The Walls* exhibition to be held during graduation week in May.

“Last year’s inaugural exhibition was wildly successful,” says artist and EXMSS creative consultant, Adam Dodd, “This is only the second time *Beyond The Walls* has been held, and it is quickly becoming a key calendar event for the EXMSS team.” Last year’s exhibition can be viewed at <http://Tinyurl.com/ydphp8c>

Artwork will be displayed from 10-16 May at Square Edge, Palmerston North; selected works will also be displayed at the EXMSS Graduation Dinner.

Submission forms and details are available online.

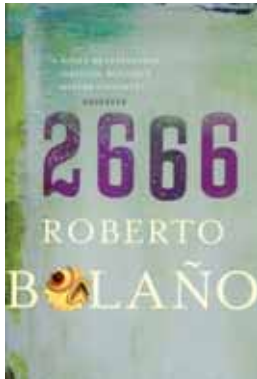
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2666

By Roberto Bolaño

Translated from Spanish by
Natasha Wimmer. Picador 2009.

By Peter Hawes.

This, dubbed “the first great book of the 21st century” is a critic’s joy: impossible to review. The much-blathered ‘authorial voice’ and ‘unreliable narrative’ – and other descriptions of sequential history from the halls of critico-Babel–just don’t fit here. It’s not that there’s no voice, it’s that there’s no author; neither is there a narrative and it’s wildly unreliable. The simple fact is that Bolaño (the n pronounced as if by Bluebottle saying Nyit) has, as one of the blurbs at the back says, redefined the novel. Sure, he’s left it with a beginning, middle and end, but by no means in that order.

Because, you see, Bolaño wrote it as five distinct, interchangeable books.

No he didn’t; he decided upon publishing it as thus as he lay on his deathbed, (at 50) mulling over how to get the maximum pesetas for his work, to support his family. Five thin books, he reasoned, would glean more than one fattie. He made a deal with the publisher – let’s do five books. The publisher subsequently reneged, for all sorts of laudable reasons, before the authorial cadaver had even cooled and put them out as one volume. And no one will ever know if this is the order of presentation Bolaño would have wanted, but at least they’re all together and if you don’t like the sequence here, start from the back, or the middle, or almost anywhere.

Anyway! The book is about seeking the German author Benno von Archimboldi – wrong already! The book isn’t about that, it IS that. A sighting – a single, questionable sighting of some years before, had Archimboldi in a distinctive black leather jacket. Not a skerrick of him had been seen since.

It’s history’s first pointillist novel; it’s made up of dots, as in a Seurat painting, and importance is invested by how heavily Bolaño has pressed on the dot key. So from the rows of identical specks, a picture forms; and we look at the picture from the sidelines, dots ourselves.

But the neutral digital discards amidst which we stand can suddenly gain life, tip us into the picture and strand us on that battlefield where writers struggle against ‘that something that terrifies us all, that something that crows and spurs us on, amid blood and mortal wounds and stench.’ (Might I mention here that this is the second book in my adult life to give me nightmares; the first was *Hawksmoor*, by Peter Ackroyd.)

Books are spooky, always have been – Bibles, Kabbalas, books of spells, of Templar secrets, *Mein Kampf*, Korans, *Maladicta* – yuck–books compactly contain every evil under the sun. To realise you are holding a creature rather than a manufacture of paper and ink can therefore be disquieting. 2666 the novel is supra-disquieting,

In it, Professor Amalfitano, an expert on Archimboldi has hung a book on his clothesline in Santa Teresa, Mexico. ‘What’s the experiment?’ asked Rosa, his daughter... ‘It isn’t an experiment in the literal sense of the word,’ said Amalfitano. ‘Why is it there?’ ‘It occurred to me...it’s a Duchamp idea, leaving a geometry book hanging to the elements to see if it learns something of real life.’ As I said above, books live, and breathe heavily.

The first book ever read by a young 6 foot 6 tall Prussian called Hans Reiter was ‘Parzival’, a knight. Parzival declares, “I fled the pursuit of letters, I was untutored in the arts.” This ‘confers on him a halo of dizzying mystery, of terrible indifference, which attracted the young Hans the way a giant magnet attracts a slender nail... And what he liked most, what made him cry and roll laughing in the grass was that Parzival sometimes rode... wearing his madman’s

garb under his suit of armour.’

Hans Reiter goes to war for Hitler, wearing his madman’s suit under his uniform and winning the Iron Cross.

Chaos in the last months of the war. Hans encounters a Romanian regiment breaking and fleeing. They have crucified their general; there he languishes, correct in every detail on his cross; Entrescue.

Hans meets a girl he had kissed in 1942. She has waited. “I was sure I would find you here, or someone very like you.” She had fled Berlin. ‘The forests are full of graves where locals buried city dwellers after they had robbed and raped and killed them. That’s more or less all she had to update him with since their last meeting. She fills in the gaps between rapes with stories of Aztec sacrifices, 20,000 a session. Heart wrenching stuff; quite literally.

Now, about the title. On page 52 is the story of a young painter, first artist to inhabit dockland, East London. He loved it: ‘The pain, or memory of pain that was here was literally sucked away by something nameless until only a void was left. ...pain that finally turns to emptiness.’

A year later he had an exhibition of his dockland works. ‘The show would not have been so successful if not for the central painting ...the masterpiece that years later led so many British artists down the path of New Decadence. ... (It) was an ellipsis of self portraits... in the centre of which hung the painter’s mummified right hand.’

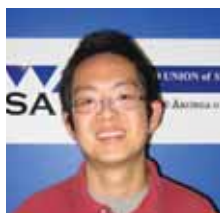
Bolaño had spoken of a ‘hidden centre’ to the book “2666”, and my guess is this is it. On 2/6/66 the painter chopped off his painting hand, took it to a taxidermist (as the book says) and headed for hospital, to be patched.

And one last thing. On page 100 a writer and government agent called El Cerdo – The Pig – saved an old man from harassment by Mexico City cops at the airport. ‘He was huge, El Cerdo wrote. Nearly seven feet tall...’ He asks him if he would like a tour of the city although it’s 2 am. ‘I’m game.’

‘The old man put on a leather jacket... and followed him out.’

That’s page 100, of 898. Archimboldi, mad suit under his jacket, has been stalking us down the pages of the book since then.

NZUSA: A Year of Challenges



Welcome to a new year of study, and a new year of challenges. You'll face a lot of challenges in your work and study, and that's not just writing assign-

ments! This year there are several things brewing in the education sector that may pose major threats to the quality of your education and how accessible it is.

My name is David Do and I'm one of the co-presidents of the national students association, the New Zealand Union of Students' Associations (NZUSA). NZUSA works closely with your EXMSS president Ralph Springett and EXMSS to ensure that your issues and concerns are heard at a national level, especially in Wellington where many of the decisions affecting your education are made.

It's a really busy job being co-president, because there are so many student issues and needs that require attention. I thought the best way in this column would be to canvass a handful we're watching at the moment:

Roger Douglas' Voluntary Student Membership Bill

Elsewhere in Off Campus you would have read all about voluntary student membership, so I won't double up here. Essentially, if Roger Douglas' private members bill is passed into law it will devastate the impor-

tant welfare and pastoral services EXMSS provides for you, as well as the less tangible but very important representation and advocacy EXMSS does on your behalf to Massey University, the government, and the wider community. So while it will threaten how your representatives will advocate for you, it will also harm the quality of your education.

New Minister for Tertiary Education

Some of you will have heard about Minister of Education Anne Tolley being stripped of her Tertiary portfolio so she can 'focus' on implementing national standards in schools. Steven Joyce is now the Minister for Tertiary Education, as well as Minister of Transport, and of Communications and Information Technology. We are looking forward to building a cordial and positive working relationship with Minister Joyce. In particular, we hope he can use his business background to find innovative solutions to the current challenges of the tertiary sector rather than relying on blunt funding cuts.

Academic Progression

There is growing concern over tightened policies on academic progression at universities. While we are not opposed to conditions requiring minimum standards, we are increasingly concerned that such policies are being implemented in a punitive way without adequate compensating support for the students who need it.

It appears that institutions are becoming

more proactive in trying to tailor and mandate specific academic advice and support to struggling students at an earlier stage. However, you'd think that proactive support schemes would be in place anyway. Is this a case of being more proactive with students only when the funding gets tighter, rather than due to ongoing student need?

Limited Entry

There are risks that funding pressures will force universities and polytechnics to eliminate current pathways of open access to their study programmes. While some programmes already have limited entry, there is particular disquiet over possible moves to increase entry requirements for degrees like Bachelors of Arts, Science, and Education, as well as reviewing the current access afforded to over-20s.

Reducing access like this may reduce educational opportunities for over-25s, as well as potential learners from disadvantaged backgrounds and lower decile schools. Academic performance at a university is not necessarily correlated with high school performance, and yet there is a high risk that entry criteria based primarily on high school results will shut out potential high achievers.

David Do is the co-president of the national students association, the New Zealand Union of Students' Associations (NZUSA). He can be contacted at david.do@students.org.nz

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Welcome to Maori Extramural Students

Within a few generations, Aotearoa may become to future Maori what 'Hawaiiki' is for today's Maori - a mystical ancestral homeland. Each year I seem to have more and more whanau to visit in Australia. Some have come back to the comforts of home. Others hop back and forth as the whim or opportunities present themselves and there are others who seem to have put down roots that provide me with a base for my brief visits. Children and grandchildren are born there. Can we call them tangata whenua, people of the land? I wonder.

If I take my wonderings any further perhaps I might come up with a research topic. A visit to the library and a chat to the Maori Librarian Sheeanda Field could help me find out what has been broadly covered up to now. I could check out the online resources too. From there I could tease out the topic by talking to Ani Gray—the Kaitautoko Maori (Humanities and Social Sciences)—and the other Maori staff or students. That is the advantage of being on campus—the people and the resources are handy.

So, a very warm welcome to Massey University! Your experience of learning will be unique to you. Many students will merge their study with other commitments such as work and family. Some students (internals) will visit a classroom most days but the majority (extramurals) will rarely

see a campus at anytime during their study. Each learning experience differs with its own advantages and challenges; all are interesting, positive, and explore the world of possibilities.

I have been an extramural student, living near a campus and at other times living way in the regions. There were certain advantages to living near the campus. For instance, if an assignment was due on a Friday, I had an extra two days before submitting it by driving up to the university and putting it in the assignment slot on Monday morning before 8 o'clock. In the near future students will be able to submit their assignments electronically. But not all students have Internet access and some students, e.g. inmates, likely never will. How to make opportunities equitable?

In a quest to bridge the distance for Maori extramural students, there are several initiatives available, including:

1. **Pre-reading Advice** – tawhiti@massey.ac.nz as well as the online pre-reading service,
2. **WebCT and Stream** – online whanau study and social groups, and
3. **Tuakana** regional contact person.

Writing and Study Skills Advice

At any stage of assignment preparation – from question interpretation through the planning stage, to the final draft, we offer

pre-reading advice, so email us an attachment of your drafts. We take a copy and use the track change function in Microsoft Word to give comments and advice. The pre-reading service is open to all extramurals but Maori students may email their enquiries and assignments to tawhiti@massey.ac.nz.

Stream and WebCT

Introduce yourself, have a discussion and find out who your course mates are on the Maori Student Community 'Tawhiti Whakapakari' WebCT site and the soon-to-be-launched Stream site called 'Tairua mai Tata, mai Tawhiti'. These sites enable you to share study experiences and learn from each other. At the moment you have access to the WebCT 'Tawhiti Whakapakari' WebCT and can log in through the homepage.

Whakapakari Akonga Programme

This programme runs very closely alongside the EXMSS EARS. If you are Maori you may register for the tuakana-assisted programme. The tuakana are all experienced and successful Maori students.

Also, call us – the Te Hononga Mai i Tawhiti Staff - for a phone-based or face-to-face consultation about your study.

Dorothy Hayes

Whakatohea, Ngaitai
Te Hononga Mai Tawhiti
tawhiti@massey.ac.nz
0800 Massey extn 2171

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CROSSWORD 54

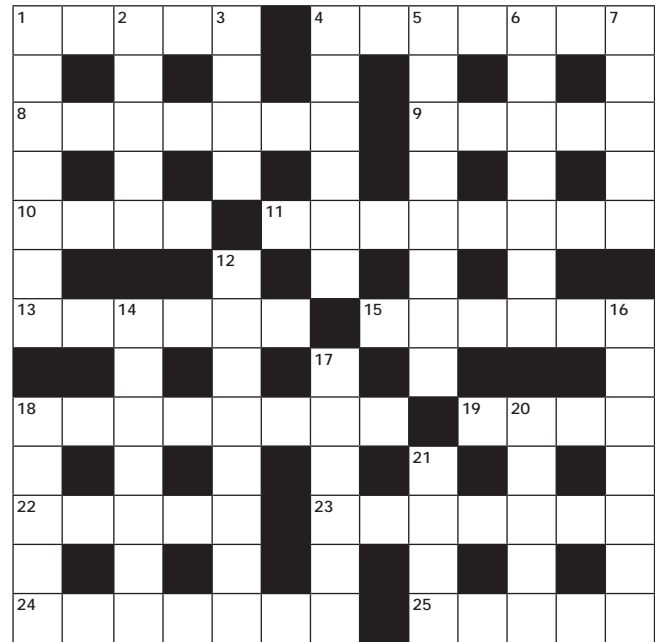
ACROSS

- 1 Small department I find lukewarm
- 4 Eroding of the slighted?
- 8 Mythical creature in a tunic? Or nylons
- 9 Marriage for the workers?
- 10 They are square on the edge
- 11 Matches people out
- 13 Get rid of French wine
- 15 Container for vehicle with weight
- 18 Main pool for a horse
- 19 Award gets nothing in the instrument.
- 22 Crew consumed say...
- 23 ...mothers fighting dog
- 24 Curl might end riling some
- 25 Doyle makes Swiss sing

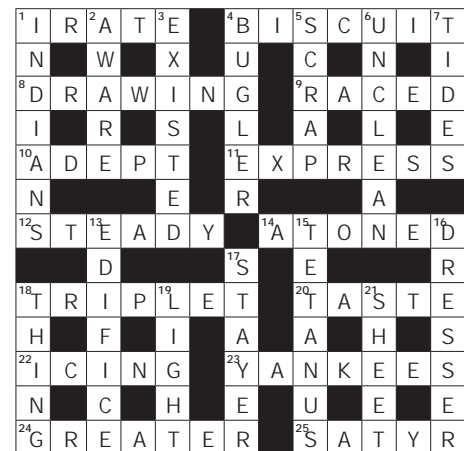
DOWN

- 1 Teased small boy with relative in...
- 2 ...a group of cats in sin
- 3 Opening to back old measurement
- 4 Fifty lost from coal fire
- 5 Cut a nail – or jib perhaps
- 6 End in tear of clothes
- 7 Hollows back in distended person
- 12 ...who is quicker than theatrical assistant...
- 14 Shape of a dead parrot?
- 16 ...wanting end to fuel
- 17 Brute backs the layer
- 18 Crease in ample attachment
- 20 Erect said to be invoiced
- 21 See a mole on point

Correct entries will go into a draw and the winner will receive a \$100 book voucher from EXMSS. Congratulations to Gilbert Best from Christchurch the winner of crossword #53.



Answers to crossword #53.



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CAREERS AND COUNSELLING with John Ross

Self-care – investing in your wellbeing and performance

Happy New Year! My column for this edition is brought to you by a colleague with whom I'm fortunate enough to work closely, namely Karilyn Andrew, Massey's Student Wellbeing Co-ordinator.

For new and returning extramural students alike, it is common to start the academic year with a host of resolutions about what you will achieve in the year, and how you will do it. Maybe you are revitalised after a holiday break and are feeling particularly motivated and committed to success. Maybe you are hoping to do things a little differently than last year, having discovered room for improvement.

Extramural students face the common challenge of balancing and managing competing demands for time and attention. It can be difficult to maintain a sense of bal-

ance and control as the demands of university study unfold during the semester and pressure starts to mount. Often the best-laid plans and intentions go out the window and it can become very easy to overlook self-care needs and the basic factors which provide balance in life and help manage stress. It is important to resist the urge to let self-care drop off your radar as you get busier. A consistent and routine investment in self-care will pay more dividends when it comes to your academic performance and sense of wellbeing.

Here are some essential components of basic self-care, which I know that you already know, but it never hurts to be reminded. It's advisable to include these in your life each day:

- Pay attention to your **diet and nutritional needs**.
- Include **relaxation** or some time out just for you each day (yes you can do it – even if just for fifteen minutes!!).
- **Be active** – walking, sport, yoga, swimming, dancing – what ever works for you. Break it into chunks – you don't have to do it all at once. Even getting up for

a quick walk round the block during a study break can be really helpful, both for your brain and your body.

- **Get adequate sleep and rest** – this is vital. Staying up all night to study is not helpful as your only strategy for getting through university. Your brain and body need time to unwind before you go to bed, and you need to have regular rest to regenerate, and keep resilient.
- **Socialise** – connect with family, friends, colleagues and others. It can be tempting to shut this down when studying, but it is vital to have those connections, to have some fun, get some time out, and keep things in perspective.

I wish you well in your studies this year. If you are interested in receiving the monthly email newsletter **Wellbeing@Massey**, please email me via K.M.Andrew@massey.ac.nz and I will add you to the mailing list.

To finish, if you are job seeking you may want to check out the Virtual Career Fair taking place in mid to late March 2010. See www.vcf.graduatecareers.com.au for more information on this.



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