

Uni NEWS

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ANNIE GOLDSON

Telling the stories
of First in Family
students in an
innovative way

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COLLECTIVE CHALLENGES



Long before I was offered the position of Vice-Chancellor at the University of Auckland, I was aware that forward movement – for

individuals and for society collectively – was based upon the determined acceptance of grand challenges.

For me, the embracing of a challenge, and the effective work in meeting and solving challenges, is not a rhetorical issue – a pleasing set of words. My commitment is born of my experiences, of the absolute certainty that treating challenges as an invitation to action (rather than as a set of formidable stop-signs), can and does change lives.

So here we are, taking a deep breath and tackling the challenges of a global pandemic.

Lives change and the world changes. In universities, this is not least because students discover that they can go further and do more than they ever dreamt, encouraged by teachers who inspire and nurture. Researchers wonder and explore, despite the innumerable difficulties and frustrations along their paths, and build pathways into the future.

There are techniques involved in the embracing of challenge and things people learn along the way. I have learnt that cooperation and collaboration works. Ploughing on regardless of the views of others will, sooner or later, bring you to a halt and incite more opposition than you would otherwise have encountered.

Collaboration and cooperation have to exist within a university, between universities, and with a wider and diverse community, in which you all play such an important part, perhaps even more so at this current time.

How we act and engage (from a distance) with our colleagues, friends, whānau and people in our bubbles will be defining – for us as individuals and as a university. It might be that this enforced break from our normal lives provides an opportunity to reflect on what we do and how, and on the valuable role that universities play nationally and internationally. This is one of the things I will be thinking about in coming weeks, as we begin to shape the University of Auckland's Strategic Plan beyond 2020 – this will be an important road map for our focus in coming years.

Our work with the community teaches us the true and immense value of welcoming diversity, in all its forms. We learn that intelligence, insight and knowledge are everywhere. These are all essential ingredients to solving grand challenges and creating a healthy and productive future. I look forward to engaging with the University community in support of this shared agenda.

■ Professor Dawn Freshwater, Vice-Chancellor

SNAPSHOTS

REMEMBRANCE SERVICE

On 13 March, a service was held in the pavilion at Old Government House, to mark one year since the Christchurch mosque killings (15 March). It was a chance to acknowledge the community and University's response, as well as people's resilience. Around 150 Muslim staff and students attended prayers, before Kaiarataki Michael Steedman opened the service. People stayed and chatted afterwards, and also farewelled McLaurin Chaplain Reverend Dr Carolyn Kelly. (See page 4.)



VICE-CHANCELLOR FAREWELLED

Remember the days when a handshake and a hongi was ok? Ahhh... it wasn't so long ago. On 18 February, around 400 staff gathered to farewell Vice-Chancellor Professor Stuart McCutcheon after 15 years in the role. UniServices kaiārahi Geremy Hema (pictured with Stuart) led the tribute, and the staff choir, conducted by Michelle Wong, sang a special waiata composed for the occasion. Associate Professor Selina Tusitala Marsh couldn't be there but wrote a poem recorded on video for the farewell event.



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MARIE ROSS

While we are saving New Zealand from the spread of COVID-19, many people are saving their sanity by being able to play a musical instrument while in lockdown.

Dr Marie Ross from the School of Music is a renowned clarinet player who's a specialist in historical clarinet – and she has plenty of instruments to choose from.

What drew you to the clarinet?

My dad was an amateur jazz guitarist so I grew up listening to that. I wanted to be a saxophonist and tried to get an audition for the school youth symphony and they were like 'no, we play classical'. I never really listened to any classical music until a teacher gave me a piece – Mussorgsky, *Pictures at an Exhibition*.

Tell us about your clarinets.

I have around 70 ... it's a bit of an addiction. I've found most quite inexpensively through good luck on eBay. Sometimes an old clarinet might look ugly and green and you just clean it up and it's a gorgeous instrument. I've figured out how to fix them myself. I made clarinets for a couple of years and still have a couple that are quite nice.

How does a modern clarinet differ?

The modern clarinet is made of a different type of wood – African Blackwood – which is much stronger and thicker. The historical clarinet is made of boxwood, which is softer, more delicate and different in tone. The next obvious thing is that modern clarinets have many more keys. Old clarinets have very few, in fact they started out with just a couple of keys and as music became more chromatic and complicated, gained more. With old clarinets you had to use odd fingering because there weren't the keys to make different tones, so composers wrote for those sort of odd-sounding notes. With modern clarinets, there's a clever fingering system and the keys play easily.

What's it like to change between them?

If you take a Baroque-era clarinet and a romantic period clarinet, they're completely different. Two of my favourites are ones that I played on the recording I did. One is a custom-made clarinet by one of the most important clarinet makers. I found it advertised on a website and I went to try it. For the family selling it, it was really important that somebody actually played it. They'd had two offers to buy it from collectors, but chose me. If you play originals, you have to work so hard on the intonation, because they valued the tone of the instrument over the intonation. The breathing is also very different. The late German clarinet is so massive ... and its sound is huge. Because of that,



Dr Marie Ross with some of her old favourite clarinets and a modern version. Photo: Elise Manahan

the finger holes are bigger and you need more air to play it, so that's a challenge. I learned it and when I went back to the modern clarinet it was much easier because I developed flexibility and listening skills as a result of playing 'the hard way'.

What brought you to NZ?

Once I got my doctorate, I was looking for a university job. I met my husband, who's from Auckland and this job opened up at the same time. I performed for about ten years and it was great but you're always broke and you don't get a chance to make recordings. Here, we have amazing grants that have allowed me, for instance, to travel back to Europe in 2018 to make a recording of Brahms on historical instruments. It was the first-ever such recording so that's an opportunity you'd never have if you just did orchestra work. Also, I really love teaching!

When did you start at the University?

I was hired in November 2016 and started in 2017. I'd been living in Cologne for ten years. Unlike the States, which can have massive performance clarinet schools with 100 students, ours is nice and small. So I may have half a dozen students but I then get to teach academic classes and share lecturing. I like the variety.

Is the School of Music strong on early music?

Yes it is. Associate Professor James Tibbles, the new Head of School, is a historic keyboards specialist. We also have recorder teacher Imogen Morris, a doctoral student, who teaches one of the performance practice classes with me. And Ben Hoadley teaches historical bassoon.

What's more important to you, performance or recording?

Recording reaches so many people around the world, more than you can ever do when you play live concerts. Not that you can do those at the moment anyway. But for about five years before I recorded *Brahms Clarinet Sonatas and Trio on*

Historical Instruments, I travelled everywhere I could doing live performances of that repertoire. I researched it for about ten years to find the right instruments to perform on, then had to get them restored and learn how to play them. We all played on original instruments, not copies.

So you've performed all over the world. Where's your favourite?

Probably Paris. People there are so excited and so enthusiastic. There's always a massive response because the orchestra I play with in 'Ensemble Matheus' is really good ... people go crazy for it. But it doesn't really matter where, if people are excited about it. In New Zealand, the audience is often older but we're trying to attract younger people too. I've started a wind octet here which has been great. I think it's one of the best ensembles we have at the University.

Favourite composers?

Mozart was the first major composer to write for the clarinet as a melodic instrument. He and Johannes Brahms wrote their clarinet pieces late in life, just before they died. Those are the most brilliant sort of major profound works. Mozart's *Clarinet Concerto* is massive, more than 20 minutes long. Brahms had retired from composing but he heard a clarinetist record Richard Mühlfeld, whom he really fell in love with, and wrote the clarinet works at the end of his life.

Is the clarinet more or less popular today?

There's not much of a history of clarinet here. At the University, I'm the first contracted permanent teacher to teach it in many decades. But, in 2017, I started the first New Zealand event solely dedicated to the clarinet. The University of Auckland Clarinet Day was so popular that in 2018 it turned into the University of Auckland clarinet weekend. We're just working out when we can hold it this year, given the COVID-19 situation.

Marie also has a podcast at fideliopodcast.com

GOOD TO KNOW

TOKEN **KEA** STORY

A new study from the School of Psychology reveals just how smart kea are.

Publishing in *Nature Communications*, PhD candidate Amalia Bastos and Associate Professor Alex Taylor carried out an experiment to test New Zealand's alpine parrots (*Nestor notabilis*) on their ability to make predictions using statistical, physical and social information in a similar way to a human. In the three-part study, six kea were first shown that choosing a black-coloured token always led to a food reward, while an orange-coloured token never did.

They were then shown two jars of mixed tokens, one with more black tokens than orange and one with more orange than black. A human experimenter reached into each jar and brought out a token hidden in their fist so the birds could not see what colour it was. Kea then had to predict which hand they thought held the prized black token. The birds consistently chose the hand that had reached into the jar with the greatest number of black tokens, showing they could use the relative frequency of black and orange tokens to make a prediction. The experimenters then tested if kea could combine other sources of knowledge into their predictions about uncertain events. The birds were presented with two jars of tokens with a barrier positioned across the middle between top and bottom so that only the tokens at the top were accessible. Even though both jars had an equal number of black and orange tokens in total, kea consistently chose from the jar that had a greater number of black tokens in the accessible top half of the jar.



This showed the birds were able to combine information about the physical world (the presence of a barrier in the middle of the jar) with information about the relative frequency of tokens, an ability that has so far only been demonstrated in human infants.

"The results from the study are surprising as they mirror those from infants and chimpanzees in similar tests," says Amalia. "They show kea can look at the ratio of objects to make a prediction about uncertain events – what we call statistical inference. That kea could then integrate different types of information into these predictions was really unexpected: this type of integration has been thought to require language.

"This is the first evidence that a bird can make true statistical inferences and integrate different types of information into their predictions of uncertain events."

■ [Read the full story about the Kea study at tinyurl.com/UoASmartKeaStudy](https://tinyurl.com/UoASmartKeaStudy)

TAKING FLIGHT TO SCOTLAND

Reverend Carolyn Kelly reflects on a job well done as the Maclaurin chaplain.

On 13 March, Reverend Dr Carolyn Kelly was part of the congregation at an event held in the University Pavilion to remember the horrific events of 15 March, 2019.

It was an emotional event for two reasons. The cause of the remembrance itself, and the fact it was held on Carolyn's last day working at the University. She says while the Christchurch terror attack was the worst of times in New Zealand, the response to it was positive and uplifting.

"The hope and the community support we demonstrated and the care for one another was powerful," she says. "It's really important that we do keep honouring it and keep thinking about our relationship with the Muslim community. If 'they are us' as we said they were, what does it mean in the way we live?"

She says the time was challenging for everyone. "We were really stretched at the University but thankfully we already had a voluntary Muslim chaplain on our team," says Carolyn. "Shahela Qureshi was actually overseas on sabbatical at the time but she pitched in and was advising us ... it was a really hard time for her too."

She says having a chaplain for Muslims is very much in keeping with the move towards multi-faith chaplaincies around the world.

Carolyn is starting a new job as the chaplain at Glasgow University this month after seven years at the University of Auckland chaplaincy, the past four full-time as the **Maclaurin Chaplain**.

"I have a real affinity with Scotland," explains Carolyn. "We're Presbyterian so we have that link to the Church of Scotland, and our family lived in Aberdeen for nearly six years where I studied. I just finished my PhD and we came straight back to New Zealand. When I left Scotland I didn't realise I'd head into University chaplaincy but I did and it's been wonderful. But there's been a sense of our time not being over in Scotland, and one of our daughters lives there.

"When we were on a sabbatical 18 months ago, it felt like we weren't done there."

Whoever takes Carolyn's place as University Chaplain will need to understand the changing nature of university community faith practices. Although the Chapel and the lead chaplain's position is for a Christian minister funded by the Richard Maclaurin Goodfellow Trust, it's very common in overseas universities to have other chaplaincies.

TEACHING AWARD

Aimee Macaskill, manager of the University of Auckland's early childhood centres, was one of six people selected nationwide to receive an ASG National Excellence in Teaching Award (NEITA) recently.

Aimee oversees the University's six childcare centres, including a Kohanga Reo and kohungahunga. The award acknowledges the inspirational mentoring she provides to the leaders of those centres.



"I shifted from working with children to working with the adults who work with children. However the goal has always remained the same – to improve outcomes and create positive experiences," says Aimee, who joined the University 18 months ago but has worked in early childhood education for 25 years.

"I try to create meaningful relationships with our centre leaders and understand deeply what's going on in their lives professionally and personally so they are fully supported. You need happy and engaged staff to have happy and engaged children."

Aimee says she is proud to shine any positive light on people working in ECE. "The first five years sets the foundation for life. I often say we work with the youngest enrolled University students. We are an integral part of the University community and having really great ECE centres means our academics, our professional staff and our students are able to perform at their best."



“That’s a journey that, as a community, we undertake together and it’s not just down to me as a chaplain just to say, seriously you need to do this. Let’s walk in partnership and see how this will evolve and reflect our character, in keeping with our University’s vision and our values.

“We also have to honour our existing traditions – this beautiful chapel was gifted by a Christian trust but has become a place that’s hospitable and that’s reflected in the chaplaincy.”

She says the University has to work with other faiths, such as Muslim, to create a model that works here. “In Britain, many universities have integrated their multi-faith chaplaincies very well into student life and that’s the situation I’m going to at Glasgow.”

Carolyn says she’s had a wonderful time at Auckland, with many highs. “One was when the Board agreed that I could build a team, about four years ago. In previous times our chaplaincy was one chaplain paid for by the Board, and there might be one or two others supported part-time by someone else. That was a huge turning point



Carolyn next to the Don Binney artwork she says reflects this stage of her life.

I love Scottish history and the history of Christianity, so there’s a deep pool I’d like to swim in.

because it meant I could bring in a couple of part-time chaplains with different skills to reflect our community and become more effective.

“The other success has been the partnerships with New Zealand Christians in Science. That’s helped us to have academically focused events, and to consider how we integrate faith with the biggest issues of science and ethics. We’ve had panels on such things as climate change, and how we respond to the End-of-Life Bill. So we have conversations with Catholic, with Muslim, with ourselves and others, and it’s been really positive.”

In a largely secular society though, could religion do with a bit of a shake-up?

“Numbers in traditional churches are in decline. So that’s a challenge. But for me, engaging with our community is the key to enabling our young students’ thoughtfulness. That means not throwing out the traditional but being able to reimagine in today’s times. Guy Consolmagno, the Vatican astronomer, is doing exactly that. They’re incorporating and researching the frontiers of science, yet recognising that at times the church has struggled with science, so shake-ups have happened at different moments. Churches needed to find fresh ways of being in this world in a way that’s authentic but also incorporates the gospel.”

She says Christianity, and all religions, must acknowledge history, good and bad. “Abuse in the church, colonialism, our early interaction with Māori, we need to talk about those things. They don’t completely define our Christian history but they’re part of it. If we believe in God, and a God of grace, we shouldn’t be fazed by these discussions. We should welcome them.”

Carolyn is looking forward to immersing herself in the history of Christianity through Glasgow University, one of the oldest English-speaking universities in the world.

“I love Scottish history and the history of Christianity, so there’s a deep pool I’d like to swim in. Glasgow University was established in 1451, and the history of St Kentigern or Mungo the patron saint of Glasgow, is so interesting. What does it mean for this ancient land, with valued Christian traditions in this incredibly complex time, to find new ways of living our faith?”

Carolyn’s husband will be alongside her. “My husband was a Church of Scotland minister in the past so he’s going to be teaching and training people in the Church of Scotland through a University post as well. He’ll be part of my flock!”

As well as the impact Carolyn has had on the University, she will be leaving something of herself behind. In days gone by there was an artwork Carolyn loved, by Don Binney, that hung in the chapel. It disappeared and she found that it had ultimately ended up in the Science Block.

“It never came back to us. But I was talking to the art collection people who told me about another one, and asked me if I’d be interested.”

That Binney artwork *Kawaupaku te Henga* (1967) features a small black shag flying over the lake at Te Henga. “Now it’s hanging in the chapel and it’s lovely. It reminds me how we learn from birds and from the natural world,” says Carolyn.

“Birds are also a theological symbol suggestive of the Trinity. In scriptures, the bird often signals the presence of the Spirit in the world. It reminds me that God is watching over this place. I feel like it’s sending me off. I feel like my time here is done.”

Now all that’s left is to have faith that her own flight isn’t delayed.

■ Denise Montgomery



On her last day at the University, Reverend Dr Carolyn Kelly attended a remembrance to mark 15 March, 2019. Pictured with Shahela Qureshi. Photo: Richard Ng



IN EVIDENCE WE TRUST

Countering the global rise of misinformation and declining public trust with robust research and evidence-based advice is the fundamental goal of Koi Tū: The Centre for Informed Futures.

It's an independent and apolitical think tank and research centre founded at the University by Distinguished Professor Sir Peter Gluckman – former Chief Science Advisor to the Prime Minister. Deputy director is Dr Anne Bardsley.

Koi Tū was launched at an event at Government House on 4 March at which Sir Peter told guests the idea was born out of a realisation that it has

never been more important for community and local, national and global policy decisions to be informed by evidence.

“Society is searching for information it can trust. But unfortunately, we live in a world where the contest of ideas is increasingly taking place in an unhealthy environment of misinformation and, in many places, declining public trust in democratic, scientific and societal institution.”

Chancellor Scott St John told the crowd that Sir Peter has identified issues that society must confront. “Leading universities such as Auckland must evolve to engage better and be more impactful on the key issues that matter. This initiative places us at the forefront of what a globally significant university should do. Research need not only be empirical. It must also involve deep reflection, analysis and communications

and must take better advantage of crossing and integrating disciplines.”

Scott also highlighted an issue created by the proliferation of social media. “*The New York Times* has won 127 Pulitzer Prizes but only has around 3 million circulation. Similarly, *The Economist* has a circulation of about 1.5 million. Meanwhile, two of the Kardashians have 127 million people reading their thoughts.”

Anne says the centre will offer thought leaders and researchers a way to engage with the community and inform the policy discussion, while also offering a pathway to policymakers to find the right advice. “We combine the scientific disciplines to provide collaborative advice that can help policy makers and civil society better understand the issues.” The timing, in light of COVID-19, couldn't be better.

■ Read more about the centre at informedfutures.org



TOP CANCER SCIENTISTS HONOURED

Since its inception in 1956, the Auckland Cancer Society Research Centre (ACSRC) has published more than 1,800 papers in international scientific and medical journals, and filed more than 130 patent applications for new anti-cancer drugs.

Recently the ACSRC held a symposium to celebrate the remarkable careers of Emeritus Professor Bill Wilson, Distinguished Professor Bill Denny and Emeritus Distinguished Professor Bruce Baguley (pictured left to right).

All three were instrumental in developing the centre's reputation for getting results and making

discoveries that give cancer sufferers hope. They have retired in the past two years, although Bill Denny plans to continue his research part-time for a few years.

The reception was attended by 180 delegates and this was followed by the full day symposium on Saturday attended by 140 guests.

Associate Professor Jonathan Koea from the Cancer Society Auckland Northland spoke at the reception and handed over life membership of the Cancer Society to Bill Denny and Bill Wilson. Both recipients gave a 45-minute lecture about their careers.

LAW ACADEMIC MAKES LEGAL HISTORY

A highly respected member of the Auckland Law School's academic staff, Associate Professor Amokura Kawharu, has been appointed president of the Law Commission.

Amokura (Ngāpuhi and Ngāti Whātua) is the first Māori and the first woman appointed to the prestigious role. The president of the Law Commission is appointed by the Governor-General, on the advice of the Justice Minister, and must be a judge or retired judge of the Court of Appeal or the High Court, or a barrister or solicitor of the High Court of not less than seven years' practice. Amokura holds a BA and a Bachelor of Law degree (with Honours) from the University and a Masters of Laws (first class) from the University of Cambridge. Her research interests include international trade and investment law, arbitration, and international disputes resolution. She will take over from deputy president, Helen McQueen, in May.





WHEN THE TIME IS RIGHT

Claire Morrison-Rooney: easing into semi-retirement

With all the self-isolating and working from home going on, it's not a bad time to retire. Claire Morrison-Rooney reflects on the past 25 years.

When Claire Morrison-Rooney finished up at the University in March, it was literally a case of last one out, turn off the lights.

Claire's office was on the seventh floor of the Fisher Building, where the former occupants are writ large in out-of-date plaques on the door. There are empty offices from tenants past such as the University of California and Comms and Marketing, but plenty of lovely art on the walls.

"I've just taken away 20 years of the University of Auckland at Manukau Programme to be archived," says Claire says.

"So 31 box files have gone to Libby Nichol in the library. And all the stationery has gone to students to use if they need it."

Then there's the several bottles of hand sanitiser and numerous packets of tissues for which she could no doubt also find a home.

Claire has worked at the University for 25 years in numerous project management roles. Her longest stint was as the manager of the University of Auckland at Manukau Programme (MIT).

"I've been in the Manukau job since 2006, but I started with the University in 1994 and worked for nearly eight years as the registrar for the Theology Consortium, which was a consortium of theological colleges. From there I moved to the School of Education and the transition to the Faculty of Education and Social Work. I've worked on the Tāmaki, Epsom and City Campuses."

When the University's relationship with MIT ended and the new South Auckland campus was set up for 2020, Claire's role came to an end. Although she thought about taking a short-term contract offered by her boss Professor John Morrow, who is also soon to retire, the time seemed right to go. "I just found it was a natural conclusion. Yes, I'm sad to be leaving an institution that I really loved working in. But I'm looking forward to all the freedom that involves. There's anticipation and excitement."

Claire says the creation of the new South Auckland campus, [Te Papa Ako o Tai Tonga](#), was vital. "It's exactly what needed to happen. It will just go from strength to strength and become a gateway for the University in South Auckland. It's really nice to have their own identity and it's in a great place right in the heart of Manukau, with the library in the same street, and a lovely park."

Claire says she's observed a real community aspect to learning at Manukau over the years and it's an experience she will treasure.

"At events, you'd look at the sea of faces from all of these different nationalities and see a student body that was just so supportive of each other. That always impressed me – they were all so invested in each other's success."

Claire has seen the University as a place of lifelong learning, even though she's been employed as professional staff. When she was doing her postgraduate diploma at the Business School, in Personnel Management and Employee Relations, Dr Judith McMorland introduced the class to the publication, *The Fifth Discipline* by Peter Senge. He talked about the "learning organisation", how to build shared vision within organisations and how workplaces could be improved if you respect each individual."

She says that kind of information influenced the way she came to work at the University.

One of Claire's most challenging management projects was the restructuring of the University's degrees to 120 points and the introduction of General Education.

"I've always had a really good team around me for all the projects I've managed. The people at the coalface doing the work have been excellent."

She says the opportunity to attend educational events on campus is also invaluable.

"You can go to all the lecture series and learn about all the research going on in the place. That will be one of the big things that I miss."

But Claire won't just be walking the beach at Long Bay and heading to the gym once life returns to normal post-lockdown. "In reality, retirement from the University is really an ease into semi-retirement. Some time ago I set up my own company, Clear Word Consulting Ltd, a book-editing and proofreading consultancy. It's important to keep the brain active.

"I was really privileged to work in this University after having done my management degree ... thank goodness I did that degree. I did used to harbour thoughts that maybe some day I'd be doing a doctorate. My husband said to me the other day ... 'well now you've got time.'"

BABY BRAIN MAY BE GOOD

A study has found that grey matter in women's brains increases after they give birth.

An international research team, including Associate Professor Eileen Lueders and Dr Florian Kurth from the University, analysed MRI brain scans of 14 pregnant women at two time points – first between one and two days after childbirth and again four to six weeks after childbirth. When scans were compared, researchers found a marked increase in grey matter in both

cortical and sub-cortical regions, across both hemispheres and in all four brain lobes.

Grey matter comprises the nerve cells in our brains responsible for processing information and contributes to thinking, feeling and behaviour. Study participants were aged 25 to 38 and for half the women it was a first-time birth. All had normal pregnancies and deliveries and were breastfeeding at the time of the second brain scan.

Study lead author Associate Professor Lueders says the observed grey matter changes add further evidence that the human brain is highly plastic, even in adulthood. While the findings are significant, further research is needed to

understand whether the tissue increase is an effect of brain restoration or reorganisation, or both. "The brain may simply recover from the tissue loss that occurred during pregnancy, so what we see could be merely a restoration effect.

"However, our findings may also point to actual brain enhancement: being a mother requires a whole new repertoire of skills and behaviour. Research has shown that exercising new skills and engaging in new activities leads to tissue increases. So, mothers might not just get back what they lost during pregnancy, but even gain a bit more."

■ Whole story at: tinyurl.com/UoABrainStudy



Professor Annie Goldson: Turning her camera to First in Family students at the University.

GIVING STUDENT STORIES A VOICE

What challenges do First in Family students face in their first year at uni? Annie Goldson and 'Ema Wolfgramm-Foliaki followed a group of them to find out.

Awarding-winning filmmaker Professor Annie Goldson hasn't had to travel too far from her university office desk for her latest production.

Annie is best known for her personal and political documentaries, often championing social justice causes. She's been making them for more than 20 years but still rates her first feature-length documentary, *Punitive Damage*, as her most powerful. Many others have drawn acclaim, including *Georgie Girl* (2002), *An Island Calling* (2008) *Brother Number One* (2011), *He Toki Huna: New Zealand in Afghanistan* (2013) and 2017's *Kim Dotcom: Caught in the Web*. (See excerpts at <http://op.co.nz/films/>)

The triggers for many of her films are little things she's overheard or seen that pique her interest, from clips in the newspaper to casual conversations and, as it turns out, pitches by fellow staff members. Great ideas are everywhere, she tells her students, but they have to be realisable. Will they be able to be turned into a documentary? Will they attract funding and an audience?

Annie was on a committee for the World Universities Network (WUN) which was

offering development funding for projects with international potential. An applicant had made it through the first two stages and then had to be interviewed by a panel that included Annie.

That applicant was a lecturer from the Faculty of Education and Social Work, Dr 'Ema Wolfgramm-Foliaki, who talked about her First in Family (FiF) research – studies of people attending the University of Auckland who were the first in their whānau to do so.

"It struck me the subject would make an interesting documentary, to look at the particular issues that First in Family face," says Annie.

"I hadn't met Annie before so I wasn't really sure what her background was," says 'Ema. "But during my interview she mentioned the idea of a potential documentary, so that was interesting."

'Ema won funding for her FiF project with the colleagues she'd been working with including researchers from overseas universities, as is required by the WUN.

"We went on and completed it that year and published a number of articles and a book," says 'Ema.

Annie was busy with the *Kim Dotcom* film but when that was completed, she contacted 'Ema.

"Initially I thought of it as a documentary, but it would have had to be a longitudinal documentary," says Annie. "They take a lot of production time so we decided to do it as a website with video, engaging with online tools, to make it simpler."

The idea was for it to appeal to other students and potential students.

The pair managed to get funding from Education and Social Work's Faculty Research Development Fund (FRDF) that helped with research, filming, photography and production.

"I hired mostly talented student and post-student crew," says Annie.

"Designer/cinematographer Renke An and directors Lila Bullen-Smith and Julie Zhu, along with some great photographers."

The result is a standalone website, <https://fif.op.co.nz/> but the project will also be hosted on [The Big Q](#) founded by Dr Maria Armoudian (Politics and International Relations) and possibly on mainstream media sites.

The directors interviewed ten of the FiF students on camera, with six making it to the final site. The interviews were transcribed, then edited into short documentaries.

The transcriptions were used as a basis for short biographies but also work, in full, as research interviews for 'Ema's academic project. Each student was then photographed, sometimes with their families, producing striking photo essays.

"We're trying to capture a sense of the students' lives," says Annie.

"First in Family students are usually assessed through quantitative measures – what's their dropout rate, what's their pass rate? This is more like a qualitative study because you're getting a first-hand account of their experiences and thoughts."

The website features six students from different backgrounds – Moana, Faith, Shelby, Arapeta, Java and Tyler. Annie acknowledges that certain students tended to self-select for the project so they may be at the confident end of the cohort, but the students are still a diverse bunch, enrolled in a range of courses of study.

Moana is one of those who features online. She's the daughter of a Japanese factory manager and a Samoan worker, who moved to New Zealand at a young age to live with her grandparents.

She says going to university has "always been a personal goal of mine but also for my

grandparents. I really wanted to go to uni for them. I'm definitely not here just for me."

Over the course of the year, Moana says she's gained the confidence to speak up about an issue that arose for her during her studies.

"I didn't expect to get angry. Part of my degree is talking about global views and I do feel like sometimes I'm not represented well or they don't understand our [Pacific] views well enough to talk about them."

Research shows FiF students are more likely to underperform at university and are at risk of dropping out, especially in their first year. They tend to come from lower socio-economic backgrounds, straddle more than one culture and report feeling out of place in a tertiary institution.

For the WUN project, 'Ema worked with researchers from Sydney, Western Australia and South Africa among others. As it turns out, there are different definitions of what First in Family means in different countries.

"The traditional definition is it's a first-generation student," says 'Ema.

"But the description is quite limiting when it's just the immediate family. For Pacific and Māori students and, surprisingly enough, students from South Africa, First in Family isn't just first-generation. It's a student who is first in their immediate family, first in the extended family, and can also be first in the village or church. So we decided that First in Family seemed appropriate as a way of bringing together a quite complex group ... in fact, we know when you drill down you realise it's not just family."

Annie says there is a degree of cognitive dissonance with the students who are proud to be FiF but when they come to university they are often lumped in with all first-years or put in at-risk programmes based on ethnicity.

"My interest was partly that this seemed to be more about class than anything else."

'Ema agrees: "The University doesn't have a FiF programme, so often they get moved into Tuakana or programmes for Māori students. But first-year students are quite a complex group and I think that's the other challenge. While FiF students' needs might be similar, they do have quite specific needs.



Dr 'Ema Wolfgramm-Foliaki says FiF students are pioneers and role models in their families and communities.

'First in Family students are usually assessed through quantitative measures – what's their dropout rate, what's their pass rate?'

Professor Annie Goldson

"There's some really rich data on First in Family. FiF students talk about their families' support as being critical to their success. But, on the other hand, literature tells us that a family's lack of knowledge about university life is a really negative issue. Because mum and dad didn't go to uni, students feel they can't help them or engage with them in a critical discourse. It

creates a barrier and becomes a predictor for success of FiF students."

She says for many the culture shock of such a huge place is also a challenge.

"I once read on a blog from a US university about this First in Family Latino American student. He'd left home to go to college and on his first weekend back at home, his mum asked how university was. He said 'Mum, it's like going to a different country'."

The same can be true here, she says.

"Despite what the literature says about FiF students, they are 'pioneers' and role-models within their families and communities.

"One of the students we interviewed in the WUN project told us her grandfather picked her up from the University one evening. He was waiting for her and she was taking a little bit longer so he got out of the car and walked onto campus.

"When she met up with him, he was quite overwhelmed. For the whole time he'd lived in this country, that was the first time he'd stepped onto university land. Think about the magnitude of that. So it's quite scary and a huge challenge for FiF students."

■ See the FiF project at <https://fif.op.co.nz/>

Turn to page 10 for **more of Annie's projects.**



Faith
fif.op.co.nz/faith



Java
fif.op.co.nz/java



Moana
fif.op.co.nz/moana



Shelby
fif.op.co.nz/shelby

ART & CULTURE

PUTTING HERSELF IN THE PICTURE

Ashley Tofa is one of ten photographers to be shortlisted in the student category of the Sony World Photography Awards.

She made the cut for her portraits presented for her Master of Fine Arts (Honours) at the University, and also for her series about Ihumātao. The student shortlist features bodies of work by students at leading higher education institutions around the world, who were challenged to create two series of five to ten images responding to two different briefs.

The first brief, Invisible Lines, asked students to engage with the stories of people trying to break invisible barriers and structures, whether natural, social or intellectual. Her response, *Fa'amoemoega' (Expectation)*, her masters submission, features large-scale self-portraits in which she is biting into or has her mouth covered by different objects – such as the red Ulafala (pandanus necklace), Afa (sennit rope) or Tusipaia (Bible).

Ashley, who is of Samoan descent, says her practice revolves around the cultural pressures of fulfilling the migrants' dream, which affected how she was raised. "My parents didn't have the opportunity to further their education at tertiary level and so it fell on us, their children, to fulfil that dream for them and my grandparents."



Ashley Tofa: 'My artworks are a response to a personal feeling or experience at that moment in my life.'

Her art practice has become an outlet for her frustrations, she says. "My clasped jaw and gritted teeth are a metaphor for being silenced, the uncomfortable pressure around my head showing my inability to voice my opinions."

"Growing up as a New Zealand-born Samoan in a Samoan family, my life's path was already determined before I entered this world. This chapter is written for my Pacific brothers and sisters who remain resilient ... where the pressure to fulfil the migrant dream is overwhelming."

She was drawn to the use of self-portraits throughout art school. "My artworks are a response to a personal feeling or experience at that moment in my life, as I struggled to juggle the responsibilities placed on me. Through

self-portraiture I could own my feelings and have some sort of control on how I wanted the audience to view my work."

The second competition brief was Sustainability Now. Students had to produce a body of work connected to environmental sustainability and Ashley's was focused on Ihumātao. "For mana whenua, this place embodies sources of identity and wellbeing."

Ashley says she was overwhelmed to be named in the final ten. "I'm a great believer in embracing opportunities that come my way and through this many doors have opened for me."

All shortlisted photographers have won Sony digital imaging equipment, and the Student Photographer of the Year will be announced in June. **Full story:** tinyurl.com/AshleyTofaPhotos

SHINING HER LIGHT ON SCIENCE,

ARTS AND JUSTICE

(From page 9)

Professor Annie Goldson, a PhD adviser in Media, Film and Television who teaches journalism studies and two advanced documentary courses, is working on a number of other projects.

One documentary that has just received funding from New Zealand on Air is called *Lease on Life*, which is New Zealander David Downs' story about his immunotherapy treatment for cancer. David kept an online blog when he was diagnosed with terminal lymphoma. By chance, a US doctor stumbled upon his entries and was impressed with their humour and integrity. The doctor "made some calls" and David ended up being part of an immunotherapy drug trial known as Car-T at Massachusetts General Hospital. Earlier this year, David announced he was cured.

"The science is so interesting," says Annie, who has a BSc. "It's not my usual thing, but I just feel at the moment in this era of fake everything, and the undermining of knowledge and expertise, it's really

important to recognise innovative science. It's a good news story when everything else is so grim."

Annie has also just completed production on *Red Mole*, funded by an FRDF grant. It explores the history of the avant-garde Kiwi theatre troupe through the daughter of its two principal members, both of whom have passed away.

As well, she's making a 10-part podcast with RNZ, with local producer Alex Behse. Called *Conviction*, it's about the Peter Ellis case.

"Since Peter Ellis died, his appeal has been tangled up in the Supreme Court deciding if it would hear the case of somebody who had passed away. Peter's lawyers said, 'this is important. We believe it's a miscarriage of justice'. The Crown argued Peter was found guilty in a court of law, and two appeals had upheld the original decision.

"What's fascinating is Supreme Court Justices Joe Williams and Susan Glazebrook saying tikanga Māori needed to be considered. They said the māna of our tupuna, all those who have gone before, is as important as the māna of the living.

"So Peter, posthumously, may have been responsible for introducing genuine biculturalism into our highest court." – Denise Montgomery



MUSIC TO THEIR EYES

Rare first editions of two Mozart piano sonatas have turned up in a donated volume of miscellaneous scores now housed in [Special Collections](#).

Te Tumu Herenga cataloguer Margo Knightbridge came across two scores lacking a title page in a bound volume. The volume also contained 18th-century sheet music by Johann Sterkel and Giovanni Viotti.

Library music specialist Phillippa McKeown-Green says School of Music experts identified the unattributed pieces as Sonatas No. 1 and 3 from Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart's *Trois sonates pour le clavecin ou pianoforte*, known more commonly as Piano Sonatas 10, 11 and 12. Further research revealed they were first editions published by Artaria in 1784, and were probably from the first print run of around 100 copies. A Viennese company, Artaria was the primary publisher of Mozart's work during the last few years of his life. Associate Professor Allan Badley, a specialist in 18th-century Viennese music publishing, had a close look at the scores and confirmed the identification.

Unfortunately, Sonata No. 2 is missing from the set and paper fragments suggest it was removed much earlier. Known now as Piano Sonata 11,



K. 331, it contains a final movement marked *Rondo Alla Turca*, possibly Mozart's most famous piano piece. Allan says it's intriguing that the best-known of the three Mozart sonatas was separated from the set at some point, evidence he believes of the work's contemporary popularity in England. He also notes it is interesting musicologically to see that the Mozart publication was collected and bound with two piano concertos by Viotti (1755-1824) and keyboard parts from a set of three trio sonatas by Sterkel (1750-1817).

The pieces in all three sets are technically challenging and were certainly intended for pianists with highly developed skills. Allan is also struck by the high-quality printing and production of the Mozart pieces, including the paper, when

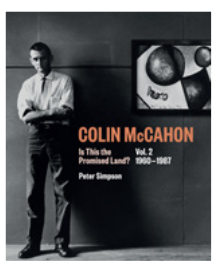
compared with many contemporary Artaria editions he had consulted in European libraries. This indicates that Mozart (1756-1791) was particularly valued by his publisher.

Phillippa adds: "Being able to see things like the quality of the paper is so useful when researching music of this period, so having the physical scores in front of you really gives you greater insight."

Researchers can now consult this volume thanks to the generosity of donor David Nalden, a retired teacher of violin from the School of Music. A musician friend had given it to him decades ago in England because of his interest in Viotti as a composer for violin.

■ Te Tumu Herenga staff

BOOKS OF NOTE



Colin McCahon: Is This the Promised Land? Vol 2

The second of a two-volume work chronicling 45 years of painting by one

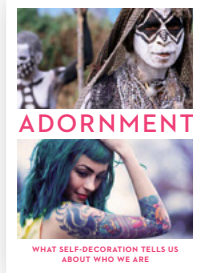
of New Zealand's finest artists, Colin McCahon, released to mark the centenary of his birth.

WIN: This 400-page, richly illustrated hardback book won't be out until mid-June because of bookstores being closed, but we have managed to get hold of one copy. In these unsettling times, what could be better than reading this impressive tome, written by former associate professor of English Peter Thompson. Email: uninews@auckland.ac.nz with Colin McCahon in the subject line and your name and address in the body. Entries close 29 May.

Peter Simpson, AUP, RRP \$79.99

Adornment: What Self Decoration Tells Us About Who We Are

Distinguished Professor Stephen Davies from the Faculty of Arts (Philosophy) says adornment is one of the few social behaviours that is close to being genuinely universal. This beautifully illustrated book examines adornment practices in African, Australasian and North and South American indigenous cultures, as well as the Māori moko and the practice of tattooing in Asia and the Pacific. Read more at tinyurl.com/UoAAdornment



Stephen Davies, Bloomsbury, RRP \$35. Online at Bloomsbury.com.uk, also as EPUB ebook and PDF ebook



Schools, Corporations, and the War on Childhood Obesity

Challenging the idea that the corporate 'war' against childhood obesity is normal, necessary, or harmless,

Dr Darren Powell (Education and Social Work) exposes healthy lifestyles education as a form of mis-education that shapes how students learn about health, corporations and consumption. Drawing on research and studies from across the globe, it explores how corporations fund, devise and implement various programmes in schools as 'part of the solution' to childhood obesity.

Darren Powell, Routledge, RRP \$70, ebook \$30

KEEP UP WITH ONLINE UNIVERSITY NEWS

READ: About colleagues' work, both COVID-19 and 'normal' news, at tinyurl.com/UoANews

SHARE: Email your working-from-home thoughts and photos to uninews@auckland.ac.nz

DISTRACT: View art online at gusfishergallery.auckland.ac.nz/online-gallery/

A CALL FOR MANAAKITANGA

Robust evidence shows that loneliness and social isolation can have an impact on mortality, writes Professor Vanessa Burholt.

The risk is comparable to smoking, inactivity and air pollution. It's been reported that a lack of social connection heightens the risk of mortality as much as smoking 15 cigarettes a day, and that loneliness and social isolation are twice as harmful to physical and mental health as obesity. Consequently, some of the fears about the impact of physical distancing and lockdown, as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, have concentrated on isolation and loneliness and the potential negative consequences for older people.

If we're looking to overcome the negative impact that restrictions to social contact may have on the most vulnerable – older people, but also adults and younger people with chronic conditions or compromised immune systems – we should focus on increasing solidarity between generations. This requires finding creative ways to connect while remaining in our homes and physically distant, as opposed to socially isolated.

There's a distinction between social isolation (objectively reduced contact with others) and loneliness (the subjective emotional response to insufficient relationships to match one's expectations), and each may require different responses. Reduced contact (isolation) can be met with practical solutions and purposeful actions which should ensure that marginalised and isolated older people are not left without essential services and goods such as groceries and medicine. We should all be mindful of the needs of people with reduced mobility or cognitive impairment, and their families and carers who may need help, especially if they are affected by the temporary loss of key support people. We also need to identify older people who may not have friends and family on whom to draw for help and kindness.

There are good examples of ways to increase remote social contact emerging from Europe and the US. Europe-AGE, the Flemish Older Persons Council and the Gerontological Society of America have been highlighting inspirational practices. For example, some organisations are sending letters to older people in their communities, organising virtual meetings, and engaging in daily telephone chats. And prior to the lockdown, organisations had been providing meals to older people through home delivery.

Many voluntary organisations rely on older volunteers to deliver services, and research has indicated that volunteering has many benefits for quality of life and well-being. Older people

who are having to stay home may consider volunteering for the first time, albeit in a different way. For example, in the US, Generations United suggests that older adults can provide support to young people in crisis through a 'crisis text line'.

With schools around the world closing to reduce the community spread of COVID-19, there are opportunities for intergenerational solidarity through technology. For example, older people may help younger people with homework or read stories over Skype or Zoom, while younger people may write emails, or use video calls to connect to older relatives, neighbours or residents in care homes. Unfortunately, these practices will highlight any deficiencies in the infrastructure and the digital divide between those with or without the knowledge to use and maintain IT, and with/without financial means to purchase devices or data. My own new research points to older technologies, such as the telephone, being more effective than new technologies in reducing isolation in older people. (My article about technology-mediated communication will soon appear in *The Gerontologist*.)

Many retirement homes closed their doors to visitors to reduce the chance of community spread of COVID-19 even before the lockdown. But staff have devised novel methods of maintaining social links. Many have purchased iPads or tablets to make it easier for residents to chat with and see relatives. In some facilities, meals are no longer eaten communally, but handwritten notes are provided to residents with their delivered meals.

Moving on to consider the emotional effects of minimal social contact during the pandemic, it is worth noting that globally 2-16 percent of older people are lonely at any one time. While people are physically distancing themselves, their normal expectations for social engagement may not be met. Avoiding loneliness entails addressing any mismatch between the social contact a person has and what they want, by adjusting either the quality and frequency of social interaction (limited under these circumstances) or expectations regarding the quality and frequency of social interaction.

On the whole, people are good at adjusting their expectations to cope with negative life events, and psychologically adapt to changes in circumstances. This is called a 'satisfaction paradox' where objectively negative factors in one's life (e.g. isolation) have relatively little effect

on subjective quality of life (e.g. loneliness). Consequently, temporary isolation may have a limited impact on loneliness but longer periods of isolation can be difficult to adjust to and will increase loneliness. This means that some older people may have been experiencing loneliness before distancing measures were even adopted.

My collaborative research suggests that adjusting expectations about social contact may be particularly difficult for older people with cognitive impairment or depression. In these cases, older people may experience more loneliness than others and require additional emotional support.

The proliferation of headlines about 'the elderly' in relation to COVID-19 is overwhelming. As a social gerontologist, I have spent the past 20-plus years trying to explain that using chronological age to define a social group is problematic.

Vulnerability to COVID-19 may be due to social, financial and biological circumstances not just age. Specific underlying health conditions increase the risk of mortality, but these conditions are present in younger and older populations too. The term 'the elderly' homogenises a diverse population comprising two or three generations, as well as an array of cultures and socio-economic circumstances. As well, the term is commonly associated with negative and patronising stereotypes.

There is likely to be a longer-term impact associated with the legitimisation of ageism during this pandemic. Implementing alternative ways of connecting throughout this crisis may promote new forms of intergenerational solidarity beyond this uncertain time. Connections are more likely to decrease loneliness for older people in the long run, if meaningful and lasting relationships are developed and sustained.

It is manaaki – the kindness and support that we give to each other – that will help us get through this.



■ Vanessa Burholt is Professor in Gerontology in the School of Nursing and School of Population Health, Faculty of Medical and Health Sciences.

The views in this article reflect personal opinion and are not necessarily those of the University.

