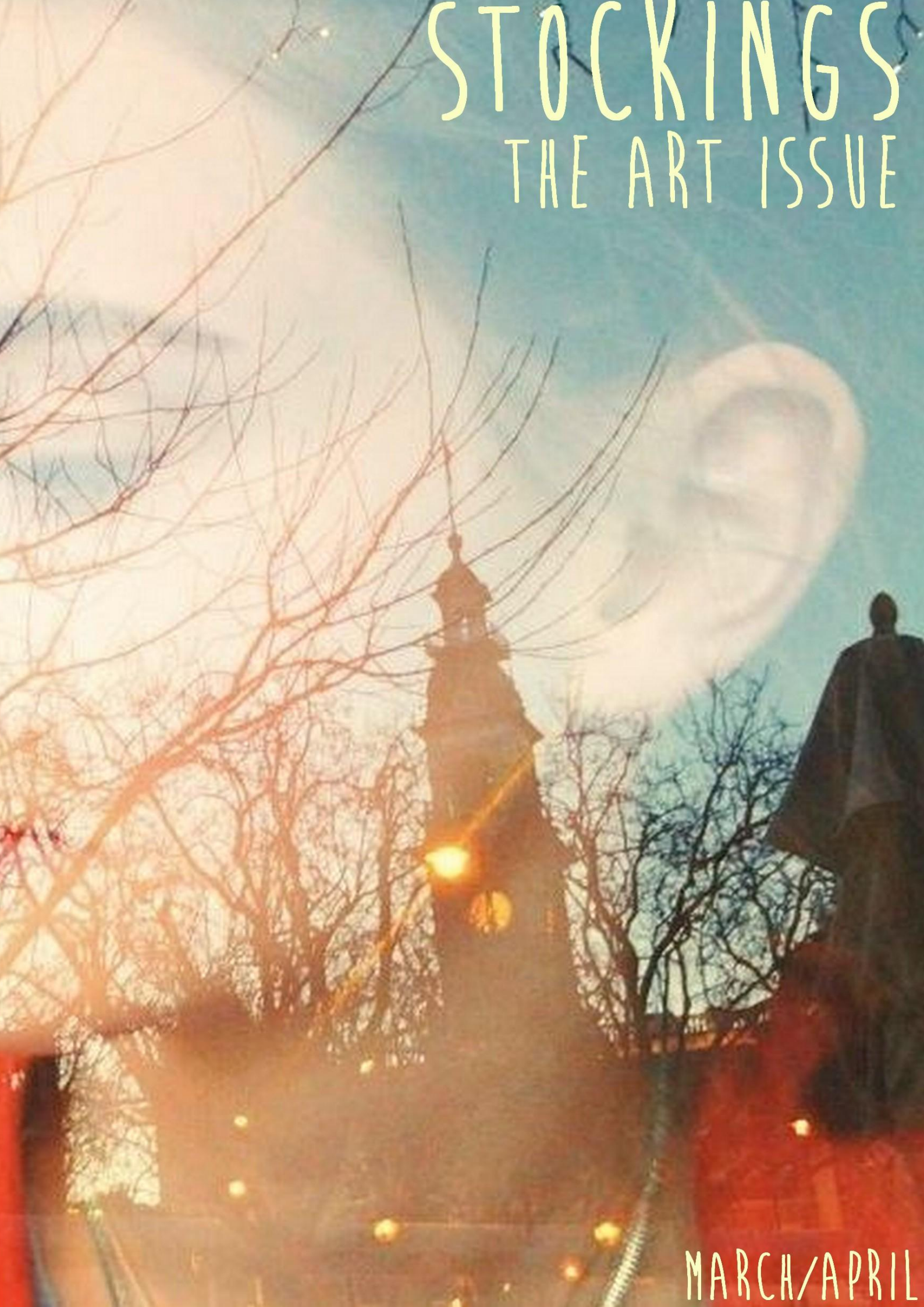
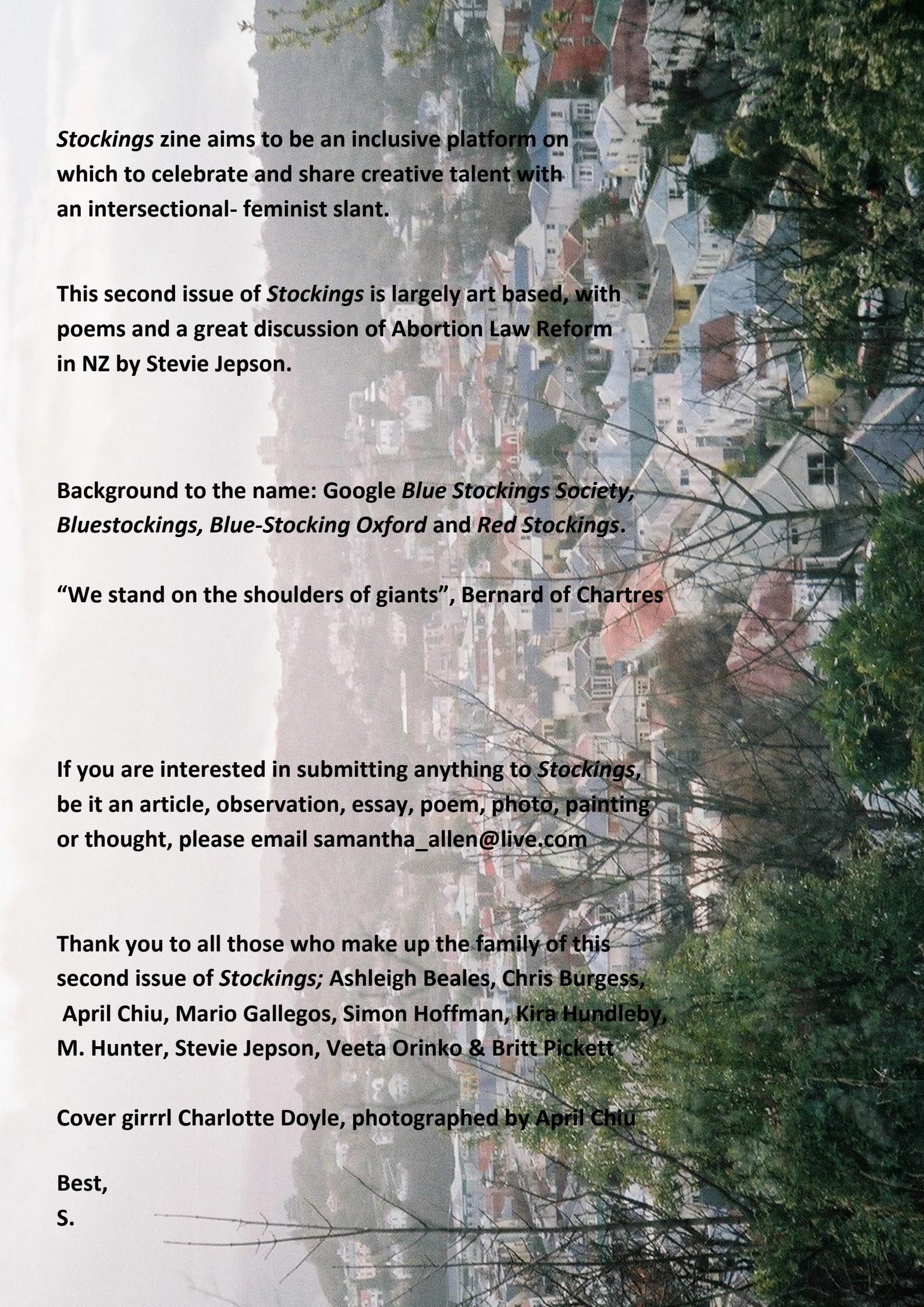


STOCKINGS

THE ART ISSUE



MARCH/APRIL



***Stockings* zine aims to be an inclusive platform on which to celebrate and share creative talent with an intersectional- feminist slant.**

This second issue of *Stockings* is largely art based, with poems and a great discussion of Abortion Law Reform in NZ by Stevie Jepson.

Background to the name: Google *Blue Stockings Society*, *Bluestockings*, *Blue-Stocking Oxford* and *Red Stockings*.


“We stand on the shoulders of giants”, Bernard of Chartres

If you are interested in submitting anything to *Stockings*, be it an article, observation, essay, poem, photo, painting or thought, please email samantha_allen@live.com

Thank you to all those who make up the family of this second issue of *Stockings*; Ashleigh Beales, Chris Burgess, April Chiu, Mario Gallegos, Simon Hoffman, Kira Hundleby, M. Hunter, Stevie Jepson, Veeta Orinko & Britt Pickett

Cover girrrl Charlotte Doyle, photographed by April Chiu

**Best,
S.**



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Veeta Orinko

Art student at Otago Polytechnic











Vagina

(For Sylvia Plath)

I am a tree that produces
no fruit or flower
and will support no moth's cocoon.
A beauty that grows
dimmer by the hour.

My badge of dishonor,
my empty womb
Love's spark grows dim, who knew so soon?
I am a tree that produces
no fruit or flower.

I was not created in God's own image,
but by Eris, roughly hewn -
my imperfections you cannot groom.
A beauty that grows
dimmer by the hour.

I cannot sing, I do not sew, I will not swoon.
For you I will provide
no delight in the afternoon.
I am a tree that produces
no fruit or flower.

With a heart as warm as
the month of June,
as barren as the sky with no stars or moon.
A beauty that grows
dimmer by the hour.

From sorrow and regret I am not immune,
despite the wooden guise I am obliged to assume.
I am a tree that produces no fruit or flower,
A beauty that grows dimmer by the hour.

Abortion Law Reform in NZ

Stevie Jepson

In New Zealand, the core legislation regarding the legality of abortion is found in the Crimes Act 1961, section 187A. The grounds for abortion are; to save the life of the woman, to preserve the physical or mental health of the woman, foetal impairment or in the case of incest. Outside these grounds, abortions are not legal. Factors that can be considered, but which are not grounds for an abortion in themselves, are cases of rape (or sexual violation), and certain social factors like extremities of age. Gaining an abortion requires two certifying consultants, a specific and often limited group of medical professionals, to agree to act on one of the grounds specified above. Regardless of the actual legislation regarding abortion, the procedure is often argued to be 'technically legal' in New Zealand; yet the barriers that women have to overcome to obtain one are problematic due to its categorisation in the Crimes Act.¹ Mental health is the most cited ground for abortion, Statistics New Zealand reporting 98-99% in the year ending 2011.² A woman's right to reproductive choices over her own body and future are currently not enough on their own to allow her to undertake abortion services. Our current laws are outdated, unrealistic, punitive, disempowering, undemocratic and do not reflect the reality that abortion is a health issue, not one of justice and crime. Our goal must be decriminalisation of

abortion if we want to create a fair and equal society.

Last year, an Auckland nurse working for an abortion clinic was the victim of an attack in which the fuel line in her car was cut while she was at work.³ ALRANZ (Abortion Law Reform Association of New Zealand) took the attack as anti-abortion action from pro-life groups, commenting "it is outrageous and disappointing that some in the anti-choice community in New Zealand resort to intimidation and threats".⁴ In 2010, threats were made towards ALRANZ and a new abortion service that was being set up in Invercargill. The clinic had to open in secrecy to protect its staff and patients, while anti-abortionists claimed they would increase their protests around the clinic as well as "naming and shaming" those who worked there.⁵ An abortion clinic in Remuera was at the centre of two arson attacks in 1976 and 1987.⁶ In the 1980s, Operation Rescue undertook a blockade in order to prevent women seeking abortions from entering abortion clinics. Dr Margaret Sparrow, who provides abortion services in New Zealand, has been the victim of a leafleting campaign telling neighbours their property value was decreased simply by her presence in the area.⁷ Anti-abortion protests and harassment still take place weekly outside Dunedin Public Hospital and other areas of the country. New Zealand may have technically legal abortions under the four grounds outlined in the legislation, but it clearly

¹ It is necessary to acknowledge early in the article that cis-women are not the only people who access abortion services and using particular language may exclude some people. This article, however, will use the term 'women' as it deals with particular legislation which also uses this term. I acknowledge the shortcomings of using 'women' to refer to all people who have abortions and regret the exclusion that it may perpetuate.

² Statistics NZ, 2012

³ Fairfax New Zealand, 2013

⁴ ALRANZ, 2013a

⁵ Hill, 2010

⁶ McCulloch, 2009

⁷ Ibid

has a shaky history when it comes to abortion services being offered and undertaken by women who need them. The stigma that is created through attacks by anti-abortionists creates a culture where it is not ok to talk about abortion, and may make some feel guilty for choosing abortion. For this reason, abortion must be decriminalised in order to counteract the stigma and shame that still surrounds abortion services and to champion the right of women to have control over their own bodies.

The arguments against the decriminalisation of abortion in New Zealand are often based on moralistic beliefs held by anti-abortionists. One of the most prominent is the argument that any liberalisation of the abortion laws would be a danger to the family⁸, causing a change in the nuclear family structure and a 'slippery slope' to moral decay.⁹ Other targets of these arguments include homosexuality, sex education and pay equity. This imagined opposition between the family and decriminalised abortion services is one of the reasons that many women are drawn to the anti-abortion cause, and why non-religious people will still support what is often a religious conception of the fetus and fetal rights. However, this is a strawman argument. Statistics show that in 2012, women who had already had a previous live birth made up 54.9% of the people accessing abortion services, making clear that 'the family' and decriminalised abortion are not inherently opposed.¹⁰ Instead, these services are necessary and in demand by a variety of families, and to restrict the services in their interests would be contradictory.

The often cited 'personhood' argument in anti-abortion campaigns rests on the idea that the fetus is a person and that abortion is the

intentional killing of this 'unborn child'.¹¹ The rights of the unborn child, in this context, become equivalent to, or often surpass that of the woman carrying the pregnancy. Right to Life's Ken Orr is a proponent of highlighting the 'rights' of the fertilised egg, by arguing that the fetus is "endowed by its Creator with human rights...at the moment of conception".¹² The rights of the woman to reproductive justice and choice in her own future are overturned to champion the rights of a fetus, which, at the point of the majority of abortions in New Zealand, does not qualify under the law as a person. Our current laws do not state that abortion under one of the four grounds, occurring before 20 weeks, is the intentional killing of a child; therefore, decriminalising what already happens, and is already sanctioned in some cases under New Zealand law, will not change this. The false imagery and rhetoric that is perpetuated by the anti-abortion movement through the personhood argument is one of the causes of the on-going stigma surrounding abortion services and the people who need them, and one of the reasons that the abortion laws have not been further liberalised. The opposition that these groups provide to any adjustments in the law maintain the reproductive discrimination and stigma against women, and the injustice that women suffer through having their reproductive choices determined by the government and medical professionals.

Liberal feminism has seen many achievements in the realm of gender equality; the right for women to vote, recognition that men and women are able to undertake the same careers, and that for the same job, men and women should receive the same pay.¹³ The common assumption that underlies the liberal feminist movement is that women are rational individuals, worthy of making

⁸ The 'family' in this sense is construed as a legally married husband and wife with children, which represents "'God's Plan' for the human race"

⁹ McCulloch, 2013, p.203

¹⁰ NZ Parliament, 2012b

¹¹ BBC, 2013

¹² McCulloch, 2013, p.269

¹³ Baehr, 2012

their own decisions on their own terms.¹⁴ This liberal feminist understanding is not reflected in our current abortion legislation. Liberal political thought, which we have largely accepted in New Zealand, maintains that a good society allows individuals to exercise their own autonomy and fulfil their own desires, as long as those individuals do not encroach on the rights of others.¹⁵ It is a political belief based on the idea of personal freedom, including freedom from coercive interference, from other people or from the state.¹⁶ Liberal feminists maintain that this freedom from coercion by the state refers to being free from laws that limit women's liberty in particular, or protect them in particular¹⁷.

The current laws surrounding abortion clash with liberal rhetoric in our country, as they deny women the opportunity to behave as rational citizens, who are able to make their own decisions regarding reproductive choices. The 'personhood' argument may be raised in opposition to the point that abortion does encroach on the rights of others, but as discussed previously, current, accepted legislation maintains that abortion under one of the four grounds, before 20 weeks gestation avoids this encroachment, and thus it is not a valid argument.

Liberal feminist institutions across the world, such as the National Organisation of Women in the United States of America, have based their political activism on ensuring that women are free from discrimination.¹⁸ If we extend the liberal feminist argument to the arena of abortion politics in New Zealand, it is clear that abortion must be decriminalised so that this extra discrimination that women face when making reproductive choices is removed. In the case of

abortion in New Zealand, women are being discriminated against by being unable to make reproductive choices on their own terms. There are extra barriers, such as multiple meetings, the necessity to travel, the imperative to prove physical or mental harm, stigma and shame, that men do not usually face when undergoing a medical procedure or taking control of their reproductive decisions.¹⁹

Extra barriers limit the capacity to which women can choose their own paths, for example, if they need to travel a long distance to the nearest clinic that offers abortion services, multiple times, on a low income or with other children, then their choices becomes limited. The current abortion laws perpetuate this discrimination and the barriers that women face by assuming that they are *not* fully rational, capable beings who can make decisions, but instead assumes that they need to prove themselves to a number of health professionals who will ultimately decide whether or not the woman's choice will be granted.

While some New Zealand women are able to access family planning and abortion services, there are many who cannot, as there are no hospitals or clinics that offer the services in their home towns.²⁰ In the 2010 report of the Abortion Supervisory Committee, the committee argued that it is unacceptable that women in some parts of New Zealand have to travel long distances to access abortion services.²¹ This is a prime example of where decriminalisation has potential to eliminate aspects of discrimination. Decriminalisation could mean that other medical professionals, rather than the 'certifying consultants' (a limited and often hard to access resource) could provide abortion services, such as medical abortions with mifepristone. For women who do not have easily accessible abortion services, travel costs may prevent them from

¹⁴ Jaggar, 1983

¹⁵ Ibid

¹⁶ Baehr, 2012

¹⁷ Ibid

¹⁸ National Organisation of Women, 1995

¹⁹ ALRANZ, 2013b

²⁰ NZ Parliament, 1998

²¹ NZ Parliament, 2012a

having an abortion when it would be their first choice. Under the CEDAW, these barriers constitute discrimination which take away fundamental liberties of New Zealand women²².

The paternalistic and moralistic aspects of New Zealand's abortion laws are hard to miss, and seem to want to force women into a preferred way of life that a minority of law makers and special interest groups have decided is the best way to live. By denying women agency and freedom through imposing barriers to access and categorising abortion in the Crimes Act, the current abortion laws are discriminatory and entrench inequality for women in regards to personal liberty. The preferred way of life, which includes having multiple children, is imposed on women by making the alternative choice harder to act on than is necessary. The paternalistic aspect of abortion law is again visible in its implication that women are unable to make their own responsible decisions regarding their own reproduction. Only certified medical practitioners can approve an abortion for a woman (in the legislation, the medical practitioner is specifically referred to as a 'he') and she is then made to undergo counselling services, whether she wishes to or not.²³ The law limits the autonomy of the woman for their 'own good', imposing restrictions and opinions of professionals where they may not be welcome. The moral concerns of lawmakers and health care professionals should not be a determining factor in accessing abortion services. Liberal feminism maintains that people must be free from the limits set by paternalistic laws and moralistic laws, two categories that our current abortion legislation fit into all too well.²⁴

²² New Zealand is a signatory to the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), a United Nations convention often referred to as "international bill of rights for women" (United Nations, 2008).

²³ Crimes Act, 1961, Contraception, Sterilisation and Abortion Act, 1977

²⁴ Baehr, 2012

Current laws create a punitive view of abortion due to its categorisation in the Crimes Act, rather than one focused on health and reproductive choice for women; seemingly justifying the pro-life protestors mentioned at the beginning of this article who sought to "name and shame" abortion providers in Invercargil. A 2000 review on the Contraception, Sterilisation, and Abortion Act 1977 recommends that abortion be removed from the criminal code and argues for new legislation which would still ensure that women who seek out abortions have access to correct information and support, yet, this recommendatory has not been taken up.²⁵

Anti-abortion protestors line the entrance to Dunedin Hospital on Friday mornings, when abortion services are provided, heckling women and holding posters. Women who need the health service, provided at a public hospital, face these people who aim to condemn them for making choices about their own reproductive futures. This problem has been highlighted by a committee review of the abortion legislation in New Zealand in 1998 which recommended to the Government that legislation be adjusted to protect women seeking abortions against persistent harassment at hospitals and clinics.²⁶ This recommendation was not taken up either. Together with the moralistic and paternalistic Crimes Act legislation, loud anti-abortion protestors and the secrecy and shame that follows abortion in this country, women are punished both for having an abortion, and talking about their experiences with abortion, through discrimination, stigma and unfair stereotyping. By decriminalising abortion, removing it from the Crimes Act and rightfully repositioning it in health legislation, we can remove part of this unfair, gendered experience and instead champion the rights of women to be in control of their own reproduction and their bodies.

²⁵ NZ Parliament, 2003

²⁶ NZ Parliament, 1998

Liberal feminism has been largely incorporated in New Zealand society; women can vote, participate in the work force and expect the same level of pay for the same job. New Zealanders pride themselves on being the first country to give women the vote, so why is our abortion legislation founded on restricting the rights of women to have choice over their bodies, in particular, their reproductive capacities? The move to decriminalise abortion would not be the solution to all gender inequalities in New Zealand, and it would not end all pro-life rhetoric that shames women seeking abortion. It would, however, be another step forward in ensuring that women are recognised as equal, rational citizens in a liberal society, who deserve the right to make free choices regarding what they do and

will not do with their bodies. Paired with decriminalisation, a shift in legislation from the Crimes Act to health acts would help to counter some of the unnecessary barriers that women face when seeking a vital health service, and would ensure that full access is maintained for all women. Unfortunately, the pro-life, anti-abortion voice in New Zealand is exceptionally loud, while the pro-choice movement is all too quiet, consisting of many apathetic citizens who are not aware of the unjust and inappropriate abortion legislation that we have currently. Through education on this subject, these changes are possible and would be invaluable to the millions of New Zealand women whose independent liberties are currently being trampled on by Government legislation.

Stevie is a Masters student in politics at the University of Otago and convener of Dunedin Reproductive Justice. She is currently working on a thesis examining feminist revolution through a political theory lens.

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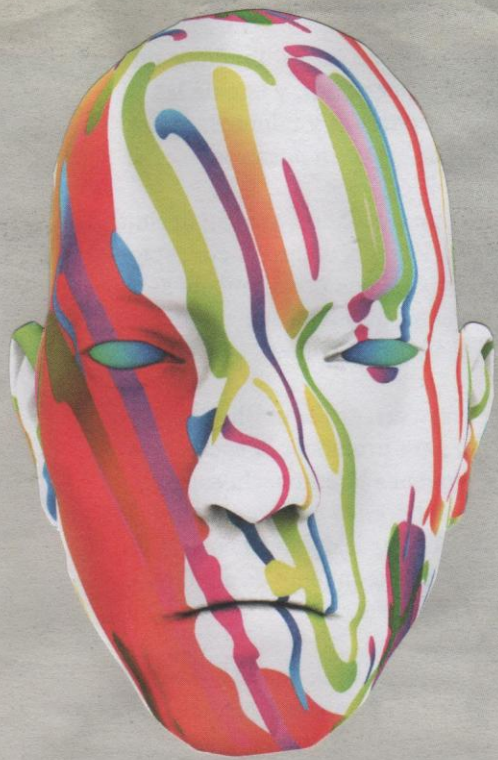
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ario Gallegos, Spain





Ectopic

Such an obedient egg and sperm and

A disobedient child occupying space between rooms
as they do

The ecology of edges was never so important
this is where
Life begins where life begins where life begins

This is just a paint by numbers poem
No name no title no shout no

I'm shit at scrabble, even when I cheat

Lines

Every good boy deserves fruit

You say

Your face centimeters from mine

Your fingers poised

I calculate a series of mundane urgent requests

For every situation

The world never seemed so staged before

I cut my nails short and paint them red

Like strawberries strung on lines

Stolen lines with a glint

I have to study and wash my hair and cook dinner and feed my Mum's cat and get up
early to run errands and lie

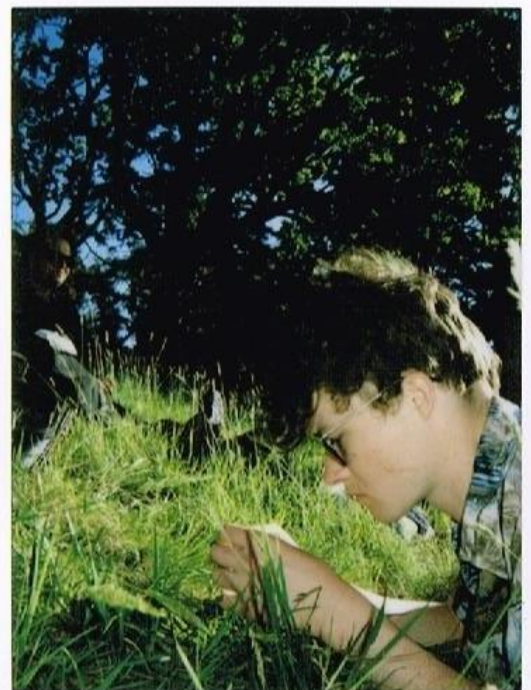
You are just the apple of my bloodshot eye

Don't move you win stay imprisoned in me

Fluid and persisting

x

Britt Pickett







On hot nights around this time of year I often find myself craving a light, fresh pasta. This one takes advantage of the plentiful courgettes and capsicums found around this time although any vegetables will do – fresh peas would work well – it's nice to have a blend of crispy vegetables to go with the tender wilted spinach and chewy sundried tomatoes, with the chilli giving it an added kick!

Summer Pasta

1. 1 fresh chilli - finely sliced (you can substitute dried or flakes if you like)
2. 4 cloves of garlic - finely sliced
3. 1 Red capsicum - chopped into matchsticks
4. 1 Zucchini - chopped into matchsticks
5. 1 Small handful of basil - leaves torn
6. 1 small handful of mixed olives/sundried tomatoes - sliced.
7. 1 Large handful of baby spinach
8. ~ 2 servings of pasta - linguine works well.
9. 1 tablespoon of olive oil.
10. Grated parmesan to taste

Bring a pot to boil for the pasta and cook according to packet instructions, the pasta should be just about ready when the vegetables are done. Place a large frying pan on medium heat, heat the oil and fry the zucchini and capsicum until tender but not too soft – usually about 4-5 minutes, adding salt to taste. Add the garlic and chilli and cook for another few minutes. Finally add the basil and olives/sundried tomatoes. At this point the pasta should be just about done, drain it, add it to the frying pan with the baby spinach and mix them together so the spinach becomes nicely wilted by the heat of the pasta.

Serve with grated parmesan on top and cracked pepper.





Chris Burgess, Hanoi, Vietnam, with a Rolleicord V















Travelling on Through

A personal account of the Dunedin Artist Collective, *GloryBox*

Recently I have been thinking a lot about what we need to do as artists, people and, generally, as human beings to further enrich our lives for the better so as to challenge ourselves about certain judgments or stereotypes that society tends to put on us. I believe that working together with people of all different backgrounds is the key to making a difference and allowing us as a community to have a voice.

My aim as a woman, an artist, a sister, an aunty, a friend and an ally to friends and family is to enrich my experience within the cultural interface of our community, our society, our country and within the international family through the written word, music, dance, poetry, visual art and film so as to promote growth, to feel, to express, to love and to fly.

I have currently stepped down as Director of GloryBox, an arts collective group of aspiring artists that was formed in Dunedin in March 2013, but I still want to write about why I thought this arts collective initiative was important for my growth as an artist and creator.

The initial dream of GloryBox came from a discussion I had with visual artist "Maggie Covell" who is a fantastic artist in her own right currently studying art History at The University of Otago. We were dreaming together about creating a group of artists in Dunedin so we could have the chance to share our work with each other and to give ourselves a voice in the community. We wanted to be able to share our work, and vision with other artists and appreciators in the community so that we had a place of coming together, a place to belong, a place to flourish and grow and support each other in the process.

The name GloryBox came from the old historical rites of passage of a girl turning into a woman. The Glorybox was a symbol of her coming of age and being ripe for the picking to an eligible bachelor and her special Box had many things inside of it preparing her to be able to take on the next journey of her life into womanhood and marriage. This name was very symbolic to the creation of our group as we are all woman artists seeking our place as artists in the world and as women and we found this name to be fitting

and ideal for what we represented at the time, a group of developing female artists.

We created two successful events, the first being "Queens of Exchange" held at Queens Bar

Venue in June 28th 2013. This particular event consisted of visual art by Maggie Covell, Jo Little, Kate Brown, Cassandra Lynne and hosted by Laura Jane Archer. I opened the evening with a West African inspired solo dance piece under my Master Teacher Dr Ojeya Cruz Banks, an accomplished Dance Anthropologist presently lecturing at Otago University. I also performed a set of songs that I have composed over the years under my artist name Kira Hundleby and other music works were performed by our guest musician Hana Fahy, who is also an accomplished song writer and music teacher here in Dunedin. The feedback we received after the event was absolutely mind blowing; full of praise and I was so very thrilled from the comments and surprised hugs I received from the aftermath of all our efforts.

Our second event "Blood Lust" was a Film Noir inspired event so our theme was 1940's-50's film attire. All of our work was developed and created with this theme in mind so all art pieces had a film noir edge and created a sense of unity and togetherness of all artists involved. I had the opportunity of meeting a

"We were dreaming together about creating a group of artists in Dunedin so we could have the chance to share our work with each other and to give ourselves a voice in the community"

lovely lady by the name of Virginia Theiss who use to dance in the Royal New Zealand Ballet in the 70's and she resides here in Dunedin as a teacher, a community ambassador and mother. Virginia's help, support, courage and insight gave me the wings to fly past what I thought was possible and I am absolutely indebted to her for the opportunity of working with her and learning so much about grace, classical beauty and appreciation, what a woman! Virginia had also went one step further; she found me a professional choreographer by the name of Emmett Hardie who had also danced internationally with the Royal New Zealand Ballet in the 70's. Emmett came to help put my five piece dance theatre piece together so I could create this epic dance performance for the night. I had no idea how it was going to happen, but I found the dancers including myself, I had a choreographer, a vision and we just went for it.

"Blood Lust" was held on the 23rd November at the Dunedin Railway Station. People bought works of art, ate amazing food, sipped on our GloryBox cocktail and rocked out into the night to our guest band "Tahu and the Takahes". We had an amazing guest artist that night also who opened our event, Fushia Gash, who captured the audience with her feminine fatale element and intrigue. We also had a masculine element of the evening with Jared Smith and his brother Damo Smith giving us some old time rockin blues (these boys used to play in a band called SoulSeller). A photo booth was also put together by our GloryBox photographer artist Cassandra Lynne so people could wear props like hats and hold guns and take black and white photographs for them to have with them as another interactive part of the event. I was absolutely amazed at how this night came together event better than the last, with increased drive, dedication, community and vision.

I wanted to add one more thing to my journey of words here in this article as I feel it is relevant and has personal meaning to me. Just recently I had the opportunity to record my works as part of a Dunedin music collaboration called "Operation Underground" by Mr Michael Morris. I was invited to his home to record one of my songs as part of this artist collaboration and wanted to record my song "Oh Father" written about my amazing dad. This song is prolific and means so much to me as my father has been one of my most inspiring role models and visionaries in my life. The connection with my Father and what he taught me about life was absolutely the pinnacle shift in how I wanted to express myself as an artist and woman.

Though still finding my voice as I discover new shifts and changes in my creative life, I have learnt so much about myself and about my strengths and weaknesses though directing and guiding GloryBox and am eternally grateful for the experience. Where the road will now take me, I do not know. I will continue my song writing, recording and learning of West African Dance as that keeps me grounded and in my body. I still have so much to accomplish and achieve but I am proud of what I have thus done so far, I am indebted to so many friends and family I have found along the way in my Dunedin journey. I am humbled by the people who have embraced and loved me in Dunedin and continue to love me like I am their sister, daughter and friend. I am so excited for this year, no matter what challenges that come my way, I will keep pushing forth, keep flying high, and try not to fall in the process. So many mountains yet to climb and I have barely even landed on the first hill.

Kira Hundleby

Links:

www.youtube.com/watch?v=uCbNEEdCbE0

www.facebook.com/pages/Kira-Hundleby/395140537165373

GloryBox, 2013



