

SPEAK

A night photograph of a large steel truss bridge, likely the Mackinac Island Bridge, spanning a body of water. The bridge is illuminated with warm yellow lights, and its complex steel structure is clearly visible. In the background, a city skyline is lit up, with the prominent CN Tower standing out. The water in the foreground reflects the lights from the bridge and the city. The word 'SPEAK' is overlaid in large, white, 3D block letters across the upper portion of the image.

ISSUE 2



Table of **CONTENTS**

03

EDITOR'S LETTER

Joseph Sothcott

05

THE TRUTH OF THE MATTER

Joseph Sothcott

08

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL

Ashley Pereira & Leon Southey Ray

10

**THE PROBLEMS YOU DON'T
KNOW YOU HAVE**

Benedict Sheehan

16

**EDUCATION IN THE FUTURE
PART 2**

Joseph Sothcott

20

**HOW WE REPRESENT
OURSELVES**

Jack McConnell

26

CLASSICS TRIP REPORT

Seth Nicholson

28

BEAUTY AND THE BEAST

Joseph Sothcott

33

A REVIEW: JUNE

Díaz



I know, I am just as surprised as you are that Speak Magazine has made it to a second issue! It's taken what seems like ages, but I'd like to thank all those who have made both issues possible. I'd like to particularly thank everyone who left feedback on the previous issue, both positive and negative. We have looked to incorporate many of the changes you guys asked for whilst retaining what we believed made the first issue of Speak so special. At the end of this issue is a link to a new feedback survey, we implore all of you to leave a comment. Be nasty and be honest, we want to ensure this magazine continually improves as it moves into the future and your feedback is the most useful way of knowing what direction we should steer Speak.

The second issue you're reading now covers a range of stories – from discussions of the culture at St Peter's to the importance of supporting refugees who are stuck in countries not too far away. This issue even sees the return of my much polarizing future of education series. In brief, we hope that this issue of Speak features an article or story that intrigues or delights everyone who reads it.

He


We're also looking for new writers! If you have a story to be told or something that you think needs to be commented on, come along to the next Speak meeting, we'd love to see new exciting writers contribute towards issue three. We are especially looking for more junior (Year 7-10) writers, especially for those who love writing stories. If you are in the middle school and love drawing, writing comics or making memes, an art competition will also be commencing soon, and the best ones will end up in Issue 3 of Speak.

Overall, the hope for Speak magazine is that it is able to achieve longevity. The likelihood next year is that a dedicated media prefect will have responsibilities for producing Speak magazine regularly. Thank you for all those who supported Issue 1 and made that possible. Here's hoping we make it to Issue 3 a lot sooner!

A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Joe'.

Joseph Sothcott
Editor

The word 'Hello' is written in a very large, bold, red, rounded sans-serif font. The letters are thick and have a friendly, approachable feel.



THE TRUTH OF THE MATTER

A Speak Editorial:
Fake News in SPC

“The leaks are real; the news is fake” - Donald Trump

Yes, you read that right. Our beloved school has become overridden with the cancer that has been synonymous with Trump’s America, fake news.

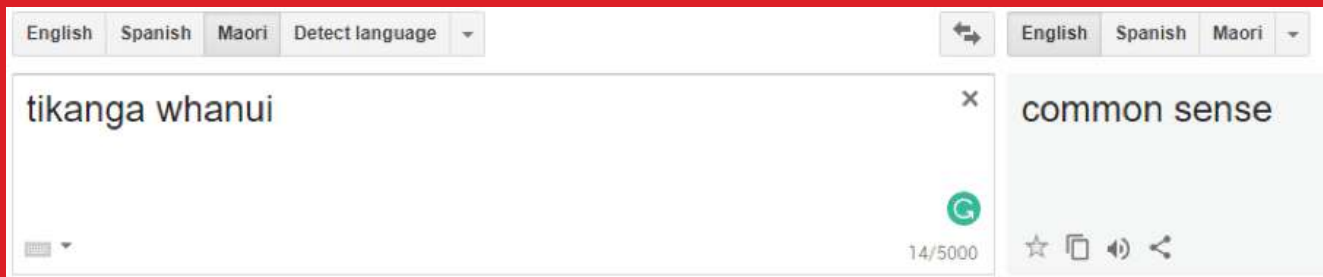
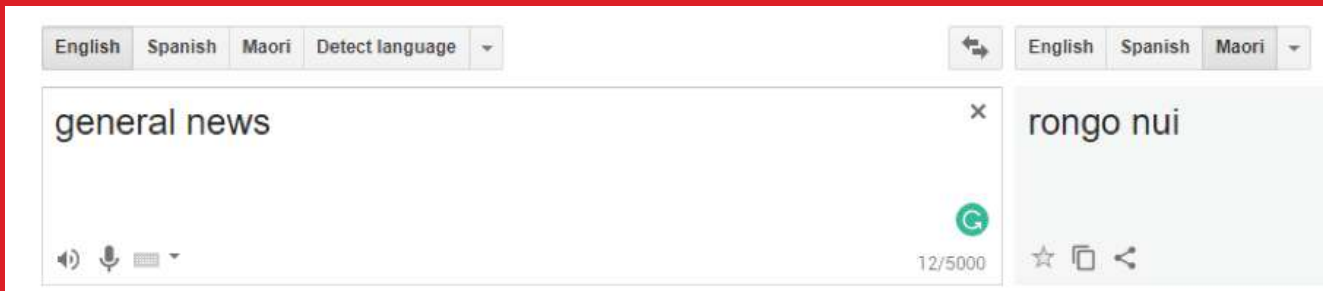
An in-depth Speak investigation over the last few months has uncovered a secret that should shake all St Peter’s students, both current and former, to their very core.

But where and how we hear you ask?

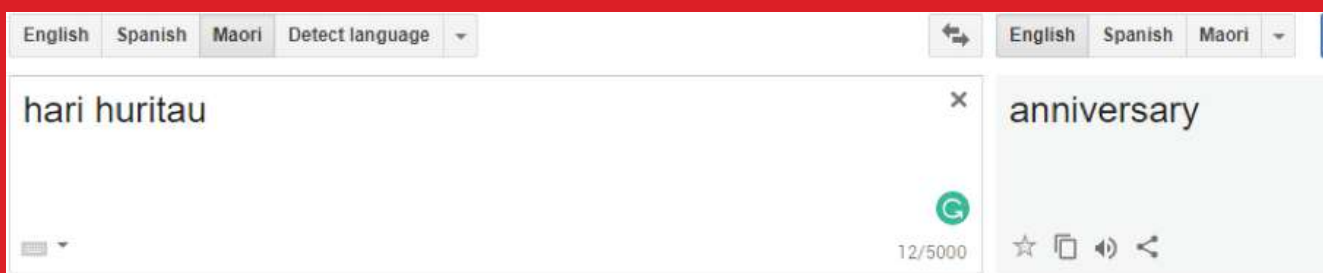
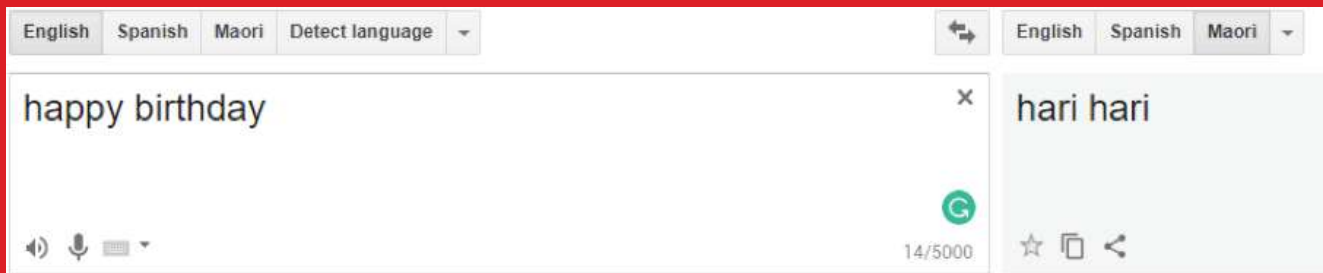
In our much-cherished daily notices.

Every morning we hear the sweet, sweet sound of a Prefect reading out those beautiful four words “General News - Tikanga Whanui”. You have been lied to. Tikanga Whanui does not mean general news.

After a long search we found this irrefutable evidence:



But at least we have Hari Huritau. Or so we thought:





Thankfully we can confirm “Sports – Hākinakina” and the less frequently heard “Music – Puoro” are correct translations according to our source.

Will the school act on these discoveries and change the translations? Part of us wishes we never found out these horrible truths. Could we, the school community, really accept a change to our beloved Tikanga Whanui and Hari Huritau. Maybe in time.

Regardless, the future looks bleak for the mainstay of our weekday mornings, the daily notices in their current format.

Until next time, cheers boys.

DISCLAIMER:

Fake News in SPC is a satirical article reflecting the dangers of relying on the internet for information and the prominence of fake news in the world's current media climate. SPC Te Reo teacher Matua Wiremu Ngatipa has confirmed tikanga whanui and hari huritau are accurate translations. No offence is intended.

- Ashely Pereira &
Leon Southey Ray

“ I’M A HUMAN BEING, BUT I HAVEN’T BEEN TREATED
LIKE A HUMAN. I WAS ALWAYS TREATED LIKE AN
ANIMAL, THERE IS NO DIFFERENCE BETWEEN MY
LIFE AND AN ANIMAL IN A CAGE. ”

- S Thanuraj

**AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL**



"I'm a human being, but I haven't been treated like a human. I was always treated like an animal, there is no difference between my life and an animal in a cage."

These are the words of S Thanuraj, a young man who is being held illegally by the Australian Government on Manus Island. Thanuraj is not the only one to have suffered at the hands of the Australian Government, as many others have been detained and endured similar suffering. Ever since 2001, Australia has been forcibly detaining refugee men on Manus Island, often patrolling the surrounding waters on the lookout for refugee boats. Any such boats which are found are sent on a detour to the island so their claim can be processed, which can take up to four years. The advantage that Australia gains by sending these refugees to the island is that because they never technically land on Australian soil, they are not obligated to accept them and can freely reject them.

While these men are awaiting their claim to be processed, they endure severe "prison-like" conditions. After the Supreme Court of Papua New Guinea ruled that these centres were illegal because they were denying these refugees fundamental human rights, Australia devised a plan to close the facility and shift them to another one. They withdrew the guards, shut off the water and withheld food, medical supplies and electricity for close to 3 weeks while 600 men were still within the facility. These men do not deserve to have to suffer through these atrocities.

Having already fled dangerous situations within their own countries, these refugees are treated like prisoners and sub-human instead of being greeted with safety and hospitality. No one deserves to be treated this way – no matter who they are. Many of the men do not want to move to the new centre as they are just moving from one prison to another, with no hope of salvation.


"I SOUGHT SAFETY IN AUSTRALIA, BUT THE AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT HAS DESTROYED MY FUTURE"

– S. VINOOTH

These people are being mistreated and are having their basic human rights stripped from them just because Australia doesn't want to pay for their integration into the community which could potentially benefit from them. The worst part? This has been going on for 5 years.

83 of these refugees have been settled in the USA, but this avenue might not be available much longer, after Trump infamously tweeted it was a 'dumb deal' in February last year. Jacinda Ardern has offered several times to take 150 of the refugees into New Zealand – an offer that has been ignored. Over 2000 refugees are waiting in these terrible conditions, and the Australian government is doing nothing about it. What's worse is that nobody can talk about it. In 2015, it became a criminal act for anyone working with the refugees to talk about what they see occur every day there. As such, the information on what is actually going on is limited. Abuse happens every day, and we never hear about it.

In the words of S. Vinoth, another refugee: "Now the Australian government has simply abandoned me on Papua New Guinea. What is my state now? I'm completely desperate. My life is in limbo. I sought safety in Australia, but the Australian government has destroyed my future."




“PLEASE HELP US. WE ARE COMPLETELY HOPELESS” – SRIANGAN

This is where Amnesty International and by extension, you come in. You have the power to make a change, to end this cycle of abuse. Even though this issue is happening thousands of kilometres away, you can still make a difference. You can stand up for these wronged people. Use your rights to defend those who have had theirs stolen from them. How can you do this? Just the simple act of signing a petition, contacting an MP or just taking an action on Amnesty International’s website can be enough to make a difference – something which takes only two minutes

(<https://www.amnesty.org.nz/build-hope-end-australia%E2%80%99s-offshore-detention-centres-nauru-manus-and-christmas-island>).

The action is a simple one, but the effects of it are immense and ripple out into the world. So take a stand of solidarity and create a world in which you are proud to live in. Every action, no matter how small, helps save these men. The decision lies with you.

If you want to continue to help those who are being oppressed, come along to Amnesty meetings every Friday lunchtime in A22. We discuss these problems and what we can do to raise awareness of them in our school, and how we can help to make a difference. Remember, it is better to light a candle than to curse the darkness. That is what Amnesty stands for.



Problems
you don't
know
you have

The problems you don't know you have.

Welcome to life, the place where you get one shot and that's it. During your shot, you can do, have, and become many things. You can do almost everything, apart from one thing; you can't get your one shot right.

For many of us, this is a killing statement. People today hold the naive desire to be perfect. And that's the problem, you can't get your one shot right because you can never be perfect. Why can you never be perfect? Because you are an unfortunate sufferer of the human condition. You are susceptible to failure, mistakes, flaws and much, much more.

Life, in essence, is a long series of overcoming problems. This is how humans work, we discover a problem and either ignore it, solve it, or accept it. The first option, Ignoring, is the wrong way to go as it will stay there in the back of your mind for the rest of your life. You can then either solve your problem or simply accept it and move on. Either way, you are overcoming the problem.

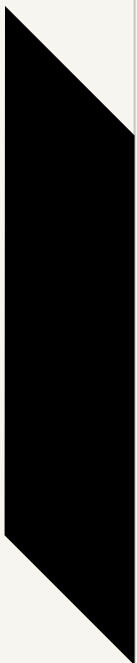
But, the problem here is that people vary over whether they are aware of their problems or not, and then vary again if they decide to do anything about them. Now I am at no place to know who are aware of their problems and who are not, but regardless, you will have problems you don't know about.

So, what do problems look like? They generally range from social to personal. Examples of social problems are over-competitiveness, antisocial tendencies, or a blown-up ego. Whereas examples of personal problems are self-deprecation, envy or, attention seeking. This is a very small cumulation of problems, there are many, many more diverse problems out there.

Now, these sound like easy to identify problems. And for some, they are, for others they are not. This is one reason for my title: "The problems you don't know you have". Some people cannot identify their problems, so they live their lives unaware of the harsh truths of their reality. However, this is of course not everyone. I hope for this to be an eye-opening insight to those who are unaware of their problems into the world of finding, identifying and dealing with them.


The focus of this is instead on the problems which even those who know how to look for them, cannot find. For me, this manifests itself as the problems that lie within your problems. A personal example for me is this: I am obsessed with finding my own problems, which combined with my tendency towards self-criticism, means I can never fully be "happy" or at least content with myself as I am constantly beating myself up over all the new problems I find. I thought that the worst of my problems was my self-criticalness, yet this turned out to be a surface level analysis of my problems.

I was able to discover the depth of that particular problem through a friend telling me. I would say that is the best way of identifying and dealing with your problems, by talking to people. The people you are closest to, know you the most (second to yourself) because other people can give you a new perspective on your problems.



And what you will find is that many problems have domino effects. For example, I suffer from being much too critical of myself. That enough puts me down, but then I become self-conscious of everything I'm critical of, making liking myself a much harder task than it should be. Problems are d*cks, they gang up on you.

Now, most people don't think about unknown problems. Which is why you should start asking yourself the question of "Why?" Why am I envious? Why am I so needy? Why am I so focused on myself I don't notice the people around me getting hurt? Because these questions will be the ones that lead you to the depths of your problems. These questions make you realise not only your deeper problems, but why they started in the first place. For example; Why am I so needy? An answer to this may be because you don't try hard enough to solve your own problems, you give up and rely on other people.



The problems you don't know you have are the ones that hide. You have to look into yourself to find them. And that's only part one. Part two, the overcoming is up to your personal motivation and determination.

Good luck.

CHLÖE SWARBRICK



The Future of Education Part 2

In the first edition of Speak, we considered the future of education from the perspective of ACT Party Leader David Seymour with a promise to look left in the next issue.

Let me introduce Chlöe Swarbrick.

Chlöe Swarbrick made headlines in 2016 when she ran in the Auckland mayoral race aged 22. Utilising relatively untested political platforms like social media, Swarbrick remarkably finished 3rd with 29,098 votes, trailing only the 2 establishment candidates and ahead of 16 other candidates.

Since then, Chlöe Swarbrick has been elected to Parliament as a list member of the Green Party, the youngest MP in 42 years. She was quickly given the pivotal role of Education Spokesperson, making her the ideal opposing perspective to Seymour's Classical Libertarianism.

However, like Seymour, Swarbrick feels as if our current education system is, "not catering to all students across Aotearoa New Zealand."

For Swarbrick, we need only go and talk to a group of students at any given school and ask if the current education system is working for them – she says that for many the

Clearly this is an argument to demonstrate that the New Zealand education system is flawed in a broad sense. However, the same test can be applied to the microcosm of St Peter's College. Would the same simple question of 'Is the current education you're receiving working for you' return similar results? Perhaps it's worth asking yourself that question.

Moving on, Swarbrick poses another enduring question: What is the purpose of education not only in the 21st century but also within its historical context? Again, this seems to me a question we should all ask ourselves at some point during our education.

For some of you, the answer to that question may be "to get a job." Swarbrick disagrees. For her, the purpose of education is to, "train people how to be citizens." The reason for this certainly seems to make sense. In a rapidly evolving world, Swarbrick sees it as increasingly important to have, "a large number of people in society who have been trained to work together, think creatively and collaboratively along with having the ability to problem solve."



We moved onto a topic that has been at the forefront of education news in recent months, the planned review of the NCEA system.

The results of this review are likely to result in drastic changes to the NCEA system, notably scrapping Level 1 external assessments and introducing more 'pathway' and 'community project' assessments through Level 1, 2, and 3.

Some have suggested these proposals are a response to cries that our current education system is too examination oriented and doesn't focus enough on broader life skills. Swarbrick seems to both agree and disagree with this.

Swarbrick says that there is not necessarily a correlation between, "decreasing the level of testing and increasing the teaching of life skills."

However, Swarbrick also views continued testing of students as a flawed approach, referring to the recent government decision to scrap National Standards.

According to Swarbrick, “National Standards tried to fit round pegs into square holes” causing many teachers to complain that if forced teaching to texts which consequentially resulted in a narrow curriculum.

Ultimately, Swarbrick suggests that whilst testing is necessary, it doesn’t always have to involve, “sitting down and shutting up for 3 hours, getting a gold star if you can regurgitate information” as Swarbrick puts it, because not everyone learns this way.

For this reason, Swarbrick thinks projects and life skills assessments do have an important place in the model for future education. This future just relies on being, “bold and brave enough to question why we currently do things this way and whether they are working.”

*

Another issue the Green Party has been particularly vocal about is the debate over whether Te Reo Māori should be compulsory or not.

A criticism of the policy raised by David Seymour was that it wouldn’t benefit everyone so what would be the point.

Swarbrick points to a glaring issue in this line of argument. It essentially reduces Te Reo to a secondary subject behind the likes of Maths and English.

“The purpose of making Te Reo Māori compulsory or universal is recognising the inherent value that it has in Aotearoa New Zealand in terms of our culture but also in terms of preserving taonga* but so too in terms of helping young people in our country and by virtue of that in the next few decades, all of the people in this country understand our cultural identity so too our history.”

LEARNING ANOTHER LANGUAGE IS MASSIVELY HELPFUL AND BENEFICIAL

According to Swarbrick, compulsory Te Reo would allow the entire country to engage in Te Ao Māori (The Maori World) but also less holistically with things like Tikanga Māori (Māori practices and customs).

Swarbrick also sees a strong economic argument for universal Te Reo education, as it has the potential to greatly increase our exports in areas such as tourism.

Swarbrick sums up her argument with science and reason, a difficult combination to debate against:

“We know for a fact that learning another language is massively helpful and beneficial for brain development and if we are going to be learning another language, why would we not be learning the language of this land?”

★

The final topic of discussion centred around sustainability, obviously an issue of great importance to the Green Party.

To Swarbrick, it is important to note sustainability has many different manifestations, many of which can be applied to a school environment.

Educational Sustainability is one of these - creating lifelong learners. Communal Sustainability is another - ensuring everyone feels as if they have a sense of belonging.

Of course, there is also ecological sustainability. This is actually referred to as a key educational focus in the Green-Labour confidence and supply deal, primarily in what is called the Solar Schools Project.

According to Swarbrick, this project will see, "solar panels going up on schools so that they're not so reliant on energy off the grid." Is this something St Peter's could look at?

Another way some schools have become more sustainable is becoming plastic free. Swarbrick also alludes to older students and prefects leading beach clean-ups as an effective means of schools becoming more sustainable.

For Swarbrick, ultimately the best solution is "aligning the kaupapa of the school with the student leadership", allowing for, "interesting, innovative and engaging projects that get everyone on board and collaborating to clean things up."

★

My final question to Swarbrick was the same one I posed to David Seymour: If you were the sole remaining politician in the country, what is one change you would make to education and what is one general policy change you would make?

Swarbrick's general change, which she stresses is not explicit Green Party policy but instead a personal concern, is constitutional transformation in New Zealand.

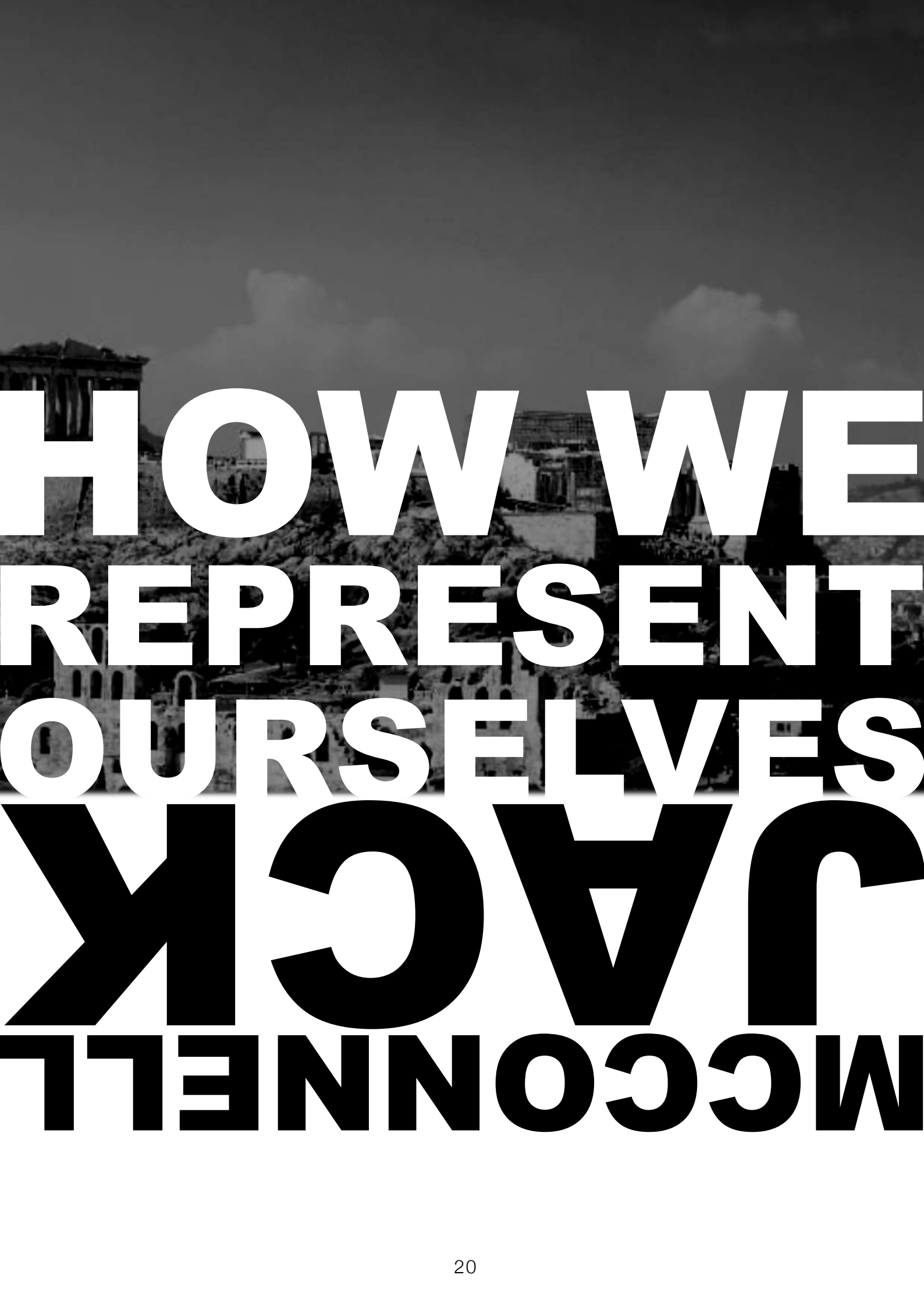
Swarbrick is concerned that there are very few limits on parliamentary sovereignty in New Zealand, which means our Government can completely override constitutional documents such as the Bill of Rights and the Treaty of Waitangi.

This problem manifested itself under the last Government, which blocked under urgency (another area which has been described by some as unconstitutional) carers from accessing compensation (pay) for the care of relatives with disabilities even though the Supreme Court had deemed this as discrimination on the grounds of familial connection.

Swarbrick believes the public seemed almost unaware of the issue, a problem she blames on a lack of funding for public interest journalism and the absence of civics education around our constitutional documents in our current school system.

Swarbrick's educational change would to ensure that the education system is inclusive, envisioning a future where, "no kid is left behind, and all kids are recognised for their inherent talent and skill set" because "everyone has something that they can contribute to the world", a genuinely uplifting note to finish on.

**Anything considered to be of value including socially and culturally valuable objects, resources, phenomenon, ideas and techniques.*



HOW WE
REPRESENT
OURSELVES
YCV
MCCONNELL



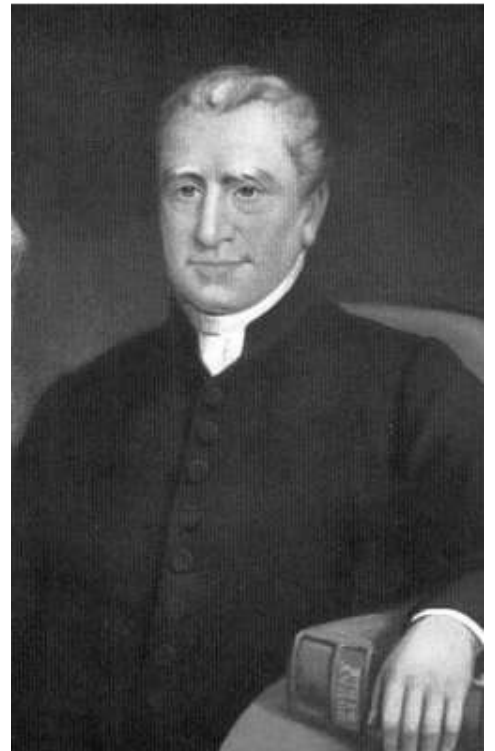
Scattered amongst Athens within the ruins, museums and buildings are many reoccurring motifs. These motifs demonstrate clearly the connection which the capital of Greece has to its sense of identity and culture. Owl and olive tree along with an extensive number of statues adorn buildings around the city in remarkable excess. Analysing why, sheds some light on both Athens past, and its future.

Few cities have a cultural history that can match Athens. Given it has lasted almost 3000 years it is miraculous that any imagery at all has been consistently used. Therefore the fact that a sizeable portion of ancient symbols are still thriving in the city today, somewhat validates their importance.



The connection between old and new is evident within the appearance of the owl on coins dating back to 400 BCE and buildings built in the modern age. The symbol of the goddess Athena, the patron of Athens, (as well as goddess of wisdom, handicraft and warcraft) the owl reminds viewers of Athens origins, taking its name from the goddess herself.

Seen as a wise bird with its large all-seeing eyes while also being a predatory species, the owl is a perfect starting point for what a symbol should embody, clearly and concisely demonstrating some aspect of the character they aim to illustrate. Indeed, association of the owl and wisdom still occurs today in modern media, and it can be seen upon all corners of the Academy of Athens, which was established in 1926 and is the highest research establishment in Greece.



SYMBOLS

The goddess is, in fact, another brilliant example of a symbol. The myth of Athens' origins chronicles a competition between Poseidon and Athena during which each produces a gift; Poseidon a spring and Athena an olive tree. As they would soon be called, the Athenians, being more impressed with the olive tree, adopted the goddess as their patron. The Athenians, upon picking Athena, showed themselves to be people more easily impressed by intelligence and strategy than simple great feats. It is for this reason that Athena stands on a column at the Academy of Athens opposite Apollo, the god of music, poetry and truth (to name a few of his aspects). Apollo earns his place at the Academy through his symbolic depiction as a cultural wellspring, something which the university itself is attempting to replicate.

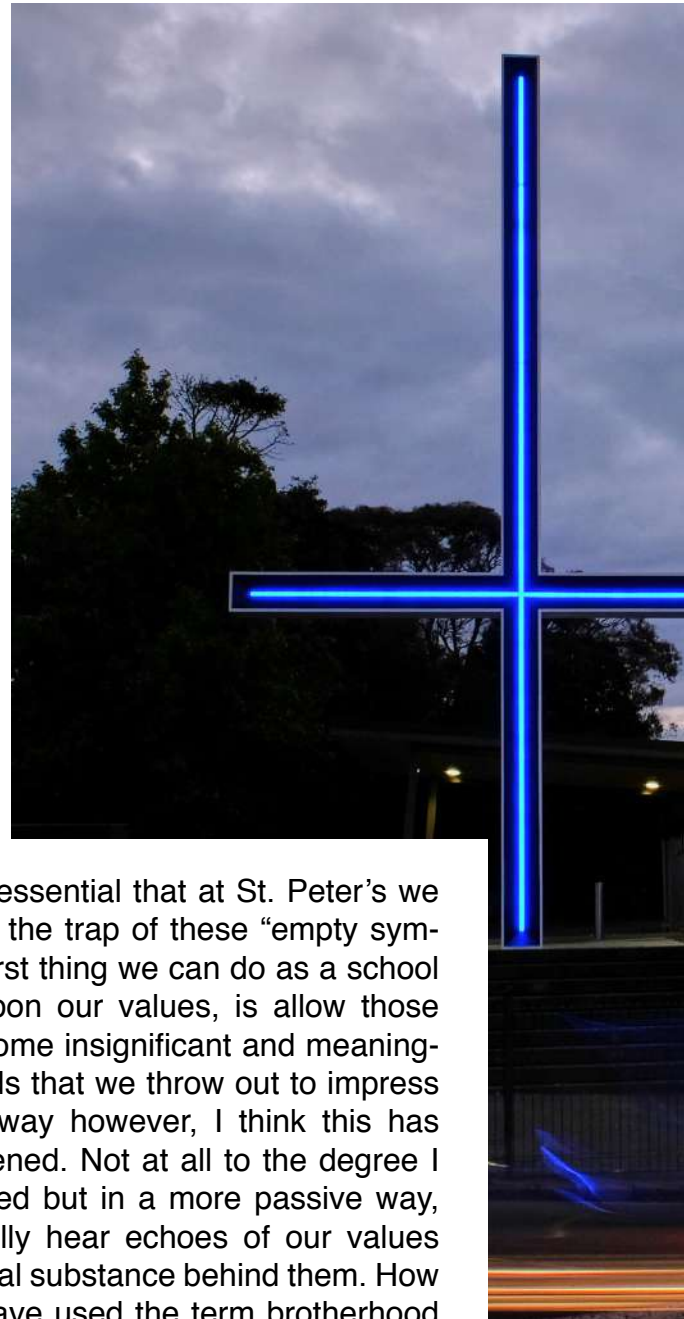
Much closer to home however there are several symbols prevalent in the St. Peter's community which are highly interesting to investigate. The most immediate is of course the Saint after whom we are named. Beginning with the idea of "stuff up, own up," a very self-explanatory phrase that we were taught from day one, it is easy to see how Peter is a role model for this behavior.

Famously, Peter denied Christ three times and in doing so failed Christ and his faith. While this was the case, Peter would go on to take responsibility for not only his actions, but also the entirety of the church. This great responsibility, and Peter's status as the first pope, reflect the spiritual nature of St. Peter's College. Moreover, Peter's death under persecution upon the upside-down cross shows not only the conviction and commitment that all Saint Peter's men should strive to emulate, but also humility, another key component of the ideal student at our school.

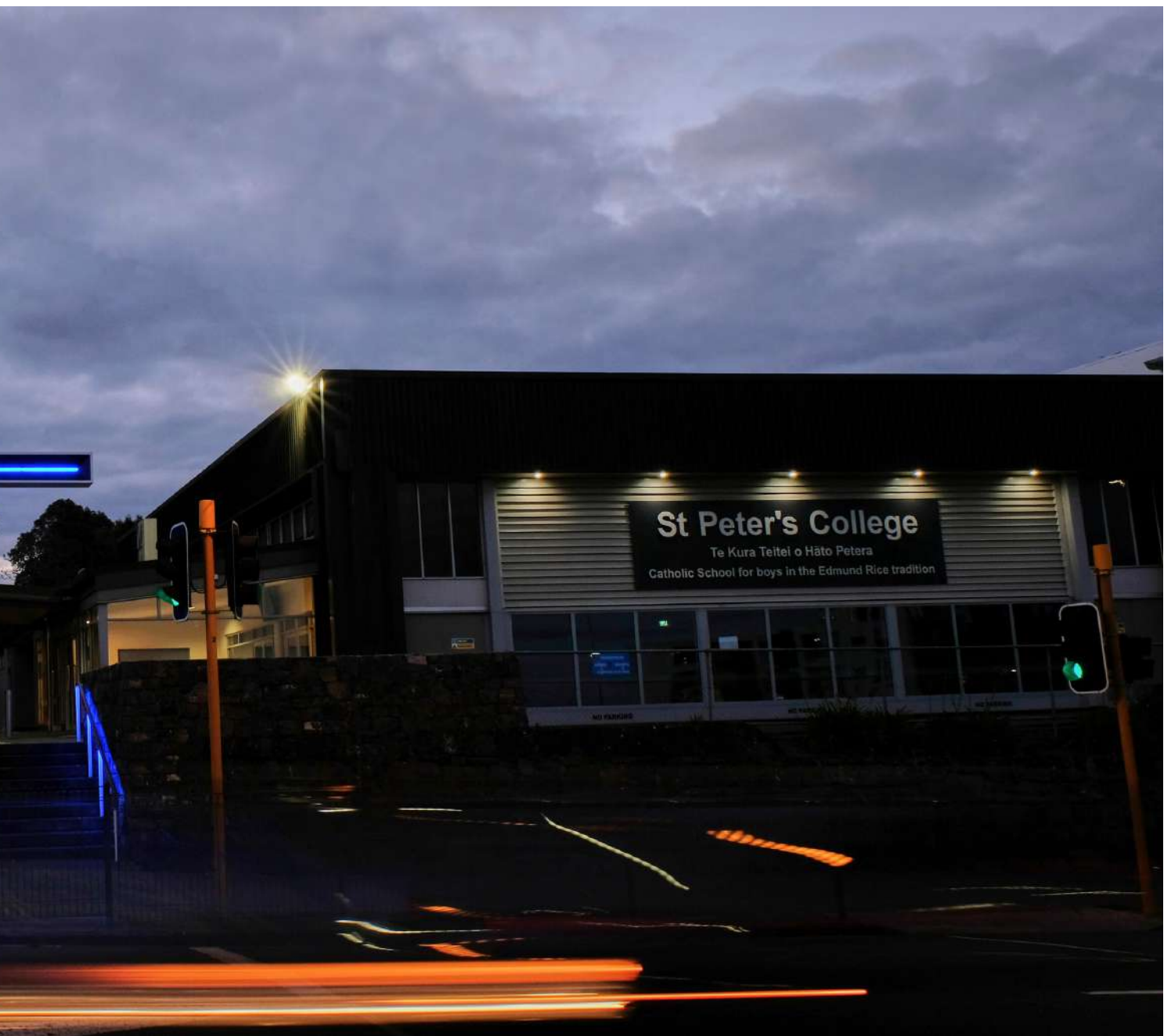
Another historical figure who has become a symbol of service to his community is Edmund Rice, the man responsible for establishing schools for poor and disadvantaged children in Ireland, and eventually the man who would found the brothers responsible for the establishment of the college itself. This selfless attitude, which should be the goal of all St. Peter's men, shows itself not only in our school motto (to love and to serve), but also in the prayer recited each morning within which we ask to "remember especially the disadvantaged of the world." These two figures in addition to the motto and prayer, all succinctly demonstrate some cornerstones of St. Peter's values and this makes them ideal for usage as symbols of our College.

Unfortunately, there are many cases in Athens where I believe the power of a symbol has been somewhat diluted. Walking down streets in a flea market draws your attention to the sheer number of tiny owl charms or figurines that are being sold. The number of olive trees, ironically symbols of abundance, that are displayed on mats and in baskets outside of shops as well as

the number of once regal Athenas that have been miniaturised and sold for one or two euro to a tourist looking for a trinket. These commercialised figures are an issue as they lose all the gravity and importance that is attached to the image of the owl, olive tree or god. They are not bought because they are symbols of wisdom, strength or abundance, they are bought simply because they are something to remember someone's time in Athens by. I myself am guilty of purchasing an owl which now perches on my desk and as I look at it I am forced to wonder how these three centimetres of metal could ever be anything other than an excuse to talk about my trip to Greece.



I believe it is essential that at St. Peter's we never fall into the trap of these "empty symbols." The worst thing we can do as a school so centred upon our values, is allow those values to become insignificant and meaningless buzzwords that we throw out to impress people. In a way however, I think this has already happened. Not at all to the degree I have suggested but in a more passive way, we occasionally hear echoes of our values without any real substance behind them. How many of us have used the term brotherhood to explain why we love St. Peter's, without living it to its fullest every day? How many of us have barely scraped through with the minimum amount of service hours required for our service journals, to avoid a Friday after school detention? How many of us have mumbled the school prayer monotonously in the morning, without considering what the point of doing so is? The point is to live our values and our symbols, and I think we can all get a little better at that. I know I can. St. Peter's does have an incredibly strong respect for its history and its iconography and that is the reason I enjoy attending SPC. This is also why I believe so strongly that St. Peter's must not lose sight of its strength in symbolism. This will only be done by every one of the boys and staff in the college challenging themselves to take ownership of their ideals.





Europe

through the lens

classics trip report

On Friday the Sixth of August, the 2018 Classics trip began at Auckland Airport. Thirty students and four teachers embarked on an 18-day trip to Greece and Italy to see some of the wonders of the ancient world.

The trip began with a 17-hour flight from Auckland to Dubai, followed by another 6-hour flight to Athens. We arrived at our hotel very jetlagged, but the next day it was straight into the sightseeing with a walking tour around Athens including the Panathenaic stadium, the temple of Zeus and the Plaka, or the ancient city. We met our guide Kaliope and went out. The Panathenaic stadium is huge and can seat approximately 50,000. The group had a look around and ran a few races on the track. Running races probably weren't a great idea in 32-degree heat but it was worth it. The temple of Zeus was a huge compound with one of the largest temples, behind the Parthenon, in Greece. We had lunch and were allowed to do some shopping in the markets around the Plaka.

The second day was centred on the Acropolis and the National Archeological Museum. We first went to the hill of the Areopagus, better known as Mars Hill. The views were amazing, and it had huge significance for the A-level boys. It was great to see places and things that you have studied in the flesh, something that would be echoed throughout the trip by the boys.

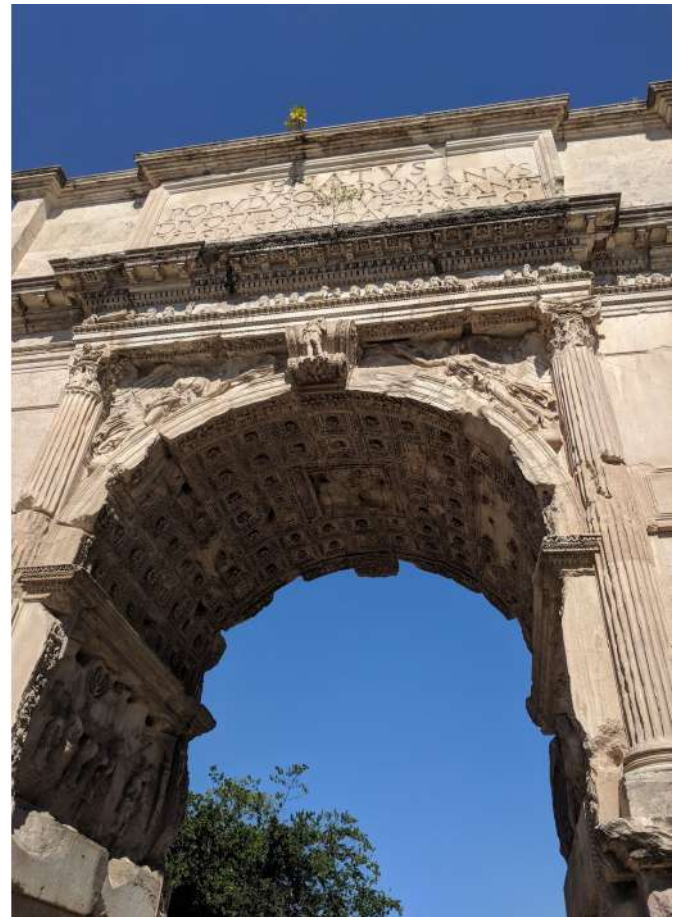


facts as the Alexander mosaic and the Farnese bull, both artifacts that the boys on the trip had studied. The next day was an amazing guided tour from our guide, Fabrizio, around the ruins of Pompeii, an amazing experience.

We overnighted in Sorrento and on the way to Rome, stopped at Montecassino to visit the beautiful abbey along with the cemeteries to the soldiers that died fighting around the monastery. The experience was one that the boys and teachers would never forget. We arrived in Rome and over the next few days we explored the Colosseum, the forum, St Peter's Basilica and the Trevi fountain, just to name a few.

The penultimate day involved a trip to the beach, at Sperlonga and a great teacher stitch up on some of the boys. The final day was another shopping day, after an excursion to see the sculpture of the dying Gaul.

A big thank you to the teachers on the trip; Mr. Sitters, Admiral Fricker, Mr. K and Mrs. O'Leary. Without your hard work this trip wouldn't have been the success it was and the boys would not have enjoyed it as much as they did. Finally, to the boys, thank you for making the trip so much fun and I hope you enjoyed it as much as I did.



We then moved to the Acropolis, through the Propylaea, the entrance way into the Acropolis, to the Parthenon, the temple of Athena Nike and the Erechtheion. To see something that was the centre of a culture and has stood the test of time was truly remarkable.

The next two days included a day trip to Delphi to see the famous seat of the Oracle, at the temple of Apollo, high up in the mountains north of Athens, and a shopping day where we went to see the ancient agora or marketplace, before heading to the main street of downtown Athens to get some shopping done, which some of our contingents really enjoyed.

Soon it was time to leave Athens and continue south past the Corinth canal, a spectacular sight, the theatre at Epidaurus, famous for its amazing acoustics, the Acropolis at Mycenae, famous for the amazing lions gate, towards the town of Sparta where we stayed the night.

The next day was dominated by our visit to Olympia, birthplace of the Ancient Olympics. It was a beautiful day and we walked round the museum viewing the friezes from the Temple of Zeus along with the many artifacts that had been collected from the surrounding complex. We visited the workshop of Phidias, the architect of the Acropolis and the gymnasium complex. From Olympia we departed for Patros to catch an overnight ferry to Bari, Italy to continue our odyssey.

When we arrived at Bari, after a rather long night of playing cards on the ferry, we immediately departed for Naples via a detour to Bari airport because our driver got lost.

After a long 3 hour bus ride we arrived at the Naples archeological museum with such arti-



Beauty And The Beast, a Review. Worthy of a No-Belle Prize?

Where do I start with Beauty and the Beast? I've heard a few words being thrown around to describe it since I saw it in June. To me though, there is only one word that does it justice. Magnificent, or should I say, magnifique.

I won't lie, when I heard the production for 2018 (my final year at SPC mind you) was Beauty and the Beast I was cynical.

For one thing, I've never been a huge Disney fan. Don't get me wrong, I like the classics (Snow White, Mickey Mouse, Cinderella

etc.), but the films post-1990 (Beauty and the Beast included) are not my cup of tea. Frozen is insufferable, Mulan is at least partially responsible for that awful Szechuan sauce meme and the Lion King – overrated garbage in my opinion (I laugh when Mufasa dies).

Secondly, I loved the raw emotional power of Les Misérables (2012) and Miss Saigon (2016) alongside the outrageous fun of Our House (2017). To my mind taking on the Disney classic was a step Backwards.

How utterly and completely wrong I was.

Where to start then? Beauty and the Beast was funny! Lumière, played by Matthew Terry and Hamish Butterworth-Snell, was a particular standout. Both actors had natural comedic timing to go along with that famous over-the-top but endearing French Accent. "Hon, hon, hon, Veronique" and "Allo" were personal favourites.



I'll admit, my favourite character was the arrogant villain of the piece, Gaston. Played by Rory Keating and Tainui Singh-Clark, I found the character almost charming in a twisted way. Or maybe it was just the two actors. Either way, when Gaston shouted, "I say we kill the beast!" I cheered in support, much to the disgust of the lady in front of me.

Whilst the comedic moments do stand out, the entire show was well acted. The chemistry between Belle and the Beast didn't seem forced, no easy feat for teenage actors.

Despite my inappropriate cheering for Gaston, my heart wrenched when the Beast died. It's a testament to the acting talents of both Belles and Beasts that this scene was as powerful as it was. It needed great actors to pull it off, and those 4 were more than up to job.

The two Belle's (Michaela Jeffries and Natasja Healey) were exceptional; as someone mentioned to me on the way out of the theatre, "She could have been a professional actress". I think they might both be one day.

And the Singing! All of it was excellent. I'd like to give credit though to the big chorus numbers, especially Be Our Guest. I can't imagine how difficult it was to choreograph a scene of such complexity, managing to fit everyone on the stage, and maintain a high quality of singing, but they pulled it off with aplomb. A mention must go to the brilliant and fun Gaston song, the mug routine in particular was sensational!

Another success was the remarkable production value of Beauty and the Beast, to say it looked professional is an understatement.





“She could have been a professional actress”

The giant screen in the background was used to great effect, far better than in years gone by. The animations were fun and helpful, allowing the narrative to flow without the need for constant set changes by the crew.

A mention must also go to the magical transformation of the Beast back into the prince. On both nights I went, this scene was done superbly well, it really was incredible to watch as the Beast was lifted into the air and the transition went off both times without a hitch. It was so impressive that I only realised the second time I went that the Beast had been played by a different actor during the entire fight scene with Gaston, and this was only because of what seemed like a slight microphone fault.

The costumes were another standout feature. Obviously, the costumes of the Beast, Lumière and Cogsworth were brilliant, but I would like to give credit to the costumes of the chorus. It's easy to forget when watching a St Peter's musical that it is only a high school production.

The delightful plates, knives and not to mention the wolves and gargoyles, were clever and creative, especially on what I imagine was a limited budget. In many ways those imaginative costumes were more impressive than the professional ones of the leads.

Even the quibbles I had with the show were few and far between. I found the trumpet playing too loud on both nights, making it difficult to hear some lines. I also felt as if the punches needed some sound effects to go along with them, if just to heighten the fun.

I do have one major criticism though. Gaston boasts that he's, “completely covered in hair”. Yet when both actors who played Gaston ripped open the collar of their shirt they revealed... a completely hairless chest. The audience had been blatantly and shamelessly misled and I'll be demanding my money back. I implore all of you who watched Beauty and the Beast to do the same.



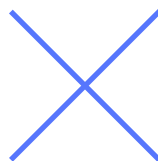
In all seriousness, Beauty and the Beast was touted as a crowd-pleaser and it didn't fail to deliver. I loved every second of it and am a little regretful I didn't go and watch it one more time. 5 Stars from me.

So, what do I want to see next year? Grease. It's fun, has memorable songs and unlike the actors in the movie, SPC students are the right age to play the characters.

But failing that, I'm sure any production we put on next year will be a triumph - they always are. I love going to watch the productions and even though I'll have left St Peter's, I'll be coming to whatever the show is next year.

If you didn't go this year, you have to go next year. The school production is always incredible, I've never come out of one feeling glum.

Take it from me, it's totally worth the entry fee. If they can turn a lifelong hater of Disney into a fan, I doubt there is little they can't do. Well, apart from making the Lion King good. Please don't do the Lion King musical.



A Review: June

The plastic seat, blue and hard, was arranged awkwardly. And they stood, leaning in towards me. Their eyes ran over my face, tracing the curves of my cheek-bones, avoiding the vicious, red sores. Looking into my eyes, as I avoided theirs.

I stood outside in the cold, back against the glass. And inside, I could see familiar faces, but I was in unfamiliar territory. I felt that my lungs were leaden, and my stomach was ablaze. I placed one hand on the door, pushing inwards. And I looked down, sinking further into my jacket, trying to avoid their gaze. But she was here, and she smiled, and walked across that tiled lobby, with hands on hips.

They lay on a trampoline under the stars, clouds rising from their huddled bodies. She lay, her head rested on his chest, and they shared a mutual smile. And he watched the moon, the light reflected in his eyes, and she was looking at his eyes. They were carried by the euphoria, by the fumes, by the things rushing through their veins. But soon, they left the trampoline.

We danced in the blue smoke, a pack of children. And I fell through the haze, and I collided with them. Our eyes meet, in the midst of that haze, that strange dance of smoke and fabric.

And I felt that I couldn't look away, as the world turned around me, and the lights flickered, and the smoke parted and enveloped us. But then, they were gone into the fog.

I handed her the paper, and stood and left. I took caution to prevent the door from slamming. I walked with slow purpose, one hand on my tie, one slack at my side. And my lungs shuddered with breath, and my hands shook slightly. And I felt that I was drowning, as if I was choking slowly on something cold, and horrid. But when I returned, she was smiling.

The light swung wildly, and one collective breath of horror was taken, and held. But the beat swelled and crashed, and the crowd returned to it's shared frenzy. Drunken hollers went up, throats went hoarse, beers went spilled. My fringe was in my eyes, and the light washed everyone in the same orange hue.

There was the scent of incense from high; and the wood bit into my back, and the carpet was under my folded legs. And there was the droning noise, and the blaring of the trumpets. And the mass stood, and belted with all their breath, but no melody.

I am in love with being alive.

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