

We Start With...

A two minute period of silence - a moment of peace.

From the 'Chair'

Ethical questions are always appearing in new guises; this election period is providing some purloiners.

I met one I had to resolve for myself early in my career as a leaflet-deliverer for a political party. Should I deliver to boxes with 'no junk mail' and similar? My letterbox has such a notice and I felt quite strongly about it. However, I decided (to my own satisfaction) that political leaflets are more likely than not to be welcome by householders, and were in fact important to the democratic process. So I felt ready for a debate with anyone on my route (and would of course never insist that anyone receive something they didn't want).

Good wishes to everyone as you work your way to making your decisions on Election Day.

Gretchen

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Next Meeting

With David Seymour's *End of Life* Bill coming up in the near future it seems an opportune time for us to visit the euthanasia question again and look at any new developments that may aid us in making informed decisions. Whatever our persuasion on this matter it presents some complicated issues. As a past member, Roberta Highton, wrote: "The devil is in the detail". It is one of those 'new' scenarios where we are not able to fall back on the wisdom of the past but

have to find ethical approaches for a contemporary challenge.

We will look at some of a power point presented at a recent U3A meeting by Dr Simon Walker from the Bioethics Centre of the University and have plenty of time for discussion.

The last moments of King George V

The Guardian Weekly 31st March 2017 by Sam Knight

"The King's life is moving peacefully towards its close," was the final notice issued by George V's doctor, Lord Dawson, at 9.30pm on the night of 20th January 1936. Not long afterwards, Dawson injected the king with 750mg of morphine and a gram of cocaine – enough to kill

Euthanasia Debate

Discussion led by

Marjorie Spittle

Thursday, 24th AUGUST

**St John's Church Hall,
Cnr Wright Street
& Highgate**

Tea and Coffee
will be available from 5.30pm

**The programme will start at
6.00pm**

Contribution - \$5

him twice over – in order to ease the monarch’s suffering, and to have him expire in time for the printing presses of the Times, which rolled at midnight.

Nuclear Destruction

It is 72 years this week since the atomic bomb was dropped on Nagasaki. Kevin Clements noted at the Peace Vigil to commemorate the event, that it was a wholly unnecessary act. Japan had virtually capitulated and to waste so many lives at the point of explosion and then to destroy so many more with slow death from radiation-induced cancer was an outrageous decision.

At a public lecture on nuclear weapons this week the point was made that we are inclined to say “this new bomb is ten times more **powerful** than the one dropped on Nagasaki”. The presenter suggested a significant change in language “this new bomb is ten times more **destructive** than the one dropped on Nagasaki”.

We are peaceful people who value human life – the proliferation of nuclear weapons must be opposed with all our energies.

SPAM

I always thought this stood for Stupid Person’s Advertising Message and maybe in the beginning it was. Now we get so many e-mails attempting to persuade us to go to a web site and log in with our password to get a tax refund or certify our Pay Pal or Apple Store details that it is hard to know which are fake messages.

A talented friend advises me to let my mouse hover over the site the message wishes you to go to and look at the little window that opens up. If the address looks like a place you go to frequently, then it is fairly safe – but most often the link will take you to a fake site and intercept your details.

Someone knows I have an interest in religion and so is trying to get me to authorise the purchase of a Hebrew Bible from the Apple Store. To be even safer – keep an eye on your internet bank account and report anything suspicious to VISA or your bank immediately.

Caring for each other and helping to avoid these sort of pitfalls is what makes us the sort of people we are.

Homo Deus (Again)

Gretchen’s study of the book a couple of months ago couldn’t have been more timely. We learned that whilst we read books on the tablet, the inbuilt camera can read us; it can see which parts of the book make us sad or happy, and can measure how fast we turn the pages as well as when we gave up on a book. The idea is to find out more about us and to target advertising especially to us.

I thought that a bit fanciful until I read in the last fortnight that Facebook has patented that technology (although it doesn’t seem to be in use yet).

The author argued that as the computer learns more and more about us (like the sites we visit when we surf the net, the places we go using Google maps and so on) the machine will know us better than we know ourselves. What is the implication of that if you decided to use a dating site? Ass Marjorie has written, we cannot fall back on the wisdom of the past to solve this.

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Explaining the Bill: <http://www.lifechoice.org.nz/>

Opposing the Bill: <http://euthanasiadebate.org.nz/resources-2/end-of-life-choice-bill/>