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NEW EXIT SNIPPETS MONTHLY, SINGLE TOPIC WORKSHOPS

Abhh 2020! The year that many said they wanted to reboot because of a virus in the system. It is like a bad dream to much of the world. COVID-19 is tragic, dramatic, and a challenge to us all. While Australia and New Zealand have been saved from the worst, for Exit members in Europe and Nth America, a dark, long, dangerous winter lies ahead.

To break the chain of confinement, Exit is pleased to announce that commencing in January, a new monthly series of **online**, single-topic workshops will commence

with Exit Director, Philip Nitschke. These Exit Snippets are a real and tangible way for the organisation to stay responsive to members' needs and to keep everyone up to date with the latest developments in practical end of life choices. The first Exit Snippet to be held 21.00 GMT on Wednesday 27 January 2021 will be on the Lethal Inorganic Salts (8am Thurs 28th Sydney time).

Exit Snippets follow from the very popular 2020 series of online workshops which were held in June, July, August and October this year. While these online workshops lasted

for 3 hours and offered a similar program to traditional face-to-face workshops, the new Exit Snippets represent an entirely new way of discussing end of life information.

Before the pandemic and before life went online, it was never feasible to hold face-to-face, short, single-topic workshops for members. This was because the effort and expense of in-person workshops did not lend itself to a shortened, more calculated program. The online environment is *not* similarly constrained. Exit is now much freer to tailor our programs to member needs.

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EXIT SNIPPETS
MINI TOPIC SPECIFIC ONLINE WORKSHOPS
MONTHLY
2021

Salts
Nitrogen
Peace
Reliability
Vomiting
Barbiturates
Opioids
Shelf Life
Going Together
Pegasus

Coming in January 2021 for Exit Members

A WAVE OF CHANGE ... LAW CHANGES ACROSS AUSTRALIA/NZ

Since 2017, there has been a marked quickening in the pace of law reform across Australia (and New Zealand). There are not many things that arch Melbourne conservative Kevin Andrews (of *Euthanasia Laws Act* fame - the law that prevents the three Australian Territories from making laws on euthanasia/ assisted dying), gets right. But Andrews' claim that his *Act* would set the movement back some 20 years was a singularly correct prediction.

That is because if we fast forward to 2020, it is near enough to two decades since the short-lived *Rights of the Terminally Ill Act of the Northern Territory* was overturned by a conscience vote in the Australian Parliament.

It is notable that the leaders of the 'Euthanasia No' movement were **Tony Burke** (now Manager of Opposition Business) and **Kevin Andrews** himself (currently on the government back bench).

Both men are still there as elected MPs in Canberra. One could say it is just as well that they are in the Federal Parliament and not State Parliaments or else things could be considerably different.



As we go to press, there are currently four end of life choices bills before the State Parliaments of the nation or having been passed. At their recent 6 November 2020 referendum, 65% of Kiwis voted in support of the *End of Life Choice Act* coming into force.

The result is binding. New Zealand, too, will shortly have an end of life choices law.



Models of Law Reform

So what are these laws that are being passed at great haste in the Parliaments in Australia and New Zealand? Firstly, each of these laws is a medical model law. In Victoria and West Australia where laws have already been passed, eligibility depends on a terminal prognosis with < 6 months to live (<12 if the diagnosis is neurological). The **Tasmania** End of Life Choices Bill started out more broadly, allowing a person with a 'disease, illness, injury or medical condition' access to the proposed law. Eligibility has since been narrowed to the same as **Victoria** and **West Australia** - therefore you'll need to be almost dead to qualify.

In **Queensland**, Premier Anastacia Palaszczuk played what has been called the 'campaign bingo card' pledging a conscience vote in the Queensland Parliament should the Labor Government be re-elected. Palaszczuk's political wildcard worked. The Queensland Law Reform Commission is now tasked with devising the shape of the law that will be put to the Parliament.

Exit's submission to the QLRC advocates for the adoption of a **Swiss-style** medical model, adopting Professor Susan Stefan's line that 'once you let the doctors into the picture, you will never get rid of them'. Exit members may remember Susan Stefan from Exit's 20th Anniversary Conference at the State Library of Victoria in 2016. Professor Stefan is the author of *Rational Suicide, Irrational Laws: Examining Current Approaches to Suicide in Policy and Law* (Oxford University Press).

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LAURA'S CHOICE WINS BEST DOCO

In the March 2020 edition of *Deliverance*, Exit reported on the voluntary death at Pegasos in Switzerland of South African-born, Ballina local, Laura Henkel. We foretold of a feature documentary by Laura's daughter, Cathy Henkel and granddaughter Sam Lara. Now a feature documentary **Laura's Choice** had its world premiere at the Revelation Perth International Festival on Saturday 12 December 2020.

As a documentary, *Laura's Choice* is unique because Laura Henkel was not terminally ill. Inspired by David Goodall, Laura was simply old (she was 91). She had long since decided that a nursing home was not for her.

By either good planning or good luck, what makes 'Laura's Choice' so remarkable is that the filming covers the years leading up to Laura's death. Two years prior Sam and Laura took off for Europe for a once-in-a-lifetime trip together, grandma and beloved grand-daughter.

Unfortunately, the trip did not go to plan with Laura ending up in hospital on day 2 (after a mishap with her walking frame). Pneumonia then set in and the much-anticipated holiday was soon replaced with a month in a Viennese hospital. Laura would gradually recover enough

to return home to Australia, but her confidence and will to live fully was shaken. It was the beginning of her end. Describing herself as 'no shrinking violet', Laura penned a manifesto on her thoughts about death and dying.

We print an extended extract of Laura Henkel's Manifesto on page 8 of this edition of *Deliverance*. We congratulate Cathy and Sam on their film which, as we understand it, is due to air on ABC 1 in 2021.



Cathy Henkel (l) & Sam Lara receiving their Innovation Award

LAW CHANGES ACROSS AUSTRALIA/NZ CONT.

But implementing medical model laws is about more than the medicalisation of death and dying and privileging the position of the medical profession over our lives and deaths. The narrow selection criteria implemented in the name of 'safeguards' has little chance of ever being inclusive.

People's reasons for wanting choice at the end of life is about more than waiting for a terminal disease to come along and to be spared the (sometime) indignity of palliative care. Choice at the end of life is much more fundamental. It is about **taking back control** of one's existential existence from the world we all live in. This is not a choice that can or should be delegated to a bunch of doctors.

Then there is the issue of the majority of people who will never qualify: those who like **Professor David Goodall** who were simply old and felt, at 104 years of age, he had lived long enough. Medical model laws also automatically **exclude couples** who want to die together. By designation, the medical model laws we now see in Australia and New Zealand exclude people with mental illness. Many people tell Exit that a long term diagnosis of depression or a recent diagnosis of dementia makes a case for choice at the end of life more urgent, more pressing and more relevant, not less.

Is medical model law reform good for the nation? You the reader should decide: bear in mind how hard it is to change something that has been set in stone.

DOXIT PODCASTS

The Doxit Podcasts have now been running for the best part of 9 months, all the time building a steady listener-ship.

While the majority of the podcasts are based on updates to the *Peaceful Pill eHandbook* interviews have also started to appear in the program; most notably with the President of the World Federation of Right to Die Societies, Professor Sean Davison and with Exit Director, Tom Curran, from lockdown at home in the Wicklow hills in Ireland.

Since the last *Deliverance* newsletter, the following topics have been covered:

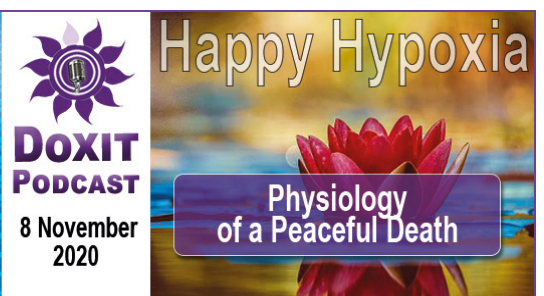
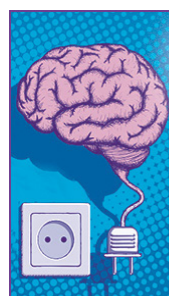
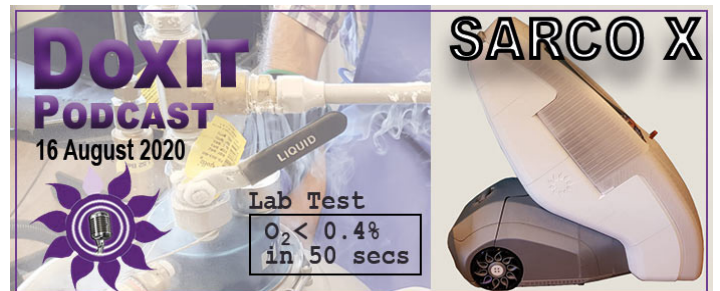
- Do You Need a Doctor?
- Is a Nembutal Death 'Cruel & Unusual'?
- Sarco X Euthanasia Capsule Arrives
- In Conversation Professor Sean Davison
- NuTech 2020 Conference Program: a sneak peak!
- A Letter from Ireland with Tom Curran
- The Physiology of a Good Death - why it works & how!
- The Legal Wave: Law Reform Moves in Australia/ NZ

For those new to the concept of Podcasts, they are free, recorded 30-40 minute conversations with Drs Philip Nitschke & Fiona Stewart. The Doxit podcasts can be found on the *Peaceful Pill Handbook* website at www.peacefulpill.com or on any of the main Podcast platforms, including: Spotify, Anchor, Apple Podcasts, Google Podcasts, Breaker, Overcast, RadioPublic & Copy RSS etc.

EXIT LOCAL CHAPTER MEETINGS

Exit is very pleased to say that in Australia and New Zealand, some local Exit Chapter Meetings have already resumed in physical form.

In this time of COVID-19, chapter meetings and coffee & chats depend entirely upon local government restrictions and regulations. But given that New Zealand and Australia are largely 'COVID-free', it is a welcome development that members can now meet again in person. If you are not sure what is happening in your local area, please contact your local Chapter Coordinator or call Amanda at the Exit office (AU) on 1300 10 3948 or NZ 09 889 0964.



EXITORIAL

e-Deliverance

2020 IN REVIEW - LOOKING BACK

It goes without saying that none of us expected 2020 to have turned out quite like it has. From my base here in Amsterdam, the virus (but not the pandemic) has come and gone and come again, like in much of Europe. As I write this Exitorial, the Netherlands is again locked down, this time hard until 19 January 2021. The pandemic and the lockdowns make Exit work difficult but not impossible. And that is the good news to come from this terrible year.

Little did I think when I held an almost-experimental **Online Webinar from Helsinki** in Finland in early February that webinars would become the norm from that point on. I had originally envisaged these online workshops as the gaps in between the 'real workshops' where members gather face-to-face to hear the latest on practical methods for a peaceful death. Indeed, I fully expected to be back in Australia not once, but twice, during the year: such was our ambition to hold member meetings in every corner of the country.

As has been the case for many organisations, the Internet 'saved' us. Looking back, our **3 Online Workshops** attracted several hundred attendees at each. The **online NuTech 2020 conference** also had an attendance in the hundreds. But that is not the only change that Exit made this year. We also started our **Doxit Podcasts** where Fiona Stewart and I discuss the day's news on end of life issues as well as the most recent updates to the *Peaceful Pill eHandbook*. And Exit launched the world's first Nembutal scams website in order to try and warn anyone seeking to buy Nembutal about which websites are scammers.

changing nature of the DIY end of life field has shown that a more frequent publication format is more useful. The **real time online chat support on the Exit International website** has been yet another way that we have been able to connect with the Exit community to answer questions and be a friendly face.

In addition to our heightened online activity has been steady and consistent work in the research and development, since it is this **R&D** which underpins the *Peaceful Pill eHandbook*. In this regard, 2020 updates to the *eHandbook* have included topics such as the R2D Debreather, the Korean Collar, the implications of COVID-19 for a peaceful death & for Advance Directives, the facts about Chloroquine, the theory and practice of Happy Hypoxia (low oxygen euphoria), significant work on the Lethal Inorganic Salts, the new US drug combinations (eg. D-DMA) and drug potentiation. Of course, we also reported that Sarco X was nearing completion and that its use in Switzerland had been delayed due to COVID-related travel restrictions.

2021 - LOOKING FORWARD

While it is difficult to know exactly what the coming 12 months will look like as predictions vary greatly about when 'the new normal' will emerge, it is safe to say that Exit will continue to be an effective presence both online and face-to-face (wherever possible). Our immediate plans concern the launch of our new monthly Snippets - mini, monthly, online workshops (70 minutes duration). Each month a topic will be selected as the focus for the Snippet. This will fulfil a much-requested change of structure in relation to the traditional Exit workshop which tend to be information-heavy and often time-poor.

For those not online (and I do appreciate that not everyone is online), some Exit Chapter Meetings and Coffee & Chats have already resumed in places where it is safe to do so. These grassroots meetings are the best way for members to link-up with others and be part of a friendly, informal network.

Suffice to say, as soon as I have had my vaccination and travel is allowed, I will be Australia-bound for an extended period of time. I would like to thank Exit members and, of course, my incredible staff (especially Kerri and Amanda) for your ongoing support and goodwill. Here's to good health for all in 2021! *Philip Nitschke*



Exit was also able to ramp-up our publications: publishing **over 40 Exit Internationalist Email Newsletters** during the year. In many respects, our email newsletters have taken over from the *Deliverance* newsletter. The news-cycle and the fast-

NUTECH 2020 CONFERENCE REPORT

In September, Exit hosted this year's NuTech conference entirely online. In recent years, NuTech has generally been held every other year, often linking in with the biennial conference of the World Federation of Right to Die Societies. On the past two occasions, NuTech has been held both at a physical venue and simultaneously live-streamed to audiences around the world. In retrospect, the decision to take NuTech online in 2017 and 2018 provided valuable experience for the online conference of 2020: a mode of delivery made necessary thanks to COVID-19.

The 2020 NuTech conference featured 13 speakers in countries as far afield as: the Netherlands, Australia, the US, France, England, Scotland and Singapore. The conference was held in real time across 7 global time zones. We are pleased to say there were few technical glitches and the gathering went according to plan.

The NuTech2020 program theme was 'The Dementia Dilemma: is the answer technological'. In asking this question, the keynote speakers of Drs Marije de Haas and Michael Laufer were invited on the basis of their leadership and research in this area.

Euthanasia Futurist, **Marije de Haas**, spoke about her speculative invention called 'the Plug' which, were it to exist, would be a chip implant that would allow the owner to create a peaceful death when their dementia got so bad that death became a preferable option.



'The Plug' short film - at: <http://bit.ly/euthanasiaplug>

From the Netherlands, well known euthanasia doctor and media commentator, **Bert Keizer**, was intended to join Marije de Haas in debate. Unfortunately, Bert experienced technical difficulties on the day, however chairperson, **Fiona Stewart**, was able to interview him separately in the following week. Bert's presentation is included in the conference recording (which is available on the Exit website).



Michael Laufer shortly before receiving his Pegleg implant

Biohacker, **Michael Laufer**, who is based in Singapore took the concept one step further discussing his actual leg implant - a device called the 'Pegleg'. The Pegleg is a server, not a dementia switch, but it proves the point. The take-away is that body implants already exist for multiple purposes, but not yet for dementia (where the ethical issues abound, not to mention legal constraints).

At a more practical level, American Medical Aid in Dying doctor, **Lonny Shavelson** spoke about his team's research into affordable lethal drug combinations and the multiple technical challenges encountered by the team in finding suitable replacements to Nembutal (which has become unaffordable for most people). Dr Shavelson is a founder of Bay Area End of Life Options in California where he works under the *End of Life Option Act*, helping terminally ill patients to die.

Polish/ Dutch feminist activist **Kinga Jelinska** spoke about lessons which the right to die movement might learn from the women's movement when it comes to the demedicalisation and subsequent shift towards

NUTECH 2020 REPORT

DIY contraception. Kinga was one of the most praised speakers in the program on the day.

From France, NuTech was joined by investigative journalist, **Guillaume Coudray**, speaking about his forthcoming book *Who Poisoned your Bacon Sandwich* which details the lethality of sodium nitrite in the preserved meats industry.

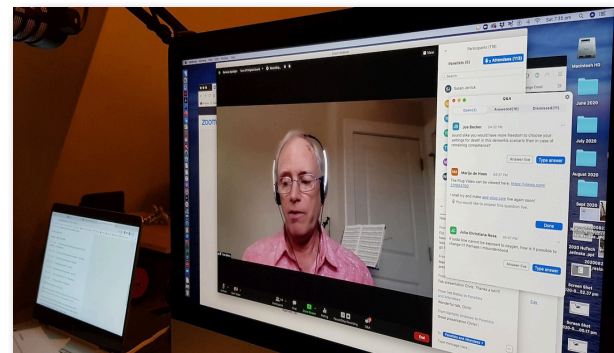
From the UK, *Last Five Acts* author and long-time euthanasia activist **Chris Docker** gave an insightful critical analysis on the pitfalls of medicalised aid in dying vs the less-regulated DIY approach. From Glasgow, **Hugh Wynne** spoke knowingly on the phenomenon known as ‘foam frenzy’ for a happy hypoxic passing.

From the US, biomedical engineer, **Ted Ballou**, presented on a dry carbon monoxide generator while from Michigan, **Neal Nicol** (assistant to and biographer of Jack Keavorkian), spoke on new methods of bio body disposal. **Richard Avocet** presented on the 2nd incarnation of his R2D DeBreather device.

From Australia, **John Todd** gave a detailed overview of eye-witness accounts of Nitrite deaths. This is one of the first public presentations of its kind and, as such, was invaluable in shedding light on the ‘lived experience’ of this type of death.

From Amsterdam, **Philip Nitschke** gave an outline of his current research concerning the development of an affordable, attainable, transportable, Ikea-style flat-pack Sarco.

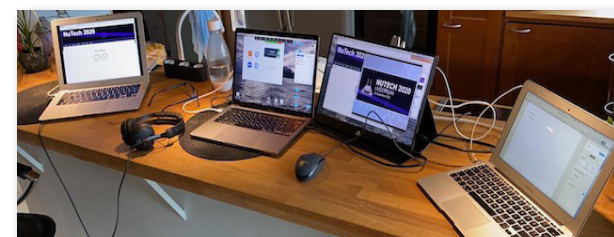
All sessions were chaired by **Tom Curran** in Dublin and Fiona Stewart in Amsterdam. The conference duration was almost 5 hours. Tech management was provided by the crew in Helsinki with tech support coming from Matteo in Milan. NuTech 2020 was a truly international collaboration. The recording of NuTech2020 is available on the Exit International website. All funds raised will go towards the next NuTech conference.



Ted Ballou, US



Bert Keizer, NL



The Control Desk



Kinga Jelinska, PL/ NL



Guillaume Coudray, FR

EUTHANASIA FOR ALL THE RIGHT TO TAKE RESPONSIBILITY FOR MY LIFE

A Manifesto for Change by Laura Henkel

So you think you're free. You are part of a democratic society, so you have the freedom of choice in how you live –and die. Well, you don't. You don't have the freedom to die in a dignified manner, which means you don't have the most basic of human rights. Animals are treated better than humans in this regard.

If you don't have an accident or a serious disease, you have to wait to the bitter end, when you are incontinent, perhaps blind, certainly deaf, in fact disgusting - to yourself, even if others won't admit it. You may be wracked with pain, bored silly. No matter! You are not allowed to die. You must just suffer on. That's what life's all about, so they say.

Life can be fun when you are full of energy, no matter what age you are. But when that energy dissipates, it can be a drag, a bore, in fact hell. Life can be very exciting. Mine has been. It has been full of challenges I have been forced to face, some with great reluctance I have to admit, but the best I can say is that I did try.



Laura Henkel - Balina NSW, December 2019

The situation now is that friends, family and even doctors are asking me when I am going to move into a retirement home. Never! Not if I have any say in it But do I?

I'm nearly 90, but until about a year ago, I didn't feel old at all. Now suddenly I do. To analyse why this has happened at this moment, will require a whole lot of time and paper and I'm not sure if I have the whole picture even now, after much thought. And this is not the place for it.

I am not afraid to die, but frankly I care very much how it will happen. Like most people I shudder to think of the gruesome ways I could suffer in death. And perhaps one of the worst is the thought of getting so old, I no longer have the strength or the will to look after myself and probably won't care either.

I have been independent all my life and view with utter dismay the prospect of being entirely dependent on someone else, no matter who that might be.

I feel very strongly about the way people are forced to clutch at any withering straw to hang on for dear life to the utter, ultimate, last gasp. It is undignified, soul destroying and completely and definitely wrong. We desperately need the law changed.

Editor's Note - Laura understood full well that no Australian law would ever assist her to die because she was not sick. Being old, but not sick is a 'need' that has been overlooked by lawmakers in every country with end of life choice laws (except Switzerland).



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