



U3A DUNEDIN

CHARITABLE TRUST

Website:
u3adunedin.org.nz

Series 3 - 2016

Course title:

Living with Breakthroughs

Dates: **Wednesdays, 7 September - 12 October**

Time: **2:15 - 4:15 pm**

Venue: **Leith Bowling Club, 2 Duke St, Dunedin**
(Enrolments for this course will be limited to **110.**)

Course fee: \$45. Tea and coffee provided.

Course Organisers: Rodney Hamel
rodhamelhawthorn@hotmail.com
and Richard Higham
rhigham@ihug.co.nz

Assistants: TBA

If you would like to apply for more than one course, please rank your choices.
If you enrol via our website **please complete payment of the appropriate fees**
EITHER by internet banking (include Membership No. in Reference box), OR by
cheque (to: Programme Secretary, U3A Dunedin, PO Box 6491, North Dunedin
9059.)

All applications must be received by **Wednesday 10 August 2016** and you will
receive a response to your application by Friday 19 August 2016.

Please contact the Programme Convenor (courses@u3adunedin.org.nz, 021 258
4183) or the Secretary (mw.potter42@gmail.com, 453 4721) with any queries.

Postponements:

Check the website: **u3adunedin.org.nz** or listen to:

The Breeze 98.2 FM — Radio Dunedin 99.8 FM — MoreFM 97.4 FM

Please note: please no recording, photographing or videoing at any session in any of
the courses.

***Please keep this brochure as a reminder of venue, dates, and times
for the courses for which you apply.***

LIVING WITH BREAKTHROUGHS

It has become a popular myth that human progress is made through breakthroughs – in medicine, machinery, social systems, and economics. This U3A course explores the myth as it applies to the period 1800-1900, and asks whether “transformation” is a better word than “breakthrough”. We then bring history up to date: with smartphones and internet banking.

- 7 Sept** The myth: long waves and little ripples. **Richard Higham** sets the scene and **Erik Olssen** explores advances (and standstills) in the human condition.
- 14 Sept** The strongest case for breakthrough theory: medical advances. **Terry Doyle** offers ten examples of dramatic change in medical knowledge and practice: but then questions the reality of dramatic change, exploring the impact of less obvious factors, like Napoleon’s treatment en masse of wounded soldiers.
- 21 Sept** Milestones in Social History and the Place of the Family. Writers in the 1800’s will be considered – Marx and Engels on the nuclear family’s role in capitalist society, and Weber on blood versus wealth, and the “protestant ethic”. Commentators in the 1900’s, like the Webbs, Tawney and Toynbee, broadened the study, taking account of larger societal forces. The American school naturally focussed on the impact of migration while the French considered the relationship between “mentalites” at the macro, and families at the micro, level. **Tom Brooking** will present and comment on traditions in the study of social history, and bring theory up to date with academic studies which used quantitative and qualitative analysis and opened the questions of gender and race.
- 28 Sept** Technology and Science: the 1800’s saw wide range exploration: in sea voyaging, in laboratory experimentation, in resource allocation, in pioneering new systems. **Terry Doyle** returns to look at invention and innovation as profoundly testing the acceptance of the world as given, but discerns a latent power of resistance, which, like a dam, held up change, then allowed advances to flood through.
- 5 Oct** Art and literature and music as witnesses to social transformation. **Rodney Hamel** will look at responses to technological breakthroughs so called. Through (a) “grateful enthusiasts” – slavery, colonialism, militarism, and adulation of heroic imperialist virtues. Then through (b) “sceptical or hostile witnesses” – Tolstoy, Gandhi, the impact of secularism, attacks on morality, Art, the Salon. Censorship. Society’s broader concepts – of duty. The forbidden in Society.
- 12 Oct** Living with breakthroughs. “We learn from history that we don’t learn from history.”
The team, **Erik, Terry, Tom, Rodney** and **Richard**, look back at centuries of enormous change and our retrospective need to interpret it through “breakthroughs.” Can we learn anything from such an exercise? And then, we bring history up to date with our and the participants’ views on a world which is “going viral”. Communication technology now changes the world we live as we live in it. How should we cope?