



Mackay

ON MONEY

(AND OTHER THINGS)

BY AUTHORISED FINANCIAL ADVISER CHRIS MACKAY

Regular readers will know I have been reproducing excerpts from Dr Ron Vlietstra's "Dutchman's Gold". Kathryn's cousin Ron "discovered" their great grandfather's book which originally had been published in Dutch by Behrns in Harlingen, in 1868.

Consistent with my genetic theme of recent articles (convict, triple D, and stupid genes) Johannes would have had the "wanderlust" gene. Gavin Haines in *The Telegraph* in August 2017 writes "Ever wondered why some people have more of a compulsion to travel than others? Not only travel, but travel to challenging destinations; places where they are likely to be pushed out of their comfort zones or encouraged to take risks.

And have you wondered why some individuals thrive in changeable environments yet wilt when faced with routine? Or why some people are more likely to flit between jobs, experiment with drugs and be more promiscuous?

Well, researchers have repeatedly tried to link such behaviour traits with a gene variant known as DRD4-7R, which is thought to be present in around 20 per cent of the population.

DRD4 is a dopamine receptor that helps control the levels of dopamine in our brains. Dopamine is an organic chemical – which can be triggered by anything from chocolate and ecstasy to receiving a text from a loved one – and is a precursor of other substances including adrenaline.

Researchers claim a variant of the DRD4 gene – known as DRD4-7R – has a lower sensitivity to dopamine. The 20 per cent who carry that variant (or allele) so the theory goes, means they are likely to seek experiences that release more dopamine.

The 7R variant is associated with increased risk taking, curiosity and [not so good] various psychiatric disorders including ADHD, alcoholism and drug dependency.

Some commentators have even nicknamed it the "wanderlust" gene which is certainly a sexier moniker than DRD4-7R.

Some studies have linked the allele with human migration. In 1999, research by the University of California suggested the allele was more prevalent in migratory cultures than in settled ones, supporting the idea of a so-called "wanderlust" gene.

All our kids' antecedents arrived in New

Zealand in the 1800s. Dad's people arrived in the South Island – the Grays and Marrs on the *Arina* in 1863. The Illingworths and Clements on the *Robert Henderson* in 1860. George MacKay came via Victoria in Oz in the 1860s but we don't know his waka. Mother's whanau, the Marshs and Gibbons arrived at Port Chalmers on the *Accrington* in 1862 and the Christensens on the *Halcione*

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in 1872 at Petone. Kathryn's waka were the *Bolton* arriving on March 15, 1842 at Nelson Haven via Petone (Ricketts & Watts families) and the *Douglas* with the *Burton* family on board arriving in Wellington on September 20, 1873.

All crazy with the "wanderlust" gene!

The early Maori who ventured south from eastern Polynesia in several waves of canoe voyages between 1250 and 1300 must also have had the gene. So did Abel Tasman, Captain Cook and Ed Hillary. I reckon Willie Apiata and Scott Dixon have got it bigtime

too. I'll tell you more about Johannes in NZ next time. We don't know what ship he arrived on but he and all our whanau's other 19th century arrivals in search of a better future for their families, must have had the DRD4-7R "wanderlust" gene. And I thank the good Lord they did.

"DRD4 is a dopamine receptor that helps control the levels of dopamine in our brains. Dopamine is an organic chemical – which can be triggered by anything from chocolate and ecstasy to receiving a text from a loved one – and is a precursor of other substances including adrenaline."

I reckon my ancestors' DRD4-7R gene has skipped me though. On my bucket list for example is – to **not** climb Mt Everest, to **not** have a bungee jump, to **not** have a free glider lesson, to **not** walk the Camino de Santiago and to **not** go skiing in North Korea.

But back to those other wonky genes. At the time of writing, it was Cricket World Cup final time at Lords. After watching the highlights again and seeing the six runs (which should have only counted as five according to ICC umpire of the year between 2004 and 2008 – Simon Taufel) "scored" by Ben Stokes as a result of his bat deflecting a ball thrown at the wickets and speeding off to the boundary, I realised there was possibly another of the dodgy genes at work here. It was like Maradona and the 1986 Football World Cup's "hand of God" moment. Without the intervention of the "bat of Ben", NZ would have beaten England in that last over. Stokes is reported as saying he will be apologising to Kane Williamson for the rest of his life. So, he should. It's just not right.

The rules of cricket are silent on such an occurrence but other international cricketers have noted they regard the ball as "dead" in such situations and they wouldn't have run or taken the runs. Apparently, Ben, born in NZ, requested the umpires not count the boundary and they should have acquiesced. Did they even go "upstairs" to confer and to clarify? How did they not get the five runs versus six runs so wrong? But that's what happens when arbiters have got the "stupid" gene. It's similar to Wayne Barnes missing that forward pass and not checking with the TMO at the Rugby World Cup Quarter Final between NZ and France in 2007. I'm still not quite over that sporting gaffe either.

According to the Lords.org website, "Cricket owes much of its appeal and enjoyment to the fact that it should be played not only according to the Laws, but also within the Spirit of Cricket."

Yeah, right!

No doubt the rules of cricket will soon change to cause a ball to be "dead" if it hits a batsman or his bat. They should also review the rules determining who wins if the game ends in a draw. One super over? Really?

The number of fours scored in one's innings? Seriously? If the winner had been based on the previous World Cup's count back of wickets taken, NZ would have won. The way the winner was determined was a joke. You would have to logically conclude the organisers are also full of the "stupid" gene.

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So, you can see those bad genes my ancestors wanted to leave behind them are still alive and flourishing back in the old country!

Now for regular readers, here's the last chapter from the journal of Johannes Vlietstra and of his time in Australia in the 1860s. At the museum we visited in 2007 back in Terschelling in the Netherlands, Johannes appeared on a poster advertising his recently re-discovered South Seas' exploits, as "the Indiana Jones of Terschelling". Johannes had the "wanderlust" gene in spades.

"THIRD STORY

That God often miraculously protects the shipwrecked is illustrated by my third story.

A few years before I arrived, a ship stranded on the coast of Australia. Half of the men aboard drowned, but the other half fortunately managed to swim ashore, at a spot where savages feared for their fate, but the savages took them in lovingly, looking after them and sharing their loot with them. After a stay of three years they all died except one.

Because the savages had noticed that the remaining one was smarter than they were, they made him their leader on their raids. He thus had to go with them when they went raiding, but since they also feared that he would run away when he came across white people, they ordered him to stay behind a little when they came close to a farmhouse. Adopting their ways, he lived with them for seventeen years. On one of these raids he noticed sheep tracks. He kept quiet, but decided to make use of the first opportunity that presented itself to find out whether he was in the vicinity of white people. A little later they went away on their own and when they had strayed off a little, he set about his investigation.

Having walked for a while in the direction of the sheep tracks he had seen, he noticed a shed. He walked towards it, but before he could reach it, he encountered the shepherd, the inhabitant of the shed. He tried to explain his predicament, but he had forgotten most of his native English tongue. The shepherd, who was very moved, took him to his master, who had only moved in there a short while ago. He attended to him first of all and then took him to another farm, further away from the vicinity of the savages.

At last they took him to town, where he was stared at by many curious folk, and showered with benefits by interested people. The government, when they heard about him, appointed him as interpreter among the savages. He testified they were hospitable but unreliable at the same time and warned everybody not to get in touch with them and make sure they wouldn't enter their grounds. He had done all he could to civilise them and to get them accustomed to a regular life.

With some of the aborigines he had succeeded in his untiring efforts, and they appreciated all the good he had brought them, but with others his efforts failed and there continued to be great bitterness against the white people.

With this my story has come to an end. Should there be anyone in the circles of my readers who, having read my adventures, harbours any intention of leaving their native country in order to settle in Australia, I hope that my simple account will serve them as a safe guide."

If you would like to read the other chapters of Johannes' book please go to our website www.mackay.co.nz and you can find my previous articles under MacKay on Money.

These are generalised and occasional tongue in cheek comments only and should not be taken as personalised advice. Disclosure Statements are available on request and free of charge.