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**Verge - 24 Hours of Comedy**
2pm, Verge Festival Dome, FREE
A popular event in previous years, the 24hr comedy event is back. Hosted by Tom Walker and Ciaran Magee, along with peeps from Project 5.2, it is an event not to be missed.

**Verge - Seascape**
8pm, The Old Equine Operating Theatre
$3 ACCESS/$6 GA
An offering from SUDS, as part of the Verge Festival, this production is a bizarre comedy about two human sized lizards and everything under the sun or the sea. Definitely worth a look.

**Verge - Hermes Launch**
4:30pm, Verge Gallery, FREE
Head along to the launch of the USU’s flagship journal Hermes. Works published this year will centre around the theme ‘Odyssey’.

**Verge - BTS presents The Dome!**
8pm, Verge Festival Dome, FREE
Beat the System has migrated down Eastern Avenue to play at the Verge Festival Dome! BTS familiar Subasoke, Kernikoll, Dan-What, Hubble and Zyklus are on board to help out with proceedings, as well as fresh faces Elle Piper and MC Zuri Akoka.

**Breakfast on Bondi**
5:30am-9am, FREE
A beautiful way to wake up on a Sunday morning. Or perhaps a fancy way to keep your Saturday night going. There will be surfside food stalls and a full symphony orchestra.

**Australian Cider Festival**
All Day, Manly, $25
Buy your ticket to taste the likes of Batlow Cider, Brimberdilly Winery Flying Brick Cider, Little Creatures Lobo Cider, Lost Pippin Cider, Magner’s and the list goes on!

**The Sandstone Report**
The triumphant return of Damo ‘Donger’ Thomson!

**The Back Page**

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LETTERS

God loves gay people

Ada Lee
MEO I

Dear Honi Horri,

To the people who tell others that “you’re going to hell because you’re gay.” I’d like to remind you that it is not up to us to make claims over which sins (and I do believe homosexuality is a sin), if any, makes us exempt from Jesus’ offer of salvation unless of course, we refuse the chance because of our perceived shortcomings.

I’m not saying that, if you’re gay, you now have to accept Jesus into your life. But I am agreeing with Curtis Dickson’s “God vs. Guys” (Queer Honi, October 3) piece that being gay and being Christian are not irreconcilable dichotomies. God is compassionate. God loves the hated and the marginalised. God loves all people.

At the same time, I don’t think it’s healthy or fair to start attacking Christianity. It’s unfortunate that many people have responded to the Church’s bullying by bullying members of the Church back. We’re not all puerile homophobes, as your “Wallace Report” and ‘Message from the Evangelical Union’ stunts would suggest. By calling us “state-sanctioned practitioners of hate” (Michael Kouliz) with “archaic religious doctrine” (William Harris), you are attacking and stereotyping a fundamental part of our identity — an argument often used to defend LGBT identity.

I think the first to admit that many Christians have been spiteful and condemning to our fellow human beings and it’s not surprising that many gay people now harbour resentment towards religion; for the pain the Church has caused, I am sincerely and utterly sorry.

I believe God is Love (noun). Love (noun) is perfect. Just because humans fail love (verb) perfectly, does not mean Love (noun) itself, is no longer perfect. (1 John 4:8).

It’s sad that so many people, let alone gay people, are deterred from giving God a chance because of the hostile actions of the Church. The God that I know would welcome anyone with open arms. The God that I know loves imperfect people (including me) perfectly.

For the love of Venus

Elliot Nolan
Arts III

Dear Honi Soit,

The consistent spread of misinformation in the past two issues of Honi Soit has pushed me to the brink, so I admit it: I’m an ancient history major. While my friends are all doing their degrees in more useful subjects like linguistics, I have chosen to go down the path of Roman history.

Ask me whether Nero really snogged his mother and I’ll tell you the truth. I might casually quote Tacitus’ own words of how Agrippina appeared before Nero (all decked out and ready for incest), stating the giant nerf war, Humans vs Zombies, as part of the Verge Festival, our esteemed opinion competition judge, Joe Hildebrand (of Drum, Drunk and Racist fame) was hard at work, musings over which of this year’s entrants should be crowned the winner.

Themed around the concept of ‘Love’, the submissions received this year covered a wide array of topics: politics, technology, law, sexuality, graduation, even Pastafarianism. Thank you to everyone who submitted an entry; the standard was very high this year. If you didn’t get around to writing in, don’t forget to put pen to paper next year, as you could end up taking home a handsome cash reward, thanks to our generous donor. Congratulations to the winners! I won’t give too much away here: flick to page 12 to read the top three entries yourself.

In this week’s edition we map the fallout following Alan Jones’ abhorrent comment about Julia Gillard’s father at the Sydney University Liberal Club’s recent function. On Monday morning Jones brazenly declared that his sponsors had become the victims of cyber bullying, following the Macquarie Radio Network’s decision at the weekend to suspend all advertising on Jones’ 2GB breakfast show. More than 70 companies had already pulled their sponsorship. The SRC, publisher of Honi Soit, ceased the day and condemned Jones’ comment and the Sydney University Liberal Club at last week’s final council meeting of the year, whose rivers of grog we in the press gallery are especially grateful for.

We also have updates on the Senate elections, the fee increase at Sydney University Village, and ways you can cheaply feed yourself by getting involved in community gardening. With the first of three debates spicing up the US presidential race, our writers reflect on the candidates’ performances. Did Mitt shock us all? Ben Winsor joins us as a reporter from the campaign trail.

But for those of you who are sick of shock-jocks, over opinions, done with debates, and exempted with elections, fear not! As we stare down the barrel of semester’s end, there is still time to enjoy a few of last frolics before the hibernation of assessment craziness. Get along to the final days of the Verge Festival and enjoy some of the blissful spring air and student entertainment.

Hannah Bruce

HONISOIT

EDITORIAL

While I spent my weekend running around, I was introduced to something new: Quizmastery. Having battled the current Quizmaster, I am confident that if you take the time to train, you too can be a master of the classics and ancient history department.

Ms McKenzies (’Romulus wasn’t built in a day’, September 19) has already dealt with the current Quizmaster, though perhaps too lightly. I enjoy doing the quiz, not to impress others but for my own edification (from the Latin ‘aedificatio, naturally). No, my issue is with Mr Chalmers’ article in Honi’s Festival of Dangerous Ideas (September 19). I thought it was an otherwise excellent piece, except for one sentence: Aoi celebrating your 80th birthday would have seemed equally unthinkable to the Romans, whose average life expectancy was 35 years.” Yes, I too was appalled.

It seems Mr Chalmers only bothered to read the tenth Google result when he searched for ‘Roman life expectancy’. It is well known these days, even outside of the Quadrangle, that such figures take into account infant mortality which skewed the outcome. I cannot argue in, that everyone who did make it through infancy lived past the age of 35 but there was a considerable chance that the Roman lifespan was comparable to modern times, even for the hoi polloi. Living to 80 was unusual, but it certainly wasn’t ‘unthinkable’.

These are facts that any undergraduate with access to JSTOR can find out. So I submit to Honi Soit that any article or quiz question should be researched thoroughly using peer-reviewed journal articles before it is published. The wrath of the classics and ancient history department should not be taken lightly.

Healthy minds

Benjamin Veness
MB, BS III, Fellow of Senate

Dear Editors,

I couldn’t agree more with Ms Moore (‘Uns must step up on mental health’, September 19) and will share her letter with my colleagues on the Senate, the governing body of the University.

Like most universities in Australia, there is a lot more we urgently need to do if we are to support our students in fulfilling their potential.

Services on- and off-campus must be reviewed, strengthened and co-ordinated under a senior member of staff who is given responsibility for student health. Students and our representative organisations must be engaged in this process and it should become a focus of the Senate, subject to at least biannual reporting. Ready to help are strong allies in the likes of Professors Pat McGorry and Ian Hickie, and the CHE Headspace (Australia’s National Youth Mental Health Foundation), Chris Tanti, whom I am meeting in Melbourne next month to discuss student mental health services across the sector.

The immediate challenge for us students is to make it clear to the Senate and administration that we are unsatisfied with the status quo. We write letters like Ms Moore who wish to see progress initiatives on student health to please email me at bens5712@ unis.sydney.edu.au. I would value your support, and offer you mine in return.

For the love of Venus

Elliot Nolan
Arts III

Dear Honi Soit,

The consistent spread of misinformation in the past two issues of Honi Soit has pushed me to the brink, so I admit it: I’m an ancient history major. While my friends are all doing their degrees in more useful subjects like linguistics, I have chosen to go down the path of Roman history.

Ask me whether Nero really snogged his mother and I’ll tell you the truth. I might casually quote Tacitus’ own words of how Agrippina appeared before Nero (all decked out and ready for incest), knowing it always gets an appreciative giggle.
SUV rental jumps again to $256.80
Price hikes at Sydney University Village have set campaigns into battle against a lack of affordable student housing, writes Ada Lee

The minimum cost for a single bed in a four or five bedroom apartment at Sydney University Village has risen by more than 21 per cent over the past two years and will cost $236.80 a week in 2013. Rent prices jumped from $211.50 per week in 2011 to $238.50 in 2012 and now the announced rate for 2013 has increased by a further $18.30 per week including a $8.80 utility fee.

SRC Student Housing Officer, Eleanor Morley, believes the new fees are “well above market price.” She is now leading a “SUB” campaign with a petition that has gathered 122 signatures. The petition says rental increases outstrip the rate of inflation and that the Village administration has “behaved abnormally.”

Ms Morley stressed the need for the university to provide budget student accommodation in order to assist students from outside of Sydney, particularly those from lower socio-economic backgrounds, in gaining access to higher education. “You want to get the brightest minds around the country,” Ms Morley said. “Brightest minds don’t necessarily mean the richest parents.”

SUV General Manager, Ron De Haan, insists the fee increase is a matter of delivering what the market requires, SUV’s prices are fair. “It’s not price gouging and trying to take advantage of students by taking all the money and running,” he said.

SUV determines ‘affordability’ as what is reasonable according to Australia’s property market, which recently, has “gone up and up and up. It can’t go on forever”, Mr De Haan said.

Every three years, the Village hires an external consultant to conduct a market review on student housing and privately owned rental properties in the area (including UTS housing). Mr De Haan explains that the 2011 market review “indicated that this facility was way behind where the market dictated it to be”. The decision was made to align with market pricing over three years rather than in one leap so as not to punish a single cohort of residents. This year’s increase represents another step towards “catching up”, he said.

But the SRC petition suggests the new rates are “laughable.” “They’re not short of funds,” says Ms Morley. “They’re just trying to squeeze out as much money as possible.”

Mr De Haan points out he is running a business and has an obligation to its asset owners who expect returns from their investment. But he said he is happy to receive student feedback and will flag complaints to the owners. Though it will be difficult to change the 2013 rates, he says in the past increases have been withheld if the market has proven unwilling to pay.

Collective Advice

The joy of gardening
Alexander Peters wants Sydney students to get green thumbs

When the artificiality and disconnection of the modern world is getting you down, there nothing like a spot of gardening to reinvigorate the soul. Now I’m not a spiritual person but there’s definitely something uplifting and wholesome about tending the earth and the results are delicious. When you bite into something home-grown, you feel and taste a real difference from what you buy from the store. You have gained a sense of freedom from eating the direct products of your labour, and if your garden has a plug on it that’s just proof you haven’t saturated it with pesticides!

Growing your own is also cheaper than buying in many cases. A pack of seeds might only cost a couple of dollars, yet the food it produces is as fresh as can be. You gain a real sense of satisfaction from eating the direct products of your labour, and if your cabbage has a slug on it that’s just proof you haven’t saturated it with pesticides!

Growing your own is also cheaper than buying in many cases. A pack of seeds might only cost a couple of dollars, yet the food it produces is as fresh as can be. You gain a real sense of satisfaction from eating the direct products of your labour, and if your cabbage has a slug on it that’s just proof you haven’t saturated it with pesticides!

The sunlight, you meet the neighbours and develop friendships with other gardeners. It’s commonly described by practitioners as therapeutic. And I haven’t even mentioned the obvious environmental benefits. Food miles become food metres, there’s no agricultural run-off and you’re helping to prolong the onset of peak phosporus if you’re careful with your fertilisers.

Yet it’s easy to miss out on the opportunity to garden in an urban, time-poor environment. Space is hard to come by for many, from apartment dwellers to tenants whose landlords won’t allow alterations to the yard. If you have to balance work, commuting and study then it’s really hard to maintain a good garden. Weeding and watering need to happen regularly, and if you go away then it can be an imposition to ask someone to look after it for you. A garden is a significant investment, so you need to have confidence that you’ll be there to reap what you sow, so to speak, which just isn’t present for many in the rental market.

A solution to all of these problems can be found in a community garden. Community gardens were first established in Britain during the early 19th century to help feed the industrial urban poor, a group analogous in some ways to today’s students! While there are a number of small community gardens around Sydney, our university with a population of 50,000 and plenty of open space is an ideal setting for a substantial garden.

There is significant interest from many sections of the student body, with a Facebook group spontaneously appearing and USU Board Directors endorsing the idea. Such a garden could easily start small and grow with increased interest. There is a wealth of knowledge amongst green thumbs on campus, and old hands to turn to in established gardens for advice.

Additionally the creation of a community garden has the sustainability benefit of teaching people skills that they can carry with them from the campus to future gardens of their own.

If you consider yourself to be one of the aforementioned green thumbs, or even just have a passing interest in the idea of a community garden, come to a public meeting hosted by the Environment Collective, which will look at the options for creating a community garden and the practicalities of doing so.

There is no real organisation currently behind creating a garden, and so there is much to be decided, or at least sketched out, about how such a garden should function, including whether to go guerrilla, whether to have individual plots, a completely communal space or a mixture of both, raised or ground-level beds, composting on site, tool storage, how to gain funding and much else besides.

If passionate students and staff come together now to take this idea forwards, it’s just possible that by the start of next semester you might be eating the products of the Sydney community garden with some of the new friends you made there!

The Environment Collective meeting will be take place Thursday October 18 at 12pm at the Sunken Lawns.
Sydney University to launch new Disability Action Plan

There is still a need to change attitudes toward disabled students, writes Alisha Aitken-Radburn.

The final workshop in a series of faculty consultations before the adoption of a new Disability Action Plan (DAP) for 2012-2015 has highlighted an undercurrent of continued disability discrimination within the University.

Students and staff at the workshop discussed the polarised attitudes towards people with a disability on campus. In addition, a former USYD student and now academic staff member expressed frustration that even well-intentioned handling of his mental health and disability issues had been “overly bureaucratic at times, reflecting ignorance of mental illness, and lacking empathy”.

One student said that upon asking a librarian at the Freehills Law Library for assistance in photocopying a book on 24-hour loan the staffer refused, as it was “not part of her job description”. SRC Disability Officer Ella Alexander has been contacted by a large number of students this year encountering negative attitudes towards disabilities on the part of individual lecturers and certain faculties. “This played out in responses to requests for assessment adjustments and in particular, in special consideration requests,” she said.

“It became clear that the resistance was in part due to lecturers not actually knowing what they could or should be doing to help,” explained Ms Alexander.

“As well as being time poor: having no time to help the student by, for example, printing a document in larger font.”

At the workshop, Professor Gerard Goggin from the Department of Media, Communications and Sociologies, who specialises in disability research and policy, derided the language of “reasonable adjustments” framing the DAP. “These statements are not the statements we should use in 2012,” he said, “We don’t talk about Indigenous people in this way so why talk about people with a disability in this way.”

Prof. Goggin recalled the achievements of the 2008-2010 DAP, with reference to the Laffan Fellowship for University researchers who have or have experienced significant disability, as well as the overhaul of the physical environment of the campus to increase accessibility. But he also highlighted that the culture within the University was yet to be addressed. “The University either has a strong vision or they don’t,” he said.

DAP Project Officer Louise Bannerman said that the action plan intends to implement a variety of strategies to raise awareness about disability issues. Ms Bannerman discussed new initiatives including a “celebratory week”, akin to Interfaith Week, as well as increased disability awareness programs for staff. “The first step is entrenching the fact every member of staff is liable to assist with equity and access,” she said.

The DAP is due to be adopted by the University in December.

Australian University Games Results

The Australian University Games were held from 23 – 28 September in Adelaide during the mid-semester break. The University of Sydney, 2011 Overall Champions, performed spectacularly but fell just short of defending their title, winning third place overall this year. This was the 20th anniversary of the Games which is the largest annual multi-sport participation event in Australia.

GOLD
Men’s Athletics
Women’s Athletics
Women’s Badminton
Women’s Basketball
Women’s Golf
Women’s Hockey
Women’s Judo

SILVER
Men’s Bowls
Men’s Cycling
Men’s Fencing
Mixed Handball
Men’s Hockey
Men’s Swimming
Women’s Taekwondo
Women’s Volleyball

BRONZE
Men’s Badminton
Men’s Basketball
Open Kendo
Women’s Netball
Open Sailing
Reflections from the polling booth
Kitty-Jean Laginha gets a kick out of exercising her democratic rights

Hoping to gain an insight into the workings of student politics, I worked as a polling booth attendant and vote counter during the recent SRC elections. I left with a lingering feeling of frustration with the whole affair that I couldn’t seem to shake.

Reasons for voting were by and large, shallow and arbitrary. The campaign itself is a battle that takes place five metres away from the booth is admittedly amusing, but absurd. In the farcical ‘Battle of Jane Foss Russell’, people vote not because they support a ticket’s values and ideas, but as a result of intimidation and harassment. A person’s “free choice” does not apply when that choice is made in an environment of coercion. At one point I watched a girl clearly rushing to get her vote cast unembarrassed by three different hacks, shoving flayers onto her folders. Influencing people to vote in this way undermines the concept of a democracy.

Electoral results should not depend on how many campaigners you have working that day, how many t-shirts you have, or what flyer is in the voter’s hand as they make their decision. Perhaps banning campaigning 24 hours prior might allow people to make something like a rational and informed decision?

An alarming number of students seemed to think voting was compulsory - many being international students. This misconception was also evidenced by the number of donkey votes we received (we counted about five phallus drawings on ballot papers). We appreciated your efforts!

To the question “would you like to vote?”, I received the (completely serious) response “Is it free?” Students need to be informed (not you like to vote?” I received the ‘Stand Up!’ team, however the loss of off-campus help was mitigated by Grassroots who, having indirectly supported last year’s Independent candidate Tim Matthews, decided to give direct support to NLS candidate David Pink for President.

This led to Labor once again having the edge in terms of on-the-day campaigners, which is generally accepted to account for as much as 50 per cent of a candidate’s final vote. Between taking President and securing a mammoth 10,000 signatures on council, NLS are now in a terrifyingly powerful position.

The biggest loser of the election is the Independent bloc known as ‘Voice’. Having failed for the second time to take the Presidency in two devastatingly close races, the Indies now have no one to blame but themselves and the dauntingly efficient Labor machine. While the outcome of eight councillors is not a reasonable result for the Indies, it may all mean nothing as the leftist coalition that supported David Pink for Presidency has achieved the two-thirds majority needed to monopolise the much-desired (often salaried) Office-Bearer positions on council. It is rare for someone to run for President without having first served in an Office-Bearer position, suggesting the days of genuine ‘Voice/Indie’ Presidential bids may be over.

HONI
Up until last year Honi ticket budgets were subject to an electoral loophole that allowed Honi groups to run an infinite individual ticket space. It was clear that a lot of people don’t know how optional preferential voting works. This needs to be explained clearly so that people are able to make a considered vote - David Pink won on preferences after all.

In all, there were just under 5,000 voting ballots issued from an undergraduate student cohort of roughly 33,000 meaning around 15 per cent of eligible students voted; a number I’ve been told is quite typical and unsurprising, but I think it reflects poorly on engagement with the wider university community. The federal opposition’s new higher education policy threatens to completely deregulate tertiary fees as well as privatising HECS. Accessibility to education clearly isn’t one of Tony Abbott’s priorities. It is especially important to have a say on matters that will affect the quality of your education. Education cuts are happening in universities all around Australia and electing a fighting SRC that can mobilise students to win higher government funding is something everyone can contribute to.

The NUS ballot selects delegates to form the peak representative body for Australian university students. This organisation represents students’ interests on issues like income support, funding, housing and safety and security. The current campaign undertaken by the NUS, “Fair Fares”, lobbies the government to legislate for concession travel fares for international students and part-time students. If you want to see change like this around campus, support what you believe in and vote. Bam! Adventures in democracy!

USYD1001: what the hell is the University of Sydney Senate, anyway?

By now, your new undergraduate and postgraduate Fellows of Senate have been elected. For the majority of the student population, this is just another election. But the Senate is a powerful body, and its composition has far-reaching consequences for your life as a Sydney University student. Let Honi Solt just your silent ignorant to any parties to an end with this bluffer’s guide for the time poor and bewildered.

WHAT DOES IT DO?
Senate is the highest governing body of the University, it makes all major decisions concerning the conduct of the university, including staff appointments and welfare, student welfare and facilities, financial matters and the physical and academic development of the university. It awards all degrees and diplomas and is responsible to the Parliaments of NSW.

WHAT IS IT WORKING ON?
• Appointment of the new Chancellor of the University, to replace Marie Bashir when she steps down at the end of the year. This is handled by the Nominations and Appointments committee, on which Ben Veness, the incumbent undergraduate representative, sits.
• Implementation of the White Paper, which among other things aims to restructure the university’s representation at SRC level (senior executive branch) by creating seven divisional boards encompassing existing faculties, rather than have representation by the Dean of each faculty. Senate is the university’s fi- nances during a difficult period of lower revenue from full-fee paying international students. This includes approving the distribution of your Student Services and Amenities Fee money.

WHAT IS IT WORKING ON?
• Facilitation of the “Wingara Mura” strategy: a document which outlines how the university will further engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to drive participation, education, and research.

HOW DO THE ELECTIONS WORK?
• Senate is the election of a more political student representative council. This is partly because voting is conducted electronically for a one-month period. One undergraduate and postgraduate representative have been selected by their respective cohorts at this election. The successful candidates will serve a two-year term, commencing 1 December 2012 until 30 November 2014.

Academic and non-academic staff will elect their representatives for two-year terms in the first half of 2013.
In the aftermath of Alan Jones’ infamous ‘death of Sydney’ tirade, both major political parties were quick to condemn Jones for his vulgarity, before descending into political brawls;Labor attempting to connect Jones to Abbott, and the Liberals, keen to repudiate any substantive connections between themselves and the right-wing broadcaster, have labelled such allegations as a sign of definite electronic cancer. Yet while the political backdrop continues unabated, there has been sustained effort on the part of the commentariat and the public at large to see Jones sacked from 2GB.

This increasingly popular demand is an excellent case study of what is wrong with contemporary media in Australia. While to an independent observer it is clear that Jones’ phenomenal list of scandals and controversies should render his contract tenuous at best, there has never been the sustained public pressure that there is currently. Indeed, Jones has long been so popular with listeners and corporate sponsors that the verbal prostitution of “cash for comment” simply rolled off his back.

While one might argue that the current calls for his head reflect 20 years of pent-up frustration with Jones’ conservatism, I believe it is more indicative of a more modern trend: the hysteria of offence, followed by corporate disownship, culminating with the sack. This trend has been prevalent in America for years, going back to political talk show host Bill Maher, who commented post-9/11 that Islamic terrorists, while perhaps evil, are not cowardly per se. This set off the pro-Islamic terrorists, while perhaps evil, are at least tolerable. By responding to shibboleths of media hell, leading to corporate sponsorship withdrawal, and finally the network cancelling his show. Rush Limbaugh’s brazen misogynistic comments about women’s rights activist Sandra Fluke (much worse than those uttered by Jones) similarly resulted in sponsors fleeing in droves, albeit with Limbaugh still on the airwaves.

Don't sack Alan Jones

Knee-jerk hysteria does little to promote civility, says Angus Reoch

In the aftermath of Alan Jones’ infamous ‘death of Sydney’ tirade, both major political parties were quick to condemn Jones for his vulgarity, before descending into political brawls; Labor attempting to connect Jones to Abbott, and the Liberals, keen to repudiate any substantive connections between themselves and the right-wing broadcaster, have labelled such allegations as a sign of definite electronic cancer. Yet while the political backdrop continues unabated, there has been sustained effort on the part of the commentariat and the public at large to see Jones sacked from 2GB.

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So what is so troublesome about eliciting such public furor? Wouldn’t that simply be about maintaining the civility of public discourse? But who gets to decide what is appropriate or not, aside from some vague entity known as “society”? The problem is that sponsors do not respond to the actual conduct of the shows which they endorse - they react to shrill hysteria of an often unclear origin. This has become particularly evident in our hyperactive, over-sensitive modern media, in which comments that "could cause offence" or are simply labelled "offensive" have led to such phenomenal scrutiny that one could easily be forgiven for considering issues like climate change and the European economy relatively unimportant.

Instead of cheering for Woolworths, Coles, Telstra, and others for disowning Jones, we should be demanding why they would ever sponsor an individual known for such gross conduct in the first place. Jones has been the most infamous public broadcaster for many years; it is impossible to ignore his plethora of nasty views. For sponsors to ditch Jones says little about their moral courage or social understanding, indeed it says precisely what we all should be aware of: corpora tions have no ethics, care not for society, and care only for profits. How else do we explain sponsorship of a man who not only openly welcomed but actively encouraged violence against ethnic groups? Over the past 20 years we have clearly accepted that Jones’ views, while disagreeable, are at least tolerable. By responding to shrill hysteria in order to sack him, we are doing little to counter the very ills Jones came to be known for.

At the moment I am here to observe.” In his calm manner he said, “After six months we’ll talk”, so perhaps next year we will have something more to say in the middle”. Dr Kramer doesn’t know Ms Walker personally.

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The man from Michigan hits the comeback trail

First time proves a charm for the presumptive underdog, writes Ben Winsor in New York

Mitt Romney won a win last week, and he got it. I was lucky enough to watch the debates and was a small group of Republicans and Democrats, some of whom knew the candidates personally, at the New York apartment of George Bush’s 2004 Campaign Manager.

Among those from both the left and right in the room, the conclusion was unanimous. Barack Obama lost this, Romney won.

The Romney campaign has been staggering along from blunder to blunder for months now, with polls showing Obama up nationally and in every swing state except for one. With Obama having the clear momentum through both August and September, this win comes as a much needed narrative-break for the Romney campaign.

Romney’s arguments were concise, direct, and clear. Obama’s statements were often meandering and indirect. There was also a clear difference in attitude. Romney listened to Obama attentively, looking directly at him with a faint smile. He looked like a kid just happy to be there.

They sent reporters on board boats racing in the Sydney to Hobart - back in the exciting days when people still died.

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But snap back to reality, and the outlook is grim. Audiences have aged, and presenters have aged with them. Egos grew, and so did advertising dollars. And a niche was created catering specifically to old white men, monopausal women, and the aspirants of Western Sydney.

Thus we get Alan Jones of today. Somewhere along the line, between the $2000 Brioni sportcoats and the Zegna pocket squares, Jones realised he could achieve the magic trifecta: speaking to the heart (of some), the hip pocket (of others), and completely infuriating everyone else. But they still listen, for the hatred of it all.

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Obama appeared worn and tetchy. This was a man who had places he’d rather be - and it showed. There was nothing particularly wrong with what Obama was saying, but it wasn’t as clear or passionate as Romney, or the Obama of four years ago.

When Romney spoke about the struggling economy and the President’s record, Obama looked down. As one person in the room pointed out, it looked like shame.

Romney defiantly exploited his challenger’s advantage. When Obama attacked on Romney’s plan to cut taxes for the rich, Romney denied the plan even existed, instead saying he’ll see what he can do when he sits down with Congress.

Obama on the other hand, had a four-year record in a struggling economy to defend.

But there are more personal factors behind this to result.

The first was Romney’s preparation, and desperation. His campaign knows the debates are Romney’s last chance to cut-through. They’re rightly focused on getting out clear messages and convincing Americans that the multi-millionaire really cares about their pain.

Romney had to go through a series of dynamic primary debates to get the Republican nomination. Now, for weeks he’s been hunkered down debating Ohio Senator Ron Portman as he does his best Obama impression. His practice paid off.

The converse is true for Obama. Overconfidence and a lack of preparation were the likely causes of Obama’s lacklustre performance last week. It appeared to those who knew him that he’d regressed to his student days, when he engaged with teachers, but didn’t have much time for other students. It may take debating like this, and the grounding effect of Michelle, to make him pick up his game.

He has two more chances. When the candidates hold a town-hall style debate in two weeks time, and a foreign policy debate shortly after that.

It wasn’t just the room that gave the debate to Romney: CNN’s undecided voter worm was also rather outspoken. The trouble for Romney may be that after months of blunders and failing to cut-through, there aren’t many undecideds left.

Faltering Obama lets Romney off the hook

The Republican cannot and must not win, writes Felix Donovan

In the first of the presidential debates last Thursday, Obama personified the disappointments of his first term. Trying not to be aggressive or partisan, he came off as timid, unwilling to call crazy crazy. Trying to be above the dirt and grime of politics appeared disinterested, bored, lacking passion.

The great orator who has been unable to connect with Americans once in office failed to even deliver a cogent closing statement. Stumbling after the Romney campaign had finished, the satirical American news site the Onion tweeted: ‘Sasha Obama asks father why he was acting like such a poser during the debate.’

Mitt Romney, on the other hand, came across as having quite sensible proposals, as (and this speaks to the depth of Obama’s failure) being able to connect to ordinary America. Adopting a commonsense tone to his explanations, citing facts and figures like the policy wonk he is, rather than talking about the suffering of particular people he’d met on the campaign trail – Mitt had clearly been taking notes when Bill Clinton whacked George HW Bush around in the 1992 debates.

To the genuine surprise of everyone – probably even his mother – Romney came across as more than just meticulous and sharp, he was likeable.

He’d have just one regret about the debate: he never got Obama with a ‘zinger’ – that one inspired statement or question that echoes around the national conversation, chases a candidate, for weeks.

Reagan, debating the incumbent Carter in a depressed economy in 1980, asked Americans to consider just one thing: Are you better off than you were four years ago? A month out, the election was close. Then it wasn’t.

Expect a dramatic shift from Obama in the next debate. He should come out more forcefully, and attack the great weaknesses of the Romney campaign: the distance between the Republican base whom Romney needs to mobilise to win, and the undecideds in the centre, whom Romney also requires for victory in November. The fissure between the two groups has rarely been wider, and Obama should exploit it. Example: “Governor, it is written in your Party’s platform that abortion should not be allowed in cases of rape. Do you agree with your Party on this question?” Let him either lose independents or keep evangelicals home on election day.

Obama may not be a great debater. But that shouldn't matter. The Republicans have embraced positions that mean they must not win, and cannot win. The President just needs to point out that.
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The first was Romney’s preparation, and desperation. His campaign knows the debates are Romney’s last chance to cut-through. They’re rightly focused on getting out clear messages and convincing Americans that the multi-millionaire really cares about their pain. Romney had to go through a series of dynamic primary debates to get the Republican nomination. Still, for weeks he’s been hunkered down debating Ohio Senator Ron Portman as he does his best Obama impression. His practice paid off.

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Sponsors jump, but they shall return

Pulling sponsors will only serve to encourage Jones in a radio desert, writes James O’Doherty

Macquarie Radio Network, owner of 2GB, pulled all advertising from the Alan Jones’ breakfast program on Sunday afternoon. The unprecedented move is, possibly, the only thing that can stop the ratings-cum-scandal juggernaut in his afternoon. The problem is not with him. Neither is it with 2GB’s exorbitant caviar with renewed fervor.

For all the controversy of advertiser advertising boycotts, 2GB now has a Macquarie Radio cares not for the distance between the Republican base whom Romney needs to mobilise to win, and the undecideds in the centre, whom Romney also requires for victory in November. The fissure between the two groups has rarely been wider, and Obama should exploit it. Example: “Governor, it is written in your Party’s platform that abortion should not be allowed in cases of rape. Do you agree with your Party on this question?” Let him either lose independents or keep evangelicalism home on election day. Obama may not be a great debater. But that shouldn’t matter. The Republi- cans have embraced positions that mean they must not win, and cannot win. The President just needs to point that out.

OPINION

They sent reporters on board boats racing in the Sydney to Hobart - back in the exciting days when people still died. They sent reporters to India for Indira Ghandi’s funeral, getting so close they could smell the fumes from the towering funeral pyre.

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Egos grew, and so did advertising dol- lars. And a niche was created catering specifically to old white men, menopaus- al women, and the aspirants of Western Sydney.

Thus we get Alan Jones of today. Somewhere along the line, between the $2000 Brioni sportscotats and the Zegna pocket squares, Jones realised he could achieve the magic trifecta: speak- ing to the heart (of some), the hip pocket (of others), and completely infuriating everyone else. But they still listen, for the hatred of it all.

Somewhere in this depressing chicken and egg scenario lays a chiffy-bag jacker, a SULC dinner, and a comment recycled from someone Jones can’t quite remem- ber - early onset memory loss can be a pain, you know.

Macquarie Radio cares not for the hem-wearing progressives cowering yidah on Jones and 2GB, or the UTS professors that lead them. They know these rabble raisers are too busy cranking the pedals of their eco-bicycle to supply a transis- tor radio enough power to stream 2SER than listen to 2GB.

In all the smoke and mirrors of the advertising boycotts, 2GB now has a ratings hit on their hands: three hours of Jones doing what he does best, without rude intrusions from pain-away arthritis cream or the super-90-per-cent specials at Renovation D.

So when the advertisers will return, as they will, the money will flow again - with even more listeners.

Alan will return to his champagne and caviar with renewed fervor. For all the controversy of advertiser boycotts, the Macquarie Radio can’t afford to give Jones a free ride for long, but in a radio landscape as bare as ours, they can’t afford to lose him.

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Christopher Hitchens welcomes the Prime Minister’s late father, John Gillard.

The first thing I notice is the arse. It is seismic. Were it not to defy the laws of physics it could have preceded him into the room. It is unquestionable where she gets it from.

The second thing, however, is perhaps more confronting. I had heard the stories. It’s written all over his face, they had warned me. Now I could see it blazing in front of me: the shame, the shame of it all. It screams out at you, jolts you out of your mindless gaze, like that first Johnnie Walker Black Label. Where I come from, politicians told interesting lies about salacious affairs, such as whether they’d spread their baby batter all over the place. Where I come from, politicians told interesting lies about salaries, such as whether they’d pay themselves a new tax. Then she brought in a new one, and told the people there wouldn’t be a new tax. Then she brought in a new one, and told the people there wouldn’t be a new tax. Then she brought in a new one, and told the people there wouldn’t be a new tax.

But did it kill him? My connections back in the material world tell me some old radio queen reckons it did. It was his daughter’s lies, apparently. She is the Prime Minister of some island in the southern hemisphere, don’t ask me which one, and told the people there wouldn’t be a new tax. Then she brought in a new one, and told the people there wouldn’t be a new tax.

It seems fairly tame by American standards. Where I come from, politicians told interesting lies about salacious affairs, such as whether they’d spread their baby batter all over the intern’s blue dress. But political leaders have been promising not to introduce new taxes ever since America invented democracy in 1776. Why would this one be so shameful?

It was clear the old man was dealing with some pretty severe complexes. As we nursed our double scotches he told of his experience being a stateswoman’s father: of hearing her integrity as a person relentlessly questioned, of seeing her face emblazoned across banners proclaiming “Ditch the Witch”, of his nightly terror that some nutter would come for her with the proverbial chaff bag.

He had been made to feel ashamed, he told me, for her childlessness, for her atheism, for her scepticism of wedlock. And all these burdens he took personally, and deeply, until he could no more. If shame killed this man, it was murder.

And as another Marlboro reached its grim expiry, I reminded this hunched, spectre of a man that as a father, there is nothing – nothing – my children could do to make me feel ashamed of them. Except perhaps in a London public toilet...

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In his new blog from beyond the grave, the Prime Minister’s late father, John Gillard...
SEXUALITY

Who says bestiality is a bad idea?

Liberal Senator Cory Bernardi recently caused a stir by comparing equal marriage for homosexuals to bestiality. The media immediately attacked him for homophobia and use of slippery slope arguments without looking at the real issue he brought up – consensual sex with animals is outlawed, and this should change.

For those that missed it, here is Bernardi’s actual quote: “There are even some creepy people out there who say it’s OK to have consensual sexual relations between humans and animals. And, you know, is that, will that be a future step?” To Australia’s credit, few of us took seriously the notion that gay marriage would lead to bestiality. It is shameful, however, that the media coverage bought into the stereotypes and discrimination that surround sex with animals. Our society has a warped view of this that should change as we become more accepting of all sexualities.

In Australia, it is legal to keep animals in captivity so that we can slaughter and eat them. Chickens are kept in cages so small that they never stand up in their whole life, and have their claws and beaks sawn off. Live export of animals involves many thousands of sheep being crammed into a ship, taken to Pakistan and then killed by clubbing and being buried alive. To breed racing horses, we force stallions to rape mares. When we allow all of this, why is consensual sex with animals considered so heinous that it must be illegal? Why is it taboo to even talk about it? Yes, most Australians find the behaviour disgusting, but that is not a good enough reason to legislate against it. In the more bigoted parts of the country, people have similar views towards homosexuality but that does not mean consensual sex between people of the same gender should be banned, or should even be taboo.

Left to their own devices, animals have sex with each other. Although they lack the intelligence of humans, they clearly have the ability to consent to sexual relations. The Australian philosopher Peter Singer has led the world in fighting for animal rights, including the legalisation of sex with animals. For Singer, any activity which is harmful to an animal should be banned, and anything that is not harmful should be permitted. Thus raping an animal or keeping four hens in a tiny cage should be banned. Consensual sex with an animal should not be illegal, no matter how distasteful it may seem.

To avoid non-consensual sex with animals, there should be rules around how it is initiated. If sex is initiated by the animal then it should be considered consensual.

One argument against this version of consent is that we have higher standards for humans, which allow us to ban sexual activity with children even if the children appear to enjoy it or consent. This ban on sexual activity with children is obviously worth keeping. A child who grows up with the memory of early sexual encounters is likely to become traumatised, and it is rightfully considered an abuse of power dynamics for an adult to have sex with a child. At first this seems like a close analogy to bestiality but there are key differences.

For adult animals, sexual activity is the norm. Animals have sex for procreation and recreation. Children do not act like this unless manipulated by an adult. Also, a child who is the victim of sexual abuse is likely to grow up with extremely painful memories and mental illness, ruining their lives. No such thing happens with animals.

Animals do have some moral status – enough that it is wrong for us to treat them cruelly or kill them for food. What they don’t have are the cognitive capacities of humans which afford us other rights, like the right to vote, civil liberties or a more complicated version of consent.

Whatever one’s views on animal rights and bestiality, the conversation needs to be more mature. The very mention of bestiality is greeted by guffaws or a quick change of topic. Perhaps our laws ought to remain as they are, but we should at least treat the matter seriously.

For most sensible people, Bernardi’s comments were deeply offensive. Despite his idiocy, he does raise a good point – there is a movement to allow consensual sex between humans and animals, and hopefully we will see more of this in the media in years to come.

Who will guard the guards? Condoms struggle to penetrate porn industry

An academic look at the cost of condom use in LA’s porn sets, by Ludwig Schmidt

An initiative has been proposed in Los Angeles County that would mandate the use of condoms on the sets of porn shoots. The seemingly logical initiative would actually have dire consequences, some industry insiders say.

What makes sense in private doesn’t necessarily translate well to adult film sets. In an email interview with a reporter from feminist blog Jezebel, porn legend Nina Hartley explained that in her business, “condom burn is a real issue.”

“The friction from the latex even with lubrication, is painful and breaches the integrity of my mucosal membranes, putting me at greater risk for disease transmission,” she says.

She highlights that while the average length of sexual intercourse off-set is a few minutes, the shortest porn scenes require a minimum of “half an hour of hard thrusting by a well-endowed young man. It’s hard enough to deal with w/o condoms. Add latex to the mix and I’m down to being able to work with a man once a week at best, to say nothing of the damage it would do to my private life and intimacy with my husband.”

Currently, what works for preventing the spread of STIs amongst actors is regular testing. Porn performers test positive for STIs at a much lower rate than sexually active people in larger society.

Vivid Video CEO Steven Hirsch told Jezebel that the porn industry has produced “more than 300,000” hardcore sex scenes since 2004, with only two cases of HIV infection – both in performers who contracted the virus from untested civilian partners. That remarkable safety record is attributable to testing and what porn star James Deen describes as a “close-knit family atmosphere… where mutual trust is sacred” in the business.

The motion will be voted upon at an upcoming election. It has been suggested that if it passes, the adult industry will be forced out of Los Angeles. However, some, including Nina Hartley, doubt anyone will leave: “we live here, our kids go to school here. We’ll go underground, with no filming permits pulled.”

When asked about why he thinks the proposed mandate might pass, porn star James Deen told Jezebel “I think people feel guilty about watching porn. They want to clear their conscience about it by trying to make us safer. But that’s more about their shame than it is about our health.”

As reported by Jezebel, Dean insists that the most unsafe sex porn performers have is in their off-screen private lives.

For a full report on the proposed mandate see “Why Porn Sex Is the Safest Sex” at www.jezebel.com
P ort Douglas is walled in by azure sea on one side, and steaming mountains on the other. Resorts dot the beachfront like fortified Monopoly hotels, issuing forth their Havana-clad host. It feels a little like Fukuyama’s “End of History” — in this corner of the planet, at least, there is no war, civil turmoil, or widespread poverty. No repression, censors, or revolution. There is just universal, botoxed happiness — the endpoint of mankind’s evolution. It is an apt location to reflect on Australian parochialism.

Allay your fears: this is not the opening of another indecent tirade on work ethics by Tsarina Gina. This article describes, instead, a reluctant nation trapped in an ideological vacuum.

Like the resort towns for which it is famous, Australia is characterised by a certain existential apathy. It did not coalesce into a nation out of dire necessity. From the First Fleet to Federation, our most troubling strategic foes were European powers in a distant hemisphere. Nor is it a nation born of aspirations. Our most enthusiastic revolution was over the price of rum, not over royal absolutism, or universal rights.

Australia is, rather, a nation forged out of convenience, to standardise railways and remove interstate banana tariffs. There was no one to fight against, but nothing to fight for, either. We have no conscious vision for this nation, and show little overt pride in its institutions.

Government here is a utility, not a vessel for idealism — and it shows in our political attitudes. Wrestling in the bog of centrist politics, Australian representatives decline to lead on pressing issues of social justice and environmental calamity. We try to outdo rather than counsel Asia in marginalising the rights of asylum seekers, as if heartlessness were a sort of civic virtue. And so the nation progressively abdicates regional leadership.

For all its electric chair and firearm foibles, the United States is quite the other. Nationhood there is a system of values — a way of thinking — which pervades policy making and political discourse. Every debate, from taxation to gay marriage, is an extension about national identity. Every foreign policy initiative is framed, quite sincerely, in terms of an ideological mission, echoing the motif of a “manifest destiny”. Continental European politics are similarly driven by principles, though without the evangelical rhetoric.

How to restore our vision? We could start by settling upon a concept of national identity which is, at present, little more than a vague appreciation for ball sports, beer, Anzac, and multiculturalism.

Our relationship with recent history is strained. On one hand, the national narrative is largely an imperial narrative of colonialism, loyalty and monarchy. We look for any occasion to justify our claims to independence, which is how relativistically isolated events like Gallipoli have come to mark the birth of national consciousness. There was no cathartic revolution. Legally and politically, the transition to independence was a sterile, unimaginative affair with the ratiﬁcation of the Statute of Westminster and the passage of the Australia Acts.

On the other hand, domestically, we have perpetrated an incipient cultural genocide against Indigenous Australians. This sits quite uncomfortably with the paramount national myth of egalitarianism. Insensibly, the historical record was obscured and distorted to shield us from the shameful implications of colonial massacres, forced removals and discrimination. Even the First Fleet is walled in by azure sea on one side, and steaming mountains on the other. Resorts dot the beachfront like fortified Monopoly hotels, issuing forth their Havana-clad host. It feels a little like Fukuyama’s “End of History” — in this corner of the planet, at least, there is no war, civil turmoil, or widespread poverty. No repression, censors, or revolution. There is just universal, botoxed happiness — the endpoint of mankind’s evolution. It is an apt location to reflect on Australian parochialism.

Allay your fears: this is not the opening of another indecent tirade on work ethics by Tsarina Gina. This article describes, instead, a reluctant nation trapped in an ideological vacuum.

Like the resort towns for which it is famous, Australia is characterised by a certain existential apathy. It did not coalesce into a nation out of dire necessity. From the First Fleet to Federation, our most troubling strategic foes were European powers in a distant hemisphere. Nor is it a nation born of aspirations. Our most enthusiastic revolution was over the price of rum, not over royal absolutism, or universal rights.

Australia is, rather, a nation forged out of convenience, to standardise railways and remove interstate banana tariffs. There was no one to fight against, but nothing to fight for, either. We have no conscious vision for this nation, and show little overt pride in its institutions.

Government here is a utility, not a vessel for idealism — and it shows in our political attitudes. Wrestling in the bog of centrist politics, Australian representatives decline to lead on pressing issues of social justice and environmental calamity. We try to outdo rather than counsel Asia in marginalising the rights of asylum seekers, as if heartlessness were a sort of civic virtue. And so the nation progressively abdicates regional leadership.

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A Right to Leave the Party

Tony Nicklinson's method of death was needlessly cruel. After having a stroke seven years ago and being afflicted with 'locked-in syndrome', whereby his mind was perfectly capable but his body entirely paralysed, Nicklinson was told by British courts he could not legally seek assisted suicide. Stuck in limbo, and having no other means whereby his mind was perfectly capable but his body entirely paralysed, Nicklinson chose to refuse all food and starve himself to death. He subsequently contracted pneumonia, and died six days after the court decision.

Attempting suicide in isolation is in many countries not a crime, despite the word still retaining a faintly illicit undertone. One can attempt suicide in, say, Australia or the UK and fear no legal repercussions for yourself or your family. Elsewhere in the world this is not necessarily the case. In the United Arab Emirates, Malaysia and North Korea, for example, the act remains illegal and is on occasion punished. The consequences of a nation legally forbidding their people from killing themselves are worth expounding upon. If you do not have a right to kill yourself, you do not really have a right to life either, as you have no choice in the matter. You merely have a duty to live. You are, as such, stuck in life, mandated by your country and deconstructing Wordsworth. The right does not suffer in the same way, for among all its lies, it has murdered soldiers from attempting suicide, and labelled such acts a form of desertion. This is perhaps the most honest characterisation of suicide from the perspective of a semi-fascist state; people literally leaving behind their country. By criminalising suicide, the state is effectively protecting their chain of damage. A completely logical thing to do.

For those with a more libertarian bent, however, suicide being illegal is nothing other than abhorrent. In the fight for human rights worldwide, this one receives almost no attention. Indeed, it would sound quite bizarre to claim to be fighting for people's right to kill themselves. Nevertheless, whilst it may not exactly be a priority, the principle behind the matter is important to acknowledge, and whether or not a government recognises and protects the right to die reveals how they fundamentally view the people they govern over.

In stark contrast to attempted suicide, assisting someone else to kill themselves is legal in only a handful of nations across the world, and only in very narrow circumstances. Typically, assisted suicide (or euthanasia, as it is sometimes known) is only permitted in these societies when the person in question is suffering a crippling disability or terminal disease, and would be otherwise forced to live out the rest of their natural life in extreme pain, or with a vastly reduced capacity to affect and be affected by the world around them.

Much of the world has over the past few decades become more amenable to the physically disabled. Ramps and elevators allow for vaguely equal access to public buildings and infrastructure, medical interventions such as cochlear implants or

doesn't work: the market

does not just contain rational

investors making self-interested

decisions which benefit everyone,

it also contains wily investment

bankers who realised they could

game the system and exploit the non-

regulation of derivatives to get wealthy

while America lost her home. The death

penalty doesn't deter murderers. There

is no reason to deny gays the right to

marry, and no case to be made in

science classes for an Earth that's

half the age of Sumeria. But for all its

blatant failings, the right still has its

adherents. And not a last struggling

few, but a great multitude: churchgoers

and farmers and plumbers and lawyers

and carpenters and bankers and a

handful of careful citizens who entomb

their children in indistinguishable range

rovers to protect them from the perilous

terrain of Bondi and Vaucluse en route

private lessons on piano and soccer

and deconstructing Wordsworth. The

right holds on to its followers for

one simple reason: it keeps them

out of limbo. The limbo that is ever

the abode of the sensitive,

thoughtful left. The limbo that lies at

the end of a melancholy slope, once

reasonable doubt has descended

into a paralysing scepticism. The

constant questioning and

dothing and searching for a better

way forward so that defines the left

only leaves the liberal thinker keenly

aware of the imperfections that

necessarily attend any decision, and the

folly of defining a person or policy.

The right does not suffer in

the same way, for among all

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www.honisoit.com honi soit 13
Culture Vulture

MUSIC INTERVIEW

Seekae

Everyone at a typical Seekae gig is pretty polite. Apart from the guy occasionally shouting requests for ‘Spacebar!’, all are in for a rollicking good time. Their recent set at the Balairung wooed the crowd with favourites such as ‘Vivid’ and ‘Three’, and treated them to their self-proclaimed ‘poppers’ sounds of ‘Yehe’. But much as they’re appealing to a broader audience in sophomore album +Dome and the material in their forthcoming album, Seekae prefer to stick to doing what they know best - selling out shows in their hometown with their nuanced electronic synths and well crafted pop songs.

John Hassell, about the direction they’re taking themselves since +Dome

HS: On your latest album, +Dome, a lot of the songs really seem to come together when you start playing them live as you’ve said in the past. How does the whole song-writing process work for you guys now?

JH: We had a totally different approach, we really wanted to do something different to (debut album) The Sound of Trees, both in the way it sounded and the way it was constructed.

The Sound of Trees was a mixture of tracks we’d made individually with the occasional track made together. This one was more of a group effort and captured what we were all listening to and making, rather than just one producer.

HS: And that’s presumably tied into not wanting to make music that’s not tied to a particular era?

JH: Well none of us can really sing. But I’d never heard Alex [Cameron, drums] sing before and recently he bust-ed out the old vocal chord and it was great. It wasn’t necessarily a conscious decision to sing or not sing. It’s just that we were so into music without vocals at the time, that was the kind of music we wanted to make, and it has happened to have evolved to a point where now we’re really trying to sing and we think it sounds pretty good. So we figured, why not give it a shot and see what happens with it?

HS: Can we definitely expect more vocals in the future?

JH: Yeah I’m waiting for George (Nicholas, sampling) to suddenly bust out the rapping. No, but I think as much as we want to keep changing our sound and bringing new elements into the picture, we want to maintain that Seekae sound and a sound that people are familiar with and can associate with us. I really don’t know, I think depending on how the next few months go with finishing the new album, it’s likely that it’s going to become quite a permanent part of our music.

HS: Let’s talk about your live set – you’ve got a lot of different instruments you experiment with. Are you looking to change things up with different people moving around on the stage?

JH: We want to try and just develop the skills that each of us already have. We were talking about hopefully more of us singing in the future, and we had so much fun playing with the string orchestra [at Vivid] that we’d love to do that again, so hopefully with brass, woodwind.

MUSIC NEWS

Not just beach parties and Bintang singlets

Avani Dias

“Some old hippies came up to us after our performance and said ‘man, you guys look so psychedelic’, but we were just wearing traditional Balinese headdresses, and front-man of the White Shoes and the Couple’s Company in an interview with the Jakarta Post. This band creates playful and brooding indie tunes, and through the merging of traditional sounds and a 5th and 6th astringent White Shoes and the Couple’s Company are easily Indonesia’s most popular indie band.

The White Shoes have played internationally, their most recent destination reaching musical mecca, the South by South West festival.

But for them home is Bandung, the capital of the West Java province in Indonesia, approximately 140 kilometres South East of Jakarta. It’s also known as the pulsing heart of Indonesia’s burgeoning independent music scene - but let’s call it “indo-indie” for short.

How did a country dominated with beautiful beaches and white tourists in sarongs and thongs become such a potpourri of music? This band creates playful and brooding indie tunes, and through the merging of traditional sounds and a 5th and 6th astringent White Shoes and the Couple’s Company are easily Indonesia’s most popular indie band.

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The indigenous Balinese music scene has many parallels to the Indonesian one. The White Shoes and the Couple’s Company are still very Indonesian - they sing in their own language and instead of copying the international cliches of music that inspire them, they put their own spin on it.

Indonesians oppose the transnationalistic hegemony of American music too, discovers Balinese musical ensembles, to create an acoustic, experimental sound desperately sought after by western musicians. Bands like the White Shoes and the Couple’s Company are very Indonesian - they sing in their own language and instead of copying the international cliches of music that inspire them, they put their own spin on it.

If you’ve ever been to Indonesia, you’ll understand that it’s still a developing country - poor infrastructure, unclean water, electricity problems, the list continues. But these bands try to stay optimistic about their situation. “This is life, we feel so proud and lucky to live in Indonesia. Because of the many limitations, we are much more creative,” says Ricky, the frontman of White Shoes. For radio stations in Indonesia, if they don’t broadcast indie programming they cease to be successful. I smell an indo-indie take over.
Every one’s beloved money minting fantasy novelist has turned her attention to “adult” fiction. Time for the adult world to get some strict disciplining about concepts of morality. My issue with J.K. Rowling’s long awaited new book The Casual Vacancy is not the unscrupulous Overloading of swearing, pornography, and misogynistic violence or with any of her thematic choices. Rather, my issue is with the execution. The plot is woven around a fictional English town of Pagford, which is thrown into political strife after the death of the town’s council member Barry Fairbrother. It is no coincidence that he is named “Fairbrother”, for he is characterised as being the central force that kept the poverty-stricken area of Pagford, “The Fields” – a part of the town and the methadone clinic running. After his death, some of the adults of the town have their own agenda – to declare ‘The Fields’ a part of neighbouring town Yarvill, to shutdown the methadone clinic and restore ‘normalcy’ to the town. Will they succeed in their devious plans? The major constraint is the overly simplistic and clear distinctions between morality and good/devil, be it the scheming adults verses the teenage victims or the rich of Pagford verses the poor of ‘The Fields’. This places limitations on the characters as they become one dimensional caricatures that lack depth or development. The vehicle Rowling chooses to give her sermon on moral purity is Krystal Weedon, a teenager who resides in ‘The Fields’ and who seems to be Steig Larsson’s muse of choice. Her mother is a heroin addict and a prostitute, whilst Krystal herself is raped by a drug dealer who claims to be her half-brother’s father, and her half-brother drowns when she is having sex in a park with the popular bully from school; basically everything that literally screams ‘victim’. In her effort to depict bleakness and supposed ‘realism’, the book becomes unintentionally comical. Even though the thematic political overtones must be applauded, their execution is far from satisfying. Overall, the book gets caught up in a world of black and white morality with cliched trivalities.
A doggone good time

Kira Spucys-Tahar finds a purr-fect new use for your iPad, and it doesn’t involve you

Cats have been reported to roll around in joy after playing with iPads.

A new craze in entertainment games for iPad is sweeping across the globe, but they are not for you to play with during your next boring lecture. These are the latest advancements in technology for the humble household animal.

Various apps designed for pets, particularly cats and dogs, have been hitting the market over the past few years and are slowly gaining in popularity. The iPad can be transformed from corporate work tool into high-tech pet toy in a matter of minutes.

Pet food manufacturers such as Purina have invested in iPad and Android apps for cats including ‘Here, Kitty Kitty’, ‘Cat Fishing’, ‘Tasty Treasure Hunt’, and ‘Party Mix-Up’. Each app claims to entertain your feline friend with animated moving objects that flash and bounce across the screen, and a soundtrack that imitates rustling cat food bags and birdcalls. Purina claims the games are all based on scientific research into feline preferences, but as any cat owner would know, they can be a picky lot, so it’s probably more about the thrill of the new chase.

There is also the ‘Touch Paw’ series which comes in iterations for both dogs and cats. The screen of the iPad animates through a series of positive and negative image associations. If the screen is touched with a nose or paw when a positive image is flashing the game adds a point to your tally, and takes away a point for an incorrect response. The owner is then supposed to give the animal a corresponding number of treats to the number of points at the end of the game.

In Queensland, a student from Bond University has developed an RSPCA app where your cat can play with a virtual ball of string or protect a slice of cheese from an invasion of mice. Other popular games include the ‘iSqueek’ iPad app which features a series of realistic squeak toys sounds digitally recreated.

‘Jitterbug’ features insects crawling across the screen to be squashed in fifteen-second rounds while ‘Paint for Cats’ encourages your cat to let loose their artistic side and you can share their artwork on social media.

These iPad apps can be a practical way to ensure your pet is getting some exercise and activity while indoors during the day. Each application engages with your cat or dog’s hunting instincts while ensuring they receive mental and physical stimulation.

Any owner may ask if the iPad is able to endure this unusual use by your pooch or moggy. Several of these games have an ‘exit’ button which can easily be mistakenly hit by your pet. With a few taps you might come home to find your animal logged on to Facebook or sending blank emails. It is probably best for owners to monitor their pets while using an expensive piece of hardware.

What will our campus be like in 2030?

James Alexander dons his futurist cap and peers into the digital future to reveal what Sydney Uni will be like in 20 years.

Recently I had the pleasure of listening to Geoffrey Garrett, Dean of the Business school, talk about the future of higher education and what the university must do to stay relevant. With the explosion of online platforms, cheap robotics and hyper-connectivity, what will our sandstone campus be like in 2030?

Tablets will probably be just known as screens as the technology becomes thinner.

Wifi on campus

Yes, that’s right. Wifi will finally be available throughout all buildings on campus. Even though it will be long superseded by mobile “7G” networks or currently theoretical “plasma wireless”, you will finally be able to stream YouTube in Fisher! Yay. Actually, probably not because all content by then will be at least 4080p.

Tablets galore

Kiss those crappy, over-priced, USYD-branded lecture notebooks away - you only ever looked at those things once anyway - and welcome the awesome iPaper Tablets. The screens will be flexible and super thin, you’ll be able to sketch with a pen stylus or create diagrams and type with just a few gestures of your finger and ambient light will help light up the screen as our current backlit LED screens go out of date.

While you can already do some of these things with the iPad, Android or even Windows based tablets, they are all still pretty poor at dealing with free hand drawing (and sunlight). But, by 2030, it’s pretty much guaranteed to have this problem solved. In fact a Sydney startup is already half-way there with their new super responsive iPad pens.

Tele-presence

Have you seen these bad boys? Search ‘Double Robotics’ and check out their first iPad stand on remote controllable wheels. The idea is that anyone can log into one of the iPad stands and easily move around a small space and communicate via the iPad’s camera and speakers. I for one would like to see the university buy a thousand of these and just let students tap into them from all areas on campus. Problem being my temptation to kick it over in real life would be far too high. Not to worry, because by then ‘Super-HD’ will mean even standard webcams at the back of lecture theatre will probably give you enough detail.

Autonomous quad copters are already available today.

You’ve ever been sitting in a lecture or in your study cave wishing someone would grab you a cup of coffee? Well, in 2030 autonomous mini quad-copters will be able to! Already in development and cheaply available online, the future mini quad-copters will be able to easily fly themselves (without hitting into walls) to give you your caffeine fix.

Something better than eLearning (we hope)

Seriously, WTF? Have you seen this sorry excuse for a ‘course management’ platform? Of course you have: the university forces lecturers to use it! By 2030 hopefully a far better (read: useable) online collaboration platform will exist for all courses where finding your assignment specifications and asking a simple question won’t require 20 clicks or reverting back to an outdated browser.

Fully digital student campaigns

You think student campaigns are annoying today? Wait until they’re all online and in your social media profile, smartphone, and tablet screens! Yes, with the advent of easy digital content distribution, super cheap and professional looking media recording, future student campaigns will be far more slick, professional, and hopefully engaging. The only way to escape it will be to turn off your digital devices and have a stroll down Eastern Ave!

Hover-boards

You’ve heard this before but it would still be fucking cool. “Vwoom vwoom.”
SCIENCE OPINION
A corporate catastrophe: Arctic melt and the race to exploit resources
Matt Withers on the double threat facing our vulnerable Arctic

Even the most bigoted of climate sceptics would have been hard pressed to snub this year’s record melting of Arctic sea ice, wherein the total surface area of the northern polar cap dipped markedly below half its 1990s average.

Such a dramatic reduction in sea ice has left most of us ostensibly anguished by images of starving Polar Bears, while of course doing nothing to rectify our consumption habits, our collective apathy is well and truly trumped by the veritable hard-on the unprecedented melt has given the mineral extraction industry. Far from exhibiting any concern over this wanton environmental destruction, oil conglomerates and mining giants are rubbing their hands and readying drills in an ill humour- ed to take the old adage that ‘one good turn deserves another’. With Shell already drilling, BP close behind and a host of mining corporatives resource frontier, ripe for plundering boom fuelled by China’s maturing industry, towards peak oil and a global mining of oil, minerals and even ‘untapped’ fish looking to capitalise on the extraction rich seabed become exposed to those greater amounts of the region’s resource- ice dwindling year-on-year, so too do ‘one good turn deserves another’. With the Arctic’s protective sheath of ice dwindling year-on-year, so too do greater amounts of the region’s resource- rich seabed become exposed to those looking to capitalise on the extraction of oil, minerals and even ‘untapped’ fish stocks. Thus, owing to our steady march towards peak oil and a global mining boom fuelled by China’s maturing industrial revolution, the Arctic has quickly become characterised as a new and lucrative resource frontier, ripe for plundering by unbridled corporate interest.

With Shell already drilling, BP close behind and a host of mining corporations – including Australia’s Greenland Minerals – also moving in, the region’s future seems somewhat unambiguous. Yet it’s not only the potential for oil spills and industrial pollution that will exacerbate existing environmental woes for the fragile ecosystem either. With new shipping routes and fishing sites subject only to the foggy jurisdiction of the eight-member Arctic Council – an institution whose lack of political clout is railed against by the UN – there is effectively a governmental vacuum over corporate behaviour in the Arctic.

In a sense, we can dub this scenario a ‘tragedy of the commons’ on a grand scale: a by-product of a high-velocity, economic ideology that stubbornly refuses to acknowledge that individual, profit-motivated ‘rationality’ can and will culminate in collective irrationality of catastrophic and irreparable proportions. It’s one thing when such idiocy is allowed to play out in small-scale land tenure, as in Garrett Hardin’s archetypal tragedy, another thing entirely when one of the planet’s most vital regions is at stake.

Two polar bears seek refuge as the Arctic sea ice continues to disappear at a magnitude unlike anything we have seen for 15,000 years. Source: Canadian Environmentalists

This is all great, but it’s essential that the campaign doesn’t end here. It’s beyond obvious that professional sports people shouldn’t call each other ‘fucking homo’ on the field, but it’s also quite likely that someone reading this article has had some sort of cancer, or has a cancer right now. Cancers can be insidious things – growing so slowly that you don’t even recognise the new ‘mole’ on the back of your neck, or they can be shocking devastations, causing a reaction involving vomiting, headaches, paralysis, and passing out within a few hours. Equally variable, they can be easily treated with a quick slice, or they could spread so dispersively that even the best surgeon and radioactive therapy would need to do more damage to the victim than the cancer itself to get rid of it.

The definition of a cancer, in the most basic of terms, is the uncontrolled growth of abnormal cells. In the healthy human, there are genes which promote cell maturity and growth. In order to stop the growth getting out of hand, there are antagonistic genes called tumour suppressor genes. When these latter genes get stopped by something such as a toxin (from tobacco), a virus (such as the human papilloma virus), or some hereditary reason beyond the understanding of the medical sciences, the cell growth continues uninhibited. Too many cells lead to the development of big growths, or tumours, that start invading other structures and blocking normal bodily functions. But, like all dangerous things, it’s not size that matters. A large golf ball-sized tumour in the colon might not cause more any more problem than some mild constipation. A pea sized ectopic neuroendocrine tumour (like the one diagnosed in Steve Jobs) can release enough steroids or thyroid hormones into the blood to lead to excessive fatigue and coma. What we need to accept and understand is that cancer is not always a be all and end all, and that there is a spectrum of damage.

Indeed, most cancers have a good chance that the patient will live at least six years after diagnosis. Given that patients are often in the older age groups, this is quite comforting. But this is not to discount the possibility of an acute onset leukaemia killing an infant within a few days. Cancer is unpredictable, and society needs to come to grips with the fact that the definition is as variable as the disease itself.

Cancer comes from the Ancient Greek word for carp, based on the appearance of the veins that grow around large tumours looking like the claws of a carp, back when dissection was a novelty. But just as the violent grip of a carp’s claws can come down hard and hurt us, so can hermaphroditic crabs run away, harmlessly causing nothing more than a small fright. True to its etymology, cancer can be just as heterogeneous, and the more we treat every case of it individually as opposed to the default apocalyptic doom status someone with cancer is normally given, the sooner we can get rid of it.

A couple of months ago, St Kilda player Stephen Milne called another player a ‘fucking homo’ on the field and was fined $3000. Many people derided this punishment as too soft, comparing it to previous slurs that were non-homophobic but otherwise offensive and which earned suspensions instead. Another controversy occurred back in 2010 when player Jason Akermanis wrote an op-ed stating that gay players in the AFL should stay in the closet.

Any concerns about the impact of the AFL’s advertising on this issue are well-founded: a petition started by amateur AFL player Peter Stephen Mary last year has only received 500 signatures.

Yet it’s not only the professional sports code that matters. A be all and end all, and that there is a spectrum of damage.
1. What two cricket teams featured in the ICC World T20 Championship final in Sri Lanka on Monday night?
2. What male actor is linked by the three films: *Looper*, *Brick* and *500 Days of Summer*?
3. Skopje is the capital of what country?
4. Approximately how many years does it take for Halley’s Comet to return to our inner solar system?
   A) 55  
   B) 75  
   C) 105
5. “You better not never tell nobody but God”, is the opening line from which of the following famous novels?
   A) *The Colour Purple*  
   B) *Wuthering Heights*  
   C) *Brave New World*
6. Astraphobia is a fear of what?
7. Prior to the Trojan War, who was it that took Helen away from her husband, King Menelaus of Sparta?
8. Is the longest (unambiguously) documented human lifespan that of a male or female?
9. *The Wind-Up Bird Chronicle* is a novel by which Japanese author?
10. Alan Jones is a former coach of what Australian national sporting team?
11. Julian Assange has recently hired lawyers to investigate his claims of ‘defamation’ against who?
12. What’s the official abbreviation for the element Silicon?
13. At what mountain range would you find the K2 mountain?
14. *No Country for Old Men* is a film directed by which two brothers?
15. After seven rounds of the English Premier League, who is on top of the ladder?
16. What country’s flag has a white cross over a red background?
17. Amnesiac is the fifth studio album from what rock band?
18. In what year did John Howard first become Prime Minister of Australia?
19. In Greek mythology, who was both a son of Zeus and the twin brother of Artemis?
20. Prior to their 2012 victory, when did the Sydney Swans last win the AFL Premiership Cup?

**Answers below.**

1. Sri Lanka and the West Indies
2. Joseph Gordon-Levitt
3. Macedonia
4. B) 75
5. A) *The Colour Purple*
6. Thunder and lightning
7. Paris of Troy
8. Female – Jeanne Calment of France died at the age of 122 in 1997
9. Haruki Murakami
10. Wallabies – rugby union
11. Julia Gillard
12. Si
13. The Himalayas
14. Joel and Ethan Coen
15. Chelsea
16. Switzerland
17. Radiohead
18. 1996
19. Apollo
20. Prior to their 2012 victory, when did the Sydney Swans last win the AFL Premiership Cup? (2005 (by 4 points against West Coast). Brainteaser: Mailbox.

**What seven-letter word has hundreds of letters in it?**

**KENKEN**

KenKen tips: 1. Numbers can not repeat in any row or column.  
2. The puzzle is split into boxes called “cages”.  
3. In the upper left-hand corner of each cage is a target number and a mathematical sign indicating how the numerals within a particular cage interact to produce the target number.

**CROSSWORD**

ACROSS
1. Healthy things, e.g. Β, vs. le confused (10)
2. Surpass when not in lecture (8)
3. It’s a girl matter (6)
4. Β’s hidden grazes (4)
5. To not be happy can be neat. Β is! (2,2,1,5)
6. Prepare to fight Β? Let’m scatter (8)
7. Get hidden in Β, taintless (6)
8. Up got a Roman outfit (4)
9. To explain a clue, edit problem (9)
10. Slogan is oddly ‘Moon Tattoo’ (5)
11. Covers for eleven case studies show… (7)
12. …falls for one in horse cart’s centre and front (7)
13. Ease for article Β edited (5)
14. Perhaps I lit sauna liner (9)
15. Not as much on starting second classes (7)
16. The morning finished having been changed (7)
17. Β cuss creatively outside pole for material (9)
18. Matt Albarn? (5)
19. Revealed skill in getting Danish cop show (7)
20. Good French bank gets a jackpot (7)
21. Eden is ruined, woman! (6)
22. Spot babe’s love of Β, to start with (4)
23. Ending of book, that is to say, Five in Eastern Europe (4)
24. Spot babe’s love of Β to start with (4)
25. Listener hath half the world (5)
26. Illegal alcoholic cocktail in no homes? (9)

DOWN
1. Help movement - add in a Β! (3,3,4)
2. Surpass when not in lecture (8)
3. It’s a girl matter (6)
4. Β’s hidden grazes (4)
5. To not be happy can be neat. Β is! (2,2,1,5)
6. Prepare to fight Β! Let’m scatter (8)
7. Get hidden in Β, taintless (6)
8. Up got a Roman outfit (4)
9. Winehouse says love is decreasing dating prowess (6,4)
10. Help movement - add in a Β! (3,3,4)
11. Definite gay conservative (8)
12. Awkwardly, I date men who don’t remember me? (8)
13. Eden is ruined, woman! (6)
14. Ending of book, that is to say, Five in Eastern Europe (4)
15. Snap babe’s love of Β to start with (4)

**TARGET**

Make as many words out of the letters above, always including the letter in the centre.

12 = Pitiful.
20 = Average.
35 = Cheat.

**SUDOKU**

Jim Fishwick

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**TEASER**

THE QUIZ
Have you been overpaid by Centrelink?

Check your records to see if you really have been overpaid. This may require you to ask them for a copy of your record. If you have been overpaid because of a mistake they made, not due to incorrect or false information from you, then you may be able to keep that money. While this is rare, it is not impossible.

If the debt is legitimate, check that it is the correct amount. They deal with thousands of people every day. It would not be unheard of, for them to make a mistake.

If you have had a “breach” before you may also be charged a 10% penalty. They can give you this penalty also if you have been reckless or misleading when giving them information.

Ideally you would pay off your debt as quickly as possible. Talk to the University’s Financial Assistance Office to see if they will give you an interest free loan. This will show Centrelink that you genuinely want to mend the error of your ways. If you have no way of paying it off, negotiate a payment plan with them. They will tend to want to take more money than you can likely afford.

Be prepared to explain to them how this will cause you financial hardship by outlining how much you spend on things like rent, food and medication.

If you have deliberately given incorrect information that has caused an overpayment, this is a serious issue. For example, if you have been working, but have not declared your income, and you have accumulated a debt of over $5000 Centrelink will probably have you repay the debt, then try to prosecute you for fraud, where the penalty is a custodial sentence of up to 12 months. That means 12 months in jail. The SRC strongly advises you to be honest in your dealings with Centrelink as the penalty is so severe.

There are some reasonably rare occasions where you may be able to get your debt written off (suspected) or waived (cancelled). Of course there are many conditions. Talk to SRC Help about this.

Remember Centrelink decisions can be appealed. Talk to SRC Help.

Ask Abe

Dear Abe,

I was really pushed for time so I used something I read in an article for my assignment. Now I’m in trouble for plagiarism. My friend told me that if I tell them I didn’t mean to do it that I wouldn’t get into trouble. I wanted to check what you thought.

Short Cut

I think you friend’s an idiot. You are already in trouble because you plagiarised. The best thing you can do is tell the truth about what you did and why. Explain that you were foolish to think you could get away with it. You should have correctly referenced it, and you will never do that again. Be sorry for the inconvenience you have caused the faculty and for thinking you could cheat and get away with it. Plagiarism is a serious issue. Be prepared to accept a zero for that assignment. If you like you can ask an SRC caseworker to attend the meeting with the faculty with you.

Abe

Abe is the SRC’s welfare dog.

If you would like to ask Abe a question send an email to hedgerow.usyd.edu.au. Abe gathers his answers from experts in a number of areas. Coupled with his own expertise on dealing with people, living on a low income and being a dog, Abe’s answers can provide you excellent insight.

SSRC Legal Service

NEED a Justice of the Peace?

Here’s a list of JPs on campus:


The Students’ Representative Council (SRC) Legal Service has a solicitor on Darlington campus to provide free legal advice, representation in court and a referral service to undergraduate students at Sydney University.

Appointments

Phone the SRC Office to make an appointment 9660 5222

Drop-in sessions

Tuesdays & Thursdays 1pm-3pm (no need for an appointment)

Location

Level 1, Wentworth Building (under the footbridge on City Road), Darlington Campus

www.src.usyd.edu.au

The SRC’s operational costs, space and administrative support are financed by the University of Sydney.
President’s Report: National Union of Students
Phoebe Drake explains what the NUS can do for you

NUS – what’s in a name?

The National Union of Students (NUS) is the peak representative body for students in Australia. It lobbies through meetings with universities and the government, whilst running activist campaigns at campuses around Australia.

NUS also provides an essential means to connect student organisations, like the SRC, to other student organisations right across the nation. It’s a way to skill share, run cross-campus campaigns, and stay up to date on all that is happening.

This year NUS has run campaigns around Base Funding, the Student Services and Amenities Fee, the National Travel Concession Card Scheme, safety on campus, Blue Stockings Week and housing affordability, to name a few.

NUS and Collective Organising

NUS also supports collectives on campus and autonomous organising. If you’re not sure what autonomous organising is, that’s perfectly ok! In a nutshell, it’s based on the fact that there are many people in society more privileged than others. For example, if we look to our children, members of the LGBTIQ+ community, people of colour, and more.

Autonomous organising, consequently, gives people who have been oppressed a safe space to organise independently without any interference from those with privilege. It’s an opportunity to reclaim a space and work within it, supporting others, whilst reaching out to broader society and educating those who do not understand the issues people from oppressed backgrounds can face.

There are varying degrees of intersectionality that also contribute to collectives, and levels of privilege that exist within autonomous spaces. For example, a queer identifying woman will experience, in her lifetime, more oppression than a heterosexual woman.

Our women’s collective, our queer collective, and our (dis)Abilities collective on campus are all examples of autonomous organising at Sydney University. If you’re interested in being involved get in touch with the Office Bearers who will let you know when and where collectives meet.

What has NUS done for me?

NUS has achieved much for students around Australia. One of the most recent wins that springs to mind is the lowering of the Age of Independence from 23 to 22. As many of you are aware, if you are at a full-time student you can now receive Youth Allowance by virtue of being age 22. Additionally, you will also receive a Start-Up scholarship at the commencement of each semester to assist with purchasing text books and other study items.

Notably, NUS was also responsible for the additional stimulus package grant given to all students receiving Youth Allowance.

Moreover, NUS successfully lobbied the government for the removal of Domestic Undergraduate Fall Fee Paying Places, which saw students who could pay for their degree up front gain entry to a course before those who couldn’t.

NUS has done all this and more. NUS will keep working for students around Australia to fight for the education we deserve – accessible, affordable and high quality.

If you would like to get involved, and if you have ideas for campaigns you would like to see NUS run, feel free to come along to the SRC’s NUS Policy evening, this Wednesday at 5.30pm. Snacks will be provided. For more information, contact the SRC on 9660 5222 or email me at president@src.usyd.edu.au.

Vice-President’s Report: SRC and Honi Soit
Tom Raue dreams of an accountable SRC

One of the most confusing aspects of the recent SRC elections was that you had to vote in four elections at once. I don’t think it’s too hard for a university student to figure out the difference between president, National Union of Students delegates, SRC councillors and Honi Soit editors, but it would certainly be easier if it wasn’t all going on at the same time.

Aside from confusion, there are specific problems with having the Honi Soit elections alongside the others. You might have noticed that how-to-votes from different groups would mention Honi Soit or SRC, even if that group wasn’t running for that position. This is the result of preference deals – SRC brand X promotes Honi Soit brand Y and vice versa.

The first problem with this is that it gives students running for Honi Soit influence over the political positions on SRC, and the other way around. This isn’t necessarily an issue if potential editors of Honi Soit have a genuine interest in the activities of the SRC, or the people running for council are especially keen on journalism. Sometimes, though, the students who run for one half of the election have no real interest in the other except personal gain. Holding the elections at separate times would partially solve this problem.

It’s likely that the strongest SRC, presidential and NUS brand will have ties to the winning Honi Soit brand. For the next year, all of these people will be working in the same office, and will probably have similar biases and views about student politics.

Part of the role of Honi Soit is to report on the SRC and hold it to account. When Honi editors tend to have ties to the people controlling the SRC, that role is undermined. Again, holding the elections at separate times would help change this trend.

None of this is meant to denigrate the work of the current editors, or the JAM team who I’m sure will do a great job next year. I haven’t noticed any overt preference for the SRC incumbents in Honi, but the structures we have in place right now can lead to institutionalised bias.

These preference deals that span separate elections are a necessary evil given the current election format. It would be folly for a group running in the elections not to engage in this behaviour. That is why we should look at changes to our constitution and regulations to ensure an independent Honi Soit and an accountable SRC.
General Secretary’s Report: Get Involved!
Tim Matthews explores all that the SRC still has to offer

doomed getting on really now. I am currently cramming for an exam, and the magnitude of my unread readings is becoming clear to me. Now is the time when we dust off those books, smash down an energy drink, and pretend that we are as diligent as we promised ourselves we would be during week 1. Has the jacaranda even started flowering yet??

The 84th Council of the University of Sydney Students’ Representative Council had its final meeting this week. Don’t worry though – if anything was clear is that we are anything but winding down for the year. There will continue to be meetings, events, BBQs, casework, legal advice, books sold, and Honi edited. This week, the SRC will launch, in conjunction with the Redfern Legal Centre, a Share Housing Survival Guide. The guide will be invaluable assistance to anybody renting a house for Universities. Do you know your legal rights as a tenant? Do you know what your obligations may be? Can you resist your rent increase? I certainly had no clue about this stuff when I moved out – so make sure you check it out.

SRC office bearers and collectives will continue running events dotted all around the campus. Look out for end of year events from all of them. Fresh new faces will take office in their positions on 1 December. Crucially, the SRC’s caseworkers and lawyers will continue their amazing work. If you feel like you’ve been unfairly treated in your end of year examination, or if your mid sprints are a nasty surprise – they can absolutely still see you and work out a way forward for you.

Administratively, the SRC is still chugging along with the other student organisations to determine how we want to deliver the best student experience possible next year in the allocation of the Student Services and Amenities Fee. So in between cramming for subjects you haven’t enjoyed this semester, (or revising your diligently prepared, colour coded study notes if you are one of those people) – check out how you can still get involved in your SRC! (It’s some of the best procrastination around...)

Chair of Standing Legal: Tom Raue
Nathan Li decides to educate Tom Raue

Mr Raue’s anarchist diatribe in last week’s edition of Honi shows that he is in want of an education on the relationship between the government and individuals, the law and society. I cannot resist the invitation.

First, a worldview is deeply flawed if one did not believe the government should have the power to decide between right and wrong. In our society at least, our members of Parliament are representatives of their respective electorates. Mr Raue would be incorrect in his assumption that the government is foreign to the citizens of this country. It is important for Parliament to decide what is right and what is wrong, what is law and what is against the law. As a most obvious example, the law gives effect to our value for our bodily integrity by passing laws criminalizing assault. Criminal examples aside, the law gives partners of de facto relationships rights with respect to division of property after the break down of a relationship. Without the law, these valuable rights would not exist.

The most feeble partners, usually those without work and performing domestic services, would be left destitute. What good can come from Mr Raue having his way?

Second, one might query the meaning of Mr Raue’s assertion that “if a behavior does no harm to anyone else, then the state should back off”. Let us ignore that Mr Raue indulges in obfuscating the concept of “harm” and ask whether Mr Raue really means what he says. Taking Mr Raue’s objections to their logical conclusion, the government has no role to play in regulating the exploitation of resources, taxation or the provision of education, health or other welfare services. If this is indeed what Mr Raue means to say, then Mr Raue and his friends on the right of politics are queer bedfellows indeed.

Women’s Collective Report: Girls
Julia Readett reports on the International Day of the Girl Child

This year the UN recognised 11th of October as International Day of the Girl Child. In this modern era, it seems that we have a day for almost everyone and everything; International Talk Like a Pirate Day, International Pancake Day, Walk to Work Day, Mother’s Day, Father’s Day. It’s hard to gauge the impact of another ‘day’ so it’s important that we don’t lose sight of its important message. International Day of the Girl Child provides an opportunity for us to focus on issues specific to young girls, not just in our culture, but on an international level. Some members of the Women’s Collective are hosting a picnic in Victoria Park from 10am to not only celebrate girlhood, but discuss their position in culturally specific societies. Worldwide, girls in Australia face a number of challenges. They have to negotiate the hyper-sexual and technologically preoccupied society we live in; a world where social networking, advertising and the media conspire to diminish a girl’s childhood. International Day of the Girl Child helps us to recognise that girls around the world suffer from prejudice, discrimination and poverty. According to Plan, an international organisation that works to improve women and girls positions, the main cause of death for girls aged between 15 and 19 is complications during pregnancy. This would be a very rare occurrence in a developed country, which is why it is so important to broaden our understanding of the situation of young girls to a global scale.

We encourage all women to come to the picnic at Victoria Park, 10am and help make International Day of the Girl Child join the ranks of International Anti-Violence Against Women Day and International Women’s Day. For more information email usydwomenscollective@gmail.com

Education Officer’s Report: Semester Survival
David Pink is looking out for student interests

A lot of people don’t have any idea what happens in Students’ Representative Council meetings, so I thought I’d give a short summary of some of the more important motions passed at last Wednesday’s meetings:

1. There was a policy moved by Rafi Alam that the SRC ‘pursue, to the best of its financial ability’, the reestablishment of Office Bearers for their work through the awarding ofstipends, thereby taking a principled policy position against voluntarism. This policy formally acknowledges that the SRC should not be a volunteer organisation exclusive to students who can afford to not work, and that officebearers should be remunerated for the work they do for advocacy and representation.

2. There was a policy moved by me that the SRC adopt a formal policy for the provision of registration, travel and accommodation bursaries for students attending SRC-endorsed conferences. The policy formalises the convention already in place for NUS NatCon, edCon and Presidents’ Summit, and provides that for other conferences the executive pay the solidarity registration price if a department has adequate resources, which was passed unanimously.

3. There was a policy moved by Mike de Waal that the SRC President and officebearers engage with social media platforms like Facebook and Twitter. 4. The Council condemned Alan Jones and the Sydney University Liberal Club executive for the appalling comments at its recent dinner.

5. The Council endorsed the Anti-Racism Collective’s motion to promote an upcoming refugee rally (featured on the back page of Honi Soit this week).

6. The Council condemned cuts to the Koori Centre and the ’mainstreaming’ of Koori Studies academics.

7. The SRC endorsed Patrick Maranini and Eleanor Gordon-Smith as candidates for USYD undergraduate fellows of Senate. This was on the basis that previous student Senate representatives had supported the staff cuts, and it was felt that these two candidates represented the most progressive alternatives to the University’s current cost-cutting agenda.

8. Joel Einstein moved that the SRC publicly display its meeting times and locations, which was passed unanimously. Then quorum was pulled by certain SRC representatives, and the meeting ceased.
College Cultcha with Damo ‘Donger’ Thomson

Y ouse cunts didn’t think I’d stopped writing for this ‘ere newspaper did ya?! I have to admit old Dong-dong’s been keeping a pretty low profile this semester. But that’s just ‘cos me old man said I had to wait until the court case was over before I could start tellin’ you povrats about life at col-col again – apparently if I’d kept writing me column I risked a mistrial or some bullshit. Anyway, I got off scot-free ‘cause the judge could tell I was a fucking mad bloke ay (Donger’s father arranged for the alleged indecent assault to be settled out of court – Eds.), plus he was one of Dad’s mates from when he was at college. So now I’m back, bitches!

Fuck me dead, where do I even begin? You dumb fucks have been living in the dark about what’s been going on at col-col for so long you probably didn’t even realise that Rawson’s finished! Gotta say I don’t really know what to do with myself now that it is over. I mean what am I meant to do? Study? Fuck that shit. I’ve already failed three of my four subjects. Usually that’d mean that I was going get chucked out of college but I’m not that worried ‘cause Dad’s best mate is head of the old boys and he said if we

him up and he drops to the floor faster than the panties of that drunk chick Rip-per banged after the informal!

So, rather than solving the problem, knocking this guy out just makes the sheilas louder and more angry, and they’re crowding round me yelling: “I can’t believe you’d hit a woman!” And, I’m like, “I fucking didn’t, I know those fairy boys look like chicks but they’re not!” But like they’re just all still yelling at me and they start chanting “woman basher” at me, and I’m like “he’s not a fuckin’ chick!” So I pull down his pants to prove my point and fuck me dead, if me tutor was a sheila after all! She was one of them ‘lesbians’ but not like the hot ones you see in pornos.

So, by now, I’ve realised that I’ve dressed the ball good and An how I just yanked me dacks up and piss-bolted back to col-col! Dead set, I thought he, me, she, was a dude. I swear. That’s what I told the judge and he fully got it ‘cause like when he/she showed up in a court he/she was in a suit just like a dude ‘n’ that ay. Anyway, like I said, the old man took care of it, so I’m back at college sinkin’ piss and gettin’ loooossssoooose.

After the success of the Indian Raj party last semester – we got in the fuckin’ Herald and everything! – some of the boys decided we’d have a Bollywood themed pub night. It was a fuckin’ top night, plus none of the lefty cunts who banged on about our last party even noticed! I won an award for best dressed by showing up in a nothing but a turban! The moon was high and the slut juice was flowing, so I ended up rootin’ some fresh-fresh on No. 1 Oval. The only downside was that the franga I was usin’ broke but it didn’t matter ‘cause I was so drunk I couldn’t finish. It was fuckin’ funny when she did the walk of shame – she had grass stains on her knees! I got a standing ovation when I walked into the dining hall. Fuck I love college, I’m so glad you cunts aren’t here to share it with me!

Generic Arts Student

G ettin’ my parents have told me it’s time I depart the gravy train at the next station and go out and get a part-time job. After taking the band on the road didn’t work out (the guitarist, John, went and got a girlfriend who went all Yoko Ono on us), I decided I’d be better off staying at home, well ensconced in the lap of luxury. Then they go and pull a stunt like this.

I can’t even begin to tell you how upset I am. They keep saying, “Part-time work will give you an introduction to the career field you’re considering.” But I keep telling them, I am not considering a career in their rat race; I will only work in philanthropy connecting with other like-minded members of humanity. My stupid sister has been chantin’ at me all night, “1,2,3... A,B,C... now I could get an Arts degree!” I just have this great plethora of emotions and ideas circling in my mind, I don’t have time to write resumes and cover letters and dress up in corporate wankery for a job interview. I am not just some drudge who is prepared to sell his soul for a wage. I am a free spirit and I can’t be bought.

But drugs and alcohol are expensive, and you can’t buy clothes online when your par- ents have cut off access to your trust fund.

So out I go into the job market, I feel like such a dirty, pathetic sell-out. I can only take solace in the fact that at least I’ll look good – my ASOS order arrives tomorrow.

There are certain things I just flat out refuse to do. Water.

What if I see my parents at an expensive function? I am not here to serve them. Retail. I will take no part in perpetuating the capitalist class system through sales. Fast Food worker. I would rather kill myself. Call centre operator. How would you feel knowing you are taking away jobs from those on the sub-continent less fortunate than we are? Data entry. A monkey could do this job – I am not studying the finer points of existentialism to type numbers into boxes for mere money.

So my whole family has cut me off and left me to starve. $500 a week in inciden- tal money simply won’t cover it. I mean, how do they expect me to maintain my current lifestyle on such a measly sum? Hiring the studio for my up-coming solo album has almost bankrupted me, not to mention the cost of the backing band.

My parents just keep asking me wheth- er I really need three theremin players if they’re all playing the same notes, but they just don’t get the layered sound I’m going for. God, it’s insufferable to have been raised by such philistines.

Maybe I’ll start taking heroin – that’d show them for neglecting me. Try putting “our eldest became a junkie this year” in the Christmas letter!
The Sydney University Liberal Club is proud to announce the launch of the inaugural Alan Jones Public Speaking Competition. In honour of our new patron, Alan Jones AO, the competition offers students of all experience levels a chance to hone their skills in distasteful and downright offensive political rhetoric.

As the oldest Liberal Club in Australia we feel that it's only reasonable for us to hold the most outdated views. Whether it's about asylum seekers, global warming, abortion, women’s rights, indigenous rights, gay rights, or in fact any rights that don't apply to rich, white males, this competition is your chance to bury your head in the sandstone.

If that's not enough reason to compete, here's another sweetener: big prizes for the winners and finalists, provided by none other than Alan Jones himself! Prizes up for grabs this year include a replica glory hole from Mr. Jones' infamous 1988 visit to the West End; a 2012 S-Class Mercedes, valued at $250,000, that Mr. Jones has graciously decided he no longer has use for; and of course, an autographed chaff bag jacket, that definitely has nothing at all to do with Prime Minister Julia Gillard. Definitely.

Registrations close 25 October. Heats will be held during November, with the Grand Final scheduled to coincide with Mr. Jones’ retirement from broadcasting.
NO NAURU - NO MANUS ISLAND

REFUGEES ARE WELCOME

NO PACIFIC SOLUTION 2.0

‘Deterrence’ won’t save lives!
No deportations!
End mandatory detention!

RALLY AT
1PM SUNDAY 14 OCTOBER
TOWN HALL

ANTI RACISM COLLECTIVE SYDNEY UNI

ARC is organising a student contingent.
Meet at 12.45 Town Hall steps.

For more info contact Marijke on 0452 192 659 or come along to our ARC meetings - every Tuesday, Noon on the New Law Lawns.