

week seven
semester one
2013

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FALL FROM GRACE



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The word games we play

Language is dearer to us than any means of sensory perception, any bleeding secret, any familiar childhood trinket. We could not hold the sights and sounds, memories and fears we do were we denied it.

Try to possess knowledge of the world without a framework of comprehension and communication at your disposal, and you'd be in trouble. It takes a feckless fool to attempt escape from the bounds of language, and perhaps a madman to succeed.

Don't turn the page yet. Although it is true such sentiments are too readily regurgitated in weary epithets and attention-grabbing bombast not unlike this one, the linguistic narrative — inextricable as it is from lived experience — has survived countless re-tellings and retained certain immortality.

The omnipotence of language lives on in the tale of the Dalai Lama and the University administration; a fable for the ages if ever there was one.

Disclosure of select correspondence between the two parties could ostensibly put the controversy to rest, but the University is insistent on as-

serting its own thrust of events.

Like any interest group under scrutiny, the University is retreating to the refuge of politically expedient language. This drew my sympathy until I realised the University is no longer acting on my behalf or in my favour when a foreign government continues to be a stakeholder in my education.

However, the politics of language do not necessarily serve to enslave us. Semantic analysis can offer us more than pedantic debate, and in fact, constitutes the first step towards a re-evaluation of the discourse surrounding paedophilia and child sexual abuse.

Merely a few words' difference separates psychiatric disorder from deviant criminality in popular consciousness; "a life of torment" from "a life of tormenting". A similar case can be made for the normativisation of sexist discourse which is equally damaging. Lest I be branded a PC thug, research has increasingly supported a correlation between acceptance of a sexist lexicon and acceptance of sexual violence.

Variously this semester, we have urged you to make some noise, to

strike, to share your stories, and to start a conversation. Perhaps it's time to pause for a moment of reflection.

A young and ambitious Icarus sought to flee Crete by way of his father's wings. Choosing not to heed paternal advice, he flew too close to the sun, plummeted into the sea and drowned. Traditionally a cautionary tale about the pitfalls of hubris, the fall of Icarus still stands.

Sometimes, the evidence speaks for itself. Choose your words wisely.

Xiaoran Shi
Editor-in-chief



WOULD YOU RATHER...

BATHE EVERYDAY IN A LUKEWARM COMBINATION OF OLIVE OIL, EARL GREY TEA, TINNED SALMON AND WINDEX?

OR

HAVE TO BEGIN EVERY SENTENCE BY EXCLAIMING: "WELL, DUNK ME IN SYRUP AND THROW ME TO THE LESBIANS!"

FAQ:

Can I then take a normal shower after bathing in that disgusting concoction?

Where's the fun in that?

What if someone literally dunks me in syrup and throws me to the lesbians?

Kick back, relax and enjoy!

Wait. Lesbians like syrup?

Little known fact: in order to catch a lesbian in the wild, you must crack open a can of golden syrup (maple will also suffice), put it in a wooded area and lie in wait until dusk, or thereabouts. I saw it on Bear Grylls once.

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SOUND & FURY

USYD administration questions allocation of SSAF funds

Dear editors,

I refer to the article which appeared in the Week Six, Semester One edition of *Honi Soit* which claimed that SSAF funds provided to SUSF for student scholarships have been applied to non-University of Sydney students.

The University takes the transparency of the distribution and acquittal of SSAF funds very seriously.

To date the University has no knowledge of the misdirection of these funds and has sought written assurances from SUSF that this has not been the case as you have asserted.

As you may be aware, the University has entered into formal funding agreements with each of the student organisations which provide the framework for how SSAF funds are to be applied, for what purpose and acquitted.

Whilst I do not believe that student scholarship funds provided under the SSAF have been applied to non-University of Sydney students as you have claimed, I would welcome any details you have to the contrary.

I have also sought and had this view confirmed by the CEO of SUSF.

Yours sincerely,
Professor Derrick Armstrong
Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education)
and Registrar

Note: We have since provided Professor Armstrong with evidence to support our claims. We are awaiting a response from him and the CEO of SUSF. If the CEO can disprove our claims, we will happily publish a retraction. Until that time, we stand by our story. -Eds.

Onya, mate!

Dear *Honi* eds,

I don't agree with Simon Chapman's position on the restructuring of academic staff but I object to the deliberately one-sided profile of him.

Chapman is a leading public health academic in Australia. His research and political advocacy were instrumental in the push for plain packaging for cigarettes in Australia. His ongoing public health advocacy against Big Tobacco, anti-wind farm lobbyists and pro-gun nutters should be commended.

As someone who has followed his academic work and had him as a lecturer, I think he is to be congratulated for his work, not dismissed simply because he has different views to me or you on staffing at our university.

I had to engage with the Senate while

I was SRC President and it is, by its very nature, a conservative body resistant to change and supportive of the status quo. But the Senate needs academic staff like Chapman who produce significant research with impact while engaging in the political debates of their field, supervising PhD students and still finding time to teach.

You might find with the unfortunate election of a federal Coalition government this year that universities will need academics like Chapman to continue their important research and speak out against the powerful interest groups supportive of the conservative movement in Australia.

Regards,
Elly Howse
SRC President, 2010

Simon says

Editors:

Unigate's reporter (HS Week 6 p5) claims that when he interviewed me after I returned his call, that I "personally knew of academics who were under-performing and deserved to be removed, saying many of these people regrettably survived last year's cuts."

This is an appalling verballing of what I said. I said that when the four publications in three years criterion was applied to the staff in my School last year, there were some who did not meet that standard. I then explained that in the case of several, there was unanimous support in the School for their retention because of the vital roles they played in academic teaching and student support. Three of these people (still with us and some since promoted) know that I spoke strongly in support of their retention to the School's executive.

I told your reporter that I supported the publication standard because it was nested within a broader commitment to retaining anyone who was "essential to mission", the expression that was used regularly here.

In general, I supported the University's minimum standard for research output because as head of research I was thoroughly acquainted with the range of research outputs across time. Three publications in four years is a very low level, although I fully agree that in some disciplines where book-length publication is the normal output, that flexibility is important.

Only two Australian universities were awarded the maximum 5 ranking for public health in last year's ERA [Excellence in Research for Australia] rankings. Sydney was one. I was the School's head of research of most of the period on which the rating was calculated. So much for the verballled fiction that we have "many" under-performing staff who should be removed.

I'm advised that 1642 staff belong to the NTSU [sic] — approximately 21% of staff. The Australian Bureau of Statistics has been advised by the Univer-

sity that on the three recent strike days 816, 798 and 104 staff declared that they were on strike. That translates to 10.4%, 10.2% and 1.3% of staff who supported the strike enough to strike themselves. If this makes me "controversial" because I didn't strike and sometimes do not agree with NTSU [sic] positions, I can live with that.

Simon Chapman
Professor of Public Health

Note: The editorial team does not agree with Dr Chapman's position that he was "appalling[ly] verball[ed]", but we respect his right of reply nonetheless.

Those who live in glass houses ...

The SRC notes that Israel continues to violate international human rights and martial law by occupation of Palestinian territories, which it has continued for over 40 years.

The question needs to be posed: how long will the SRC support BDS? 'Until Israel complies with international law and universal principles of human rights?' Until another 40, 80, even 225 years? At what point does the SRC stop?

This question needs to be asked because there is a state which has illegally occupied other peoples' land for 225 years — Australia. The occupation began illegally and with outright violence. But the occupation began before there was a Security Council deciding what was legal and illegal under international law.

Australia violates international human rights law in more ways than just occupation. Does not the disproportionate rate of Indigenous incarceration amount to arbitrary detention — not dissimilar to the detention of Palestinians without charge? Or what of the suspension of our *Racial Discrimination Act 1975* from 2007–2010 to accommodate racist legislation affecting Indigenous peoples?

Does an extra 185 years exempt Australia from comparison with Israel? If it does, we should ask: when will the SRC start its BDS campaign against itself and the state in which it operates?

D'Arcy Roche
Arts II

Pro-BDS does not equal anti-Israeli

Dear *Honi*,

With Tom Raue's letter of support for the BDS motion at SRC in mind, I would like to call attention to Sam Murray's misrepresentation of the intentions of the supporters of BDS in last week's *Honi*.

He made atrocious claims that those of us who believe the State of Israel should be held answerable to allegations that it has committed crimes against humanity are assuming that every Israeli is evil and does not believe in there

being any value in what he calls "cooperative engagement".

It is shameful that he should suggest that we progressives, in all of our celebration of diversity and self-determination and our belief in the primacy of solidarity, believe that every Israeli is evil, or that any Israeli could be evil just by being an Israeli. We strive for the realisation of the fraternity of all people of all nations — all Jews, Arabs, Israelis, Palestinians — and for their ability to determine their own fates without want or hindrance. Because of this, we are naturally compelled to support the peaceful boycott, divestment, and sanctioning of the State of Israel, a dignified but firm expression of the struggle of Palestinians for national independence.

In this, we do not claim that Israelis are our enemies, nor do we even claim that the State of Israel, as the international representative of the people of Israel, is our enemy. In the same manner that the many countries of the world lent a hand to the struggle against apartheid in South Africa, we call for a material reaction against the policies of the Israeli government by a refusal to engage in commerce with Israel in any respect whatsoever. It is for the people of Israel to take to their own elected government and compel them to end the present state of things, and the meaningful role that we believe we can play is in this stated expression of solidarity and defiance. Our Israeli friends and fellows in the Palestinian cause are a testament to our friendship with the Israeli people and our recognition of the role that they must play in all of this.

Granted, prima facie there is no way in which a campaign which describes itself as a peaceful advocacy group could possibly not support the notion of cooperative engagement. Indeed, we do. This assumes however that cooperative engagement is actually cooperative, not coercive, and that it is actually a mode of engagement, not a face for indenture. We hold that the current status of the relationship between Israeli authority and Palestinian authority resembles the latter of each of the two cases.

The supporters of BDS refuse to give anything but the harshest criticism and condemnation to those enterprises which deprive Palestinians of certain rights afforded of them by virtue of their humanity, and will not stand for others being to be led to believe that this constitutes uncooperative behaviour on our part or on the part of the Palestinian people rather than a fair struggle for their innate title as human beings.

Yours sincerely,
Kenan Danyal Toker
Engineering/Arts III

Anyone can write for *Honi Soit*!
Email letters & submissions to
editors@honisoit.com

HONI NEWS



FREE

Week Seven Edition

"DALAI DRAMA: PUTTING THE MATTER TIBET."

Fifty million dollars disappears overnight

Stephen Garton spoke to **Max Chalmers** about what the Gonski reforms mean for the University of Sydney

The Labor government's shake-up of tertiary education funding (see breakout box) is set to leave the University of Sydney with around \$50 million less revenue than expected, according to Acting Vice-Chancellor Stephen Garton.

In a rare in-person interview with *Honi Soit*, Garton – temporarily serving as Vice-Chancellor while Michael Spence is on leave – said the University was still reeling in the wake of funding reductions announced late last year. He described the most recent reforms as "not in the best interest of the country".

"This is the second major budget cut to higher education in the last 12 months because the mini-budget [of October, 2012] ripped a billion dollars out of higher education. So, you had the billion dollars there and \$2.8 [billion] here. It's actually a \$3.8 billion cut," he said. Garton noted the mini-budget had already forced the University to look for between 10 and 20 million dollars in savings. He would not be drawn on whether the most recent announcement would lead to redundancies, saying it would be up to individual faculties to

suggest savings, while the administrative side of the University would also be looking to trim the fat.

The Gillard Labor government has defended its funding changes by pointing to an overall increase in tertiary education spending since the ousting of the Howard government. A neat pair of graphs accompanied the Minister for Tertiary Education's announcement of the plans, predicting that despite the 2% "efficiency dividend", funding for the sector would continue to rise next year.

But what the tidy illustrations omit is the corresponding rise in the number of students attending universities in Australia. Since Labor uncapped the number of commonwealth assisted places a university could offer in 2012, student enrolment has soared. Australian universities offered 5.2% more places in 2012 than in the previous year, with

Sydney University reportedly admitting 17.5% more undergraduates than in 2011. While this demand-driven system has meant higher funding overall for the sector, it has not necessarily been coupled with an increase in the amount of government funding per student. According to Garton, this may mean more students are getting less.

"The bulk of that money has been funding the demand-driven system, in other words, funding quantity; a significant increase in quantity. The interesting question is how much money is coming per student?"

The acting Vice-Chancellor added that modeling being prepared by the Group of Eight universities indicates that, when funding is measured in terms of dollars per student, it has actually declined in recent years. "Every discipline in higher education is underfunded," he said.

Gonski cheat-sheet: where all that money will disappear to

An efficiency dividend for university funding: 2% in 2014, and 1.25% in 2015. 'Efficiency dividend' is Latin for funding cut. This measure will save a whopping \$300 million a year but will leave a massive dent in university budgets across the country. It is estimated the University of Sydney will now have to find approximately \$50 million to trim from its planned spending.

Removal of the 10% discount on paying university fees upfront. This appears to be the least controversial element of the plan as it likely means a slight increase in fees for wealthier students who can afford to pay upfront. However, National Union of Students President Jade Tyrrell told SBS News some low-income households take advantage of the reduction to help their children graduate debt-free. The 5% discount on making HELP payments upfront is also part of the Gonski cuts.

Conversion of student start-up scholarships into a loan, which is the \$1025 payment some students are currently eligible to claim at the beginning of each semester. It is designed to help students on Youth Allowance, Austudy, and ABSTUDY with start-up costs like books and laptops. The payment will now be added to your HECS debt. The good news is that if you're receiving it now or you make a Centrelink claim before 2014 you can keep claiming it as a scholarship for the rest of your degree.

Tax deduction on work-related self-education expenses capped at \$2000. Previously unlimited, this allowed people retraining or up-skilling to reclaim expenses through tax deductions. Garton singled it out as a "sleeper" which may effectively raise the cost of study for many postgraduate students. This may have a doubly negative effect as postgraduate degrees make money for the University and a decline in enrollment would translate to another decline in overall revenue.

Don't be afraid to tax and spend

OPINION

There is a connection between corporate universities, the Labor government, and the Dalai Lama, argues **Angus Reoch**

There are two kinds of societies.

On the one hand, there are societies that don't pay their bills; the US, Greece, Rome, King's Landing. These societies can borrow their way out of their problems and later burden the debt on the backs of the poor – either that or they collapse. Not a problem.

Then there are others such as Australia who, rather uniquely in the current economic climate, are actually committed to maintaining budget balance.

Despite the typical Coalition chicanery attempting to convince us otherwise, the Australian budget is pretty much in shape, at least for the present.

The real issue is that there's not much new revenue coming in. While the mining tax was a conveniently placed farce, the real issue with our tax code is that

Howard decided it would be best for the country if wealthy people paid less income tax – a policy which Rudd, eager to emulate his political hero, happily continued.

This strategy of refusing to shore up the tax base could have worked, so long as Labor didn't plan to enact any big federal schemes. However, one NBN, a NDIS, and a Gonski later, Labor, to its absolute horror, has discovered that it actually needs money to do things.

This would be fine if they didn't have the absolute courage/idiocy to simultaneously commit themselves to a razor-thin surplus – wait, did we say that? We were joking, guys! – which has led to a curious state of affairs whereby the government is constantly spending while constantly cutting spending and getting

credit for neither. Most outlandishly, Labor is now cutting tertiary education to pay for secondary.

None of these cuts are deep or particularly unwarranted but they do establish a dangerous precedent. Not only does it suggest that tertiary education is an easy target, it also fails to meet the very real demands the universities face.

Education is important and it's also not cheap. If our government isn't going to invest in it, then who is?

Well, as we all found out last week with the Dalai Lama fiasco, it appears the Chinese government. In the USSC's case, the defence contractor Raytheon. And in the future – who knows? I for one don't particularly wish to find out.

Universities are not a cog in the corporate engine. They are as much part

of our national framework as our infrastructure, our defence forces and our government services; these are not items we should even for a moment consider being sponsored by foreign governments or corporations.

Pseudo-ideas like 'getting the government off our backs' or 'improving efficiency' are all great until you realise that someone else is going to replace them and reap the gains.

Neither private-public contracts nor foreign government satellites are established out of good will.

This is a particularly nasty development in the corporatisation of universities, and this is a matter which Labor should have fought against, rather than help establish.



UNIGATE



All the rumours, hearsay, and downright slander from the world of student politics and culture

Literally every single student running for Union Board

Seventeen. Seventeen Union Board candidates this year. Seven-fucking-teen. Just when it looked like USYD elections couldn't get any more overwhelming, we present to you the biggest Union Board field since 2004. Thankfully, this means candidates will be so busy negotiating shirt colours they won't have time to develop the dizzying array of unfeasible, unaffordable, and agonisingly unoriginal 'policies' that Union elections throw up every year. "Can't we just put them all in a cooking contest and decide that way?" Joseph Wang asked on the *Honi Soit* Facebook page. At least this way, one of them might actually improve Union food.

Wait, did we say seventeen? Make that sixteen. Alexandra Brown has become this year's first candidate to fall off the



Jeff Probst bids farewell to Alexandra Brown

Board-wagon after she resigned her candidacy. Brown told the *Gate* she no longer had the support of the people she needed, including the Sydney University Liberal Club (SULC). As far as the *Gate* can discern, eliminated candidates are not forced to undergo any Gladiator-esque crowd-pleasing rituals of humiliation. We are lobbying hard to change this.

Among the swag of new candidates who are sill on the ballot are at least five with ties either to SULC, or the Conservative Club (to the right of SULC). We're not saying they're running all these candidates to try to maximise their allowed resources then funnel those resources into one candidate. But what we are saying is that no other even vaguely distinctive group are running more than three. The conservatives running for Board this year are either very clever or very disorganised.

WA proves it is rich, but not very Prosh

The University of Western Australia Student Guild is under fire this week for the ... questionable content of *Prosh*. *Prosh*, short for 'procession', is a satirical newspaper published by the guild every year to raise money for charity. Students get drunk, finish the paper in a night, print 130 000 copies, get drunker, and then cause havoc throughout the city begging people to pick up a copy and donate some money. The writers of the

Gate can sympathise. However, unlike our pre-deadline walks of shame to Thai La-Ong, Prosh tends to raise ~\$140 000 a year. Good for them.

Unfortunately, this year their good ends were undone after they published a fake Aboriginal horoscope, casting Indigenous people as alcoholics, petrol sniffers, and accusing them of misusing their land after the Mabo decision. Eugh. The *Gate* doesn't want to stereotype Western Australians as racist, bigoted, privileged thugs, but heck, what can the *Gate* do when a student guild decides to prove the rumours true? Things got

sticky after one of their charities, the Indigenous Communities Education & Awareness Foundation found out, and refused to accept the funds.

WA Legislative Assembly Opposition Aboriginal Affairs Spokesperson, and former UWA student, Ben Wyatt condemned the paper. The President of the Guild and contributor to *Prosh*, Cameron Barnes, apologised profusely. But the future of *Prosh* is now in doubt; The *Gate* has also learnt that this may also exacerbate the existing tensions between the Guild and the University. Oh boy.



RAINBOW SERPENT

3rd Feb - 2nd March

It's Wednesday and we all know what that means...low prices at the petrol bowser. Combine this with all those Woolworths coupons that I know you have been hoarding for a rainy day for extra savings Cash in

STORM CLOUD

15th March, 9am - 15th March, 3pm

You open a newspaper and find it's full of offensive racial stereotypes, which ruins your whole day. You open your email and write a 300 word complaint. You then look at your complaint and think is it really worth it? After all, they're just a bunch of dickhead students from the Western Suburbs. What would they know?

EMU SPIRIT

3rd April - 15th May

WINFIELD BLUE

19th Aug - 20th Oct

We're at a critical point in the election cycle; why not assemble a Tent embassy? If you want to harass the hell out of politicians to achieve next to nothing, now is your best chance! A few chats to some local news stations will also not go awry.

they know?

EMU SPIRIT

3rd April - 15th May

Don't get stuck in a rut! Shake up your daily routine and grab yourself a block of VB today instead of Export to see your spirits rise. It may cost extra, but the extra 0.1% adds up to an extra beer over the course of the evening.

Mabo

22nd Dec - 2nd Feb

You will find that success comes to you even when you don't feel you deserve it. You will be gifted large swathes of property. Use this opportunity to sink a few tinnies in celebration. Let your artistic flair show, rocks are a great substitute for canvas.

If we are ever even half as racist as this, for God's sake, have us fired.

Union money brings the candidates to the yard

And then the USU was like, if you defraud us, we will mess you up, reports Nick Rowbotham

The University of Sydney Union (USU) is confident that its \$500 grant for candidates in this year's Board election will not be abused. The USU introduced the grant this year to encourage a broader range of candidates to run in the election. Candidates can apply to have \$500 of the \$700 they are allowed to spend on campaigning provided by the Union.

As we report in *UniGate* this week, seventeen candidates have nominated for the 2013 election. This is in stark contrast to the seven who ran last year, five of whom were ultimately elected.

USU President Astha Rajvanshi told *Honi Soit* that the Union had identified "two barriers" to running for Board,

following the disappointingly low candidature last year. "The first was the money issue, and the second was the time issue," Ms Rajvanshi said.

The raft of nominations this year suggests - at least anecdotally - that the financial barrier to running has been reduced. Nonetheless, Rajvanshi acknowledged that the grant was unlikely to significantly improve access to the election for students studying time-intensive degrees. "From what I can see, predominately [the candidates are] people who were already interested in running."

When the USU announced that it intended to go ahead with the grant scheme for this year's election, concerns

were raised that the grant might lead to 'joke candidates' running for Board, or, perhaps more sinisterly, feeder candidates directing their \$500 towards campaigning for a main candidate.

The issue of electoral corruption and fraud is not new to Union elections. In 2010, a number of candidates, including 2011 President Sibella Matthews, were sanctioned for exceeding the spending cap. Board Directors Alistair Stephenson and Ben Tang were then ejected from the Board by the University Senate due to misconduct in the same election.

But the USU maintains that the terms and conditions of the contract that candidates must sign to receive the grant, in tandem with USU electoral regulations,

will prevent any misuse of the funds.

Notwithstanding, there is no explicit stipulation in the electoral regulations that, for example, a candidate cannot display the name of another candidate on election material.

Ms Rajvanshi stated that in such an instance, "the returning officer has the power to make a ruling". What exactly this will entail in practical terms remains to be seen.

The campaign period for the election begins on May 6, and polling will be held on May 22.

@nickrowbotham

Chinese whispers: the Dalai Lama and Sydney University

Avani Dias investigates the machinery of the University and its connections to China

"Education Matters" was the proposed name of a speech to be given by the Dalai Lama on the importance of learning to Sydney University students on campus this June. The irony is that in light of recent events, critics are now saying the University administration is more interested in business matters than education matters.

A number of academics from the Institute for Democracy and Human Rights (IDHR) have been in the process of organising such an event since last November. They claim to have received the go-ahead from University authorities that had confirmed the logistics of the event. According to a report on the ABC's 7:30 program last Tuesday, the University pulled out of the event, wanting to "wash its hands of the Dalai Lama's visit." The University is now encouraging a new event off campus, suggesting the hotel where the spiritual leader will be staying, which will open the event to a "wider group of students from across a number of universities in the city."

Information obtained by *Honi* indicates that planning for the event began as early as last November when the Vice-Chancellor Dr Michael Spence's approval was sought. Anonymity in these emails is necessary as adverse repercussions for those involved are a very real possibility.

In email correspondence dating from this January, organisers say "the good news is that the Vice-Chancellor has given the nod of approval for us to host His Holiness. The VC is also quite happy for us, being the Human Rights Team and the Institute for Democracy and Human Rights, to handle the event with the support of Sydney Ideas in terms of logistics, venue, security etc. ..."

Sources familiar with the event have stated there was either pressure leveraged on the University from the Chinese government or business interests. Information continues to emerge on ties between China and the University, including the recent Bo'ao forum in April in Hainan, China. The Vice-Chancellor was the only Australian representative to sit on a panel discussing education and employment, and the symposium was described in a media release by the University as a "high-level conference for leaders from government, business and academia in Asia" that Julia Gillard and Chinese President Xi Jinping also attended.

On top of this, \$20 million was funneled into the Centre of Carbon, Water and Food in March. In a statement by the University about this funding boost, it stated that "two memoranda of under-

standing were signed by representatives from the Chinese Academy of Agriculture Science and Nanjing Agricultural University" to allow joint laboratories and mirror facilities in Nanjing, China. This bilateral agreement was portrayed as beneficial to both countries and was a "culmination of several decades of collaboration already undertaken between the University of Sydney researches and Chinese colleagues from a multitude of institutions."

This is not to mention the interests of the China Studies Centre — which allegedly engaged in negotiations between the parties involved in the event — and the Confucius Institute. The objectives of these departments should be to teach Chinese language and culture, but events such as a public lecture on 'The Selection of Dalai Lama and its Political, Religious and Social Influence in Tibet' run by the Confucius Institute seems contrary to these goals. The lecture was seen by some as a move to delegitimise the Tibetan spiritual leader by showing he is chosen through a non-democratic

all international students enrolled at Sydney University.

Yeshe Palmo, the only Tibetan student at Sydney University, who came to Australia four years ago on a humanitarian visa, says she was also involved in the anticipated speech by her spiritual leader. "I am very involved with the Tibetan Council in NSW and I heard from our President that this talk was going to go ahead. I was asked to organise Tibetan students from other universities to come and join the event." She said that when she saw on 7:30 that no Tibetan students were allowed to attend the proposed event — a claim the Vice-Chancellor's office is denying — she was very disturbed and confused, saying: "we aren't studying in China. This is Australia."

This incident is not unique to Sydney University. Similar events have been scheduled at the University of Tasmania (UTAS), University of Western Sydney and Southern Cross University, and



From the University of Sydney media release: (L-R) University of Sydney Vice-Chancellor Dr. Michael Spence and Nanjing Agricultural University's Professor Ding Yanfeng signing the memorandum of understanding.

financial bottom line of the University, fear replaced enthusiasm," said Dr Alomes.

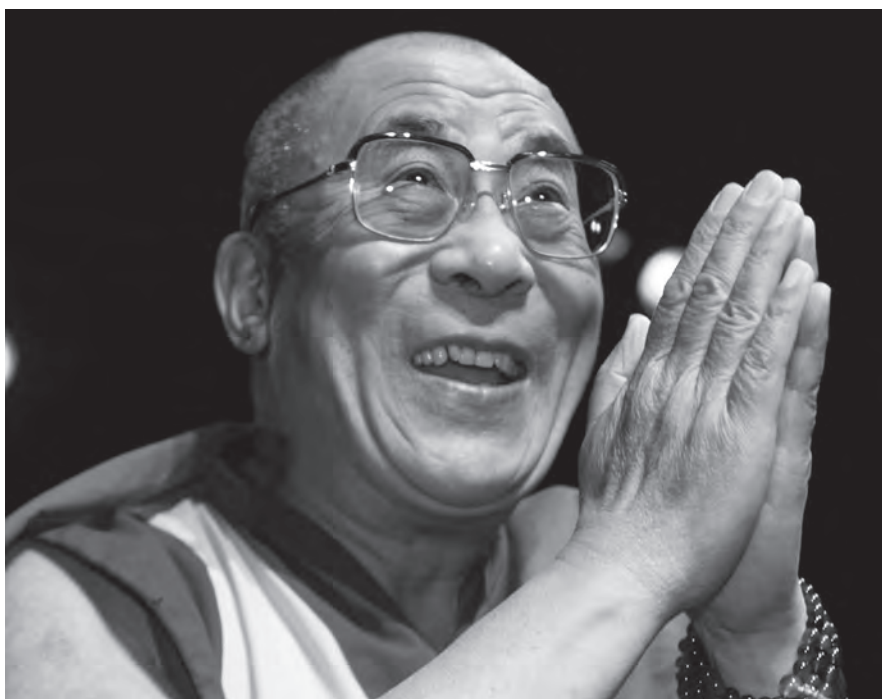
The only difference between the incidents at USYD and UTAS was that the Dalai Lama did eventually visit the UTAS campus. While UTAS administration would have preferred to cancel outright, after mounting community pressure, the event went ahead, but was scaled down to exclude crowds, executive members, and the Tibetan community.

"The pressure came directly from the Chinese Consulate in Canberra and all evidence points to the Sydney University fiasco as a duplicate situation. The response by Sydney is very common to Australian universities who have difficulty finding a moral compass in the face of mounting financial pressure," said Dr Alomes, who is now a visiting fellow at the London School of Economics' Centre for Human Rights. LSE had no trouble in hosting the Dalai Lama in 2012.

When asked about the emails mentioned above, the Vice-Chancellor's office declined to comment and maintained the accuracy of their statement released last Tuesday. According to this media release, "a few members of staff discussed possible arrangements for the only date and time the Dalai Lama was available in Sydney". This time was allegedly outside of semester, when students would not be on campus. As a result, an alternative proposal was put forward to hold the event at an off-campus location to allow for students from other universities to attend.

The University's human rights arm recently received its largest ever grant from the European Union to educate, criticise and develop teachings on human rights. The IDHR was to host the spiritual leader of Tibet and it is in this day that we need to hear about the process for increasing compassion, reducing violence, creating a more peaceful mind for ourselves and a new global secular ethics (equally embracing all faiths as well as those without a creed) that the Dalai Lama is famous for.

A protest is being organised by students on campus to express their distaste in the university's decisions. Their chants are on behalf of thousands of students that agree that this event is a grave loss.



method, thus making an apolitical topic political.

"Usually ... if a university doesn't listen to what the [Chinese government] is saying, they would discourage their students from attending that university," says Tenpa Dugdak, an Australian-Tibetan activist. Mr Dugdak has experienced similar external pressures at various events that he was to speak at, including one at the University of Western Sydney in 2008. He claims they threatened to yield influence over the number of international students from China. If these threats were maintained it would be a major financial loss to the university. In 2012, international students from China comprised 39% of

have met a similar fate. Dr Anna Alomes resigned from her position as the director of the Centre for Applied Philosophy and Ethics at UTAS following an almost identical episode.

"In 2009, we extended an invitation to His Holiness and exactly the same outcome occurred. UTAS and its executive administration were originally enthused about the idea and could see the positive side for all involved — the University, students, the Tibetan community and the Tibetan university with which it had an exchange program. Only eight weeks out from the event taking place, and after a visit from representatives of the Chinese government during which direct threats were made to impact the

Vote [1]: Inanimate Carbon Rod for NUS

Rafi Alam reports on a serious candidate that ran for a joke position in the UK NUS

The Australian National Union of Students (hereby referred to as ANUS) isn't a particularly inspiring organisation, and students are less likely to know it than to care about it. But, the UK variant is currently ahead in distrust and distaste. Perhaps due to its considerable size – financially, organisationally, and in its public persona – the UK NUS is under intense scrutiny, constantly; Labo(u)r dominance is met with attempted takeovers from the Trotskyists, abstentionism from the independent Left, mockery from the Tories, and general student apathy – much like ANUS.

But lo! a new contender arrives. Meet: the Inanimate Carbon Rod, resurrected from its brief stint on *The Simpsons*/in space, in order to forgive and salvage the UK NUS. The puppeteer – or perhaps, assistant – of #InRodWeTrust is Sam Gaus, Nominated Bearer, who spoke for the rod at the National Conference, speaking in gibberish (e.g. “clear value future people”, “positive serious fight back!”), progressive policy points (e.g. “to build the revolutionary army of students and workers, we need to divert our excellent training efforts to the production of death cyborgs”), and zen declarations from *The Book of Prov-*

erbs (e.g. “The NUS needs to be going forwards not backwards. Upwards, not forwards. And always twirling. Twirling, twirling towards... improving the student experience through sharing best practice.”).

Beyond the dos, however, the Rod also “will not spend its time fighting for nothing but buzzwords ... will not ignore policies you pass because you don't like them ... will not abandon the biggest wave of occupations in British

“[the Rod] made a political point, that student activists should be involved with an activist movement, not with a bureaucracy...”

history in order to pursue an exciting career in consultancy.” Right on.

The ‘occupations’ the Rod refers to are those carried out by the National Campaign Against Fees and Cuts (NCAFC), an alternative education network formed by activists in the UK sick of the lobbying and corporate schtick of the UK NUS. The NUS acted at its most amicable in tenuous agreement

with NCAFC, and at other times in hostility, often refusing to provide funds to support legal proceedings for activists, or speaking out against protests. All the while providing discounts on ASOS and managing a nightclub brand called ‘flirt.’

So, while the Rod eventually resigned from the race – perhaps to spread the revolution to Australia – it made a political point, that student activists should be involved with an activist movement, not with a bureaucracy they felt had failed them in action. This was echoed throughout the conference, by less inanimate candidates: from speakers who spoke out against the undemocratic nature of the organisation, to those who lambasted the NUS giving a platform to the rape apologist faction, Socialist Worker's Party.

The Rod has left a manifesto behind (<http://rod4nus.wordpress.com/>) that, amongst calls for the Workers' Bomb and quotes from Carl Carlson, stipulates, earnestly, that: “it has already done more than any National President in the last three years to challenge the agenda of the government ... from not attacking student protesters; to not refusing to support the 2010 protests when stu-



dents needed it most; to not telling the government that it was fine to cut bursaries...” It leaves behind a legacy that combines the appeal of humour with the sincerity of activism, in order to state that the student movement should not be mocked, but reclaimed, with a light heart.

Because, as the Rod states: “The Inanimate Carbon Rod is not a joke candidate. It is a serious candidate for what has become a joke position.”

@rafialarm

“Mainstream” “Party”

John Gooding is too hip for the Mainstream Party

Some of the Mainstream Party's policies are pretty sound, really. For instance, they advocate the implementation of a pneumatic mail service, with all manner of items being sent from address to address via tubes and compressed air. Sadly, a pneumatic fast food service would mean you'd have to stack pizza slices and all the grease would go to the bottom. I guess we could still eat calzones.

If elected, they would also attempt to smuggle nuclear weapons into foreign



Mainstream Party Logo

“they advocate the implementation of a pneumatic mail service, with all manner of items being sent from address to address via tubes and compressed air...”

cities. Smart move, I say. There's just no need to rely on expensive and totally flimsy missiles that people can just shoot down.

However, they also want a return to the gold standard, and that's just crazy. At first glance the Mainstream Party seems like a parody, with some mildly funny policies and some horrifically bigoted ones. However, the previous antics of their chairman, Geoffrey James Bird, indicate the party might be genuine. Bird also owns the trademark for the Australian Union of Students. The AUS is similarly bonkers, but if they are a parody, Bird has devoted an amazing

amount of time, money and effort to a joke that is mildly funny at best. He acquired the trademark in 1993. Three years later the AUS sent a letter to the National Competition Council requesting the formation of what they termed the Austudy Payroll Deduction Service, which Bird believed would help them acquire more members. Bird received a letter from the then-treasurer Peter Costello declining their proposal. Finally, in 2008 the AUS contributed to the Review of Higher Education, initiated by the Australian Government.

This is an awful lot of unfunny work for a parody.

Bird responded to requests for comment but ignored my questions on whether the party was real or would run actual candidates, instead outlining his policy of revoking the citizenship of any Australian who is too politically correct. “Obviously there should be some latitude as to what people can think about things, but we have to draw the line somewhere,” he said.

The party seems to have been formed

DA FUQ?



HD photograph of Party Chairman, Geoff Bird

quite recently; they've only had an active ABN since November of last year. They are not on the electoral roll as a political party as of this writing but they have until May 13 to register for the next federal election.

If come September you see them on the ballot, think very hard before ticking that box.

@JohnMGooding

silent sexuality

Ben Brooks examines the discourse of paedophilia and child abuse, and why we need to break the taboo of discussing child sexuality

TRIGGER WARNING: THIS ARTICLE DISCUSSES CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE

The Archbishop of Durban emerged from the papal conclave with his foot in his mouth. “What is paedophilia?” he asked the BBC, referring to allegations of child sexual abuse within the Catholic Church. “It’s a psychological condition, a disorder... Don’t tell me that those people are criminally responsible.”

Public condemnation was predictably swift, and nowhere more so than Australia, where an extensive Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse is currently underway in Melbourne. It will investigate sexual abuse in churches, schools, detention centres, orphanages, and youth groups, and hear from some 5000 victims. For many, the Commission is an opportunity to finally relate their untold trauma at the hands of adult mentors. As Nicky Davis of the Survivors Network of those Abused by Priests explained, “Our suffering is silent, but not because we don’t want to speak. We desperately tried to be heard but nobody listened, and nobody cared.”

According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), 12% of women and almost 5% of men in Australia report being sexually abused by the age of 15. Other studies cited by the Australian Institute of Criminology put the figure higher. In terms of harm and scope, child sexual abuse is arguably our most insidious and destructive criminal phenomenon.

But victims are not the only silent stakeholders. Whether because of guilt, self-loathing, the threat of prosecution, or social stigma, the voice of the paedophile is entirely absent from the narrative of abuse. They may seem politically expedient and vainly exculpatory, but there is the grain of an uncomfortable truth in the Archbishop’s remarks. Strictly speaking, “paedophilia” describes a mental disorder – a sexual attraction to prepubescent children. It does not describe the act of sexual abuse.

In practice, however, the label “paedophile” is applied indiscriminately: to people who are not only attracted to children, but act on that attraction through criminal conduct, as well as to people who are not innately attracted to children, but assault them opportunistically. Clarifying this semantic confusion is not an abstract exercise. How we conceive of paedophiles-proper has real implications for the prevention of child

sexual abuse and the rehabilitation of offenders.

SEXUAL LEPERS

Studying paedophilic crime is difficult. On one hand, reliable information is scarce. Empirical surveys of child molestation rely on arrest and conviction statistics, offender testimony, or on victim statements. However, fewer than five percent of child sexual abuse cases are reported.

On the other hand, policymakers and the public refuse to entertain the politically blasphemous idea that not all paedophiles are child sex offenders, and that not all child sex offenders are paedophiles. The two are woefully conflated. Consider the headlines announcing the death of Dennis Ferguson late last year. Almost every media outlet from News Ltd. to Fairfax appended “convicted/notorious paedophile” to his name. Likewise, “paedophile priest” has become a convenient designation for abusive clergymen, employed with casual abandon by outlets including the ABC. Paedophilia is equated with criminality, but neither Ferguson nor priests like Gerard Ridsdale were imprisoned because they were paedophiles. They were imprisoned because they kidnapped, raped, or physically assaulted their child victims.

So, what is a paedophile? The most widely-accepted clinical definition is found in the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual IV* (DSM-IV) published by the American Psychiatric Association (the DSM definition was used, for instance, by the Wood Royal Commission whilst investigating paedophile networks in the NSW Police Force). Paedophilia, it states, is a paraphilia, characterised by intense, recurrent sexual urges

toward prepubescent children younger than 13 over a period of at least six months. These urges must cause a person to act on them, or cause them significant distress and “interpersonal difficulty”.

This definition does not require a person to have acted on their attraction in order to satisfy the criteria of being classified as a “paedophile”. Figures cited by bodies like the Canadian Parliamentary Committee on Justice and Human Rights suggest that legitimate paedophiles account for as little as a fifth of all child sexual abusers.

And paedophilia is not uncommon. Some leading academics in the field of research on paedophilia and child sexual abuse such as Sarah Goode of the University of Winchester maintain that up to 20 percent of males are capable of being sexually aroused by children (as measured through “penile responsiveness” to stimulating images). Uncomfortably close to home, forensic psychologist Michael Seto found that three to four percent of university-age men admitted to having sexual contact with prepubescent children.

Coining the expression in his 1886 book *Psychopathia Sexualis*, psychiatrist Richard von Krafft-Ebing intended “paedophilia erotica” – like other sexual deviancy, including “homosexuality” – to be treated as a medical phenomenon, not a crime. Over a century later, that approach is finding fertile ground in academia. In 2010, the Mental Health Letter published by Harvard Medical School wrote: “consensus now exists that paedophilia is a distinct sexual orientation, not something that develops in someone who is homosexual or heterosexual.” Many paedophiles, for instance, report the onset of stable paedophilic preferences beginning in adolescence. Their attraction

is not only sexual, says Seto, but comprises romantic or protective characteristics too. Except for the absence of legal consent between paedophile and child, it resembles a standard sexual orientation.

It is on this basis that some advocate normalising paedophilia. In 1974, homosexuality was finally removed from the DSM-II as a recognised disorder, and activists envisage a similar process for paedophilia. Others believe the age of consent is not a satisfactory basis for determining the propriety of a sexual relationship. I spoke to one student raised in a family of Spartacists who support its abolition. “The wrong in coercive relationships is that they are coercive,” he explains, “and not because of age disparity.” Full and free consent does not require fully developed mental capacity and in any case, “the mere fact of a person’s desire does not make it wrong.” This is also one reason, he says, for legalising the possession of virtual child pornography.

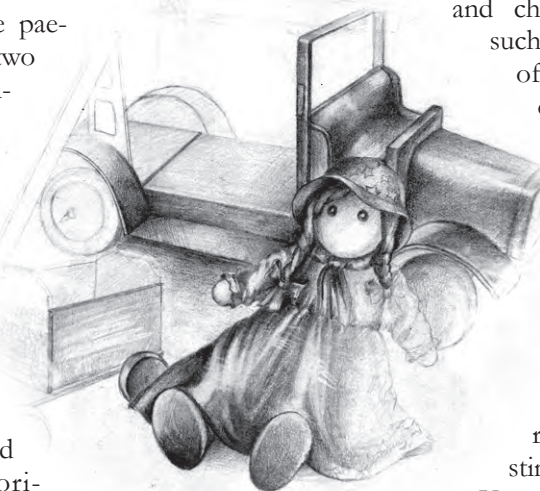
Regardless of whether or not paedophilia is an innate sexual orientation, it is important the public distinguishes paedophiles from child sex offenders.

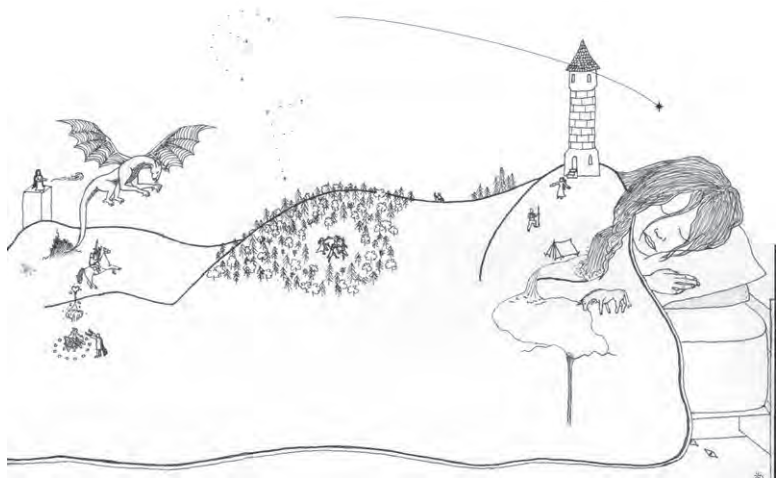
There is some merit in reforming paedophilia statutes. Laws governing sexual abuse tends to focus on the objective characteristics of a paedophilic relationship – namely, the age of the participants – while ignoring the subjective quality of that relationship.

But more often than not, advocates for paedophilic lifestyles are convicted criminals hailing from the controversial North American Man-Boy Love Association, the defunct Paedophile Information Exchange or similar. Convicted sex offenders like Tom O’Carroll (author of the divisive 1980 manifesto *Paedophilia: The Radical Case* and former chairman of the PIE) argue that social attitudes demonise an otherwise benevolent type of relationship. It earns “paedophile emancipation” little sympathy.

GOLD STAR PAEDOPHILES

Yet if paedophilia is to be considered a sexual orientation, there are profound repercussions for the ways we prevent, punish and rehabilitate paedophilic sex offenders. For one thing, it implies some





inborn biological cause. In a landmark study, the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health in Toronto found that the brains of paedophiles have significantly less connective white matter tissue. "Instead of the brain evoking protective or parental instincts when these people see children," said Dr James Cantor, "it's instead evoking sexual instincts. There's almost literally a crossed wiring."

Research like this casts doubt on the orthodox socio-legal view that paedophilia is learnt or acquired after childhood trauma. Significantly, it could also mean the disorder itself is incurable. As the preventative counselling organisation B4U-ACT notes, "reconditioning methods" like aversion therapy or masturbation satiation are just as ineffective as they were in the 1930s – when they were used to "treat" homosexuality.

The solution, then, is pre-emptive management of paedophilic inclinations before they manifest themselves criminally through abuse, sex tourism, or illicit pornography. Treatment and therapy regimes are only provided to convicted offenders. Mandatory reporting laws in every Australian jurisdiction require medical and mental health professionals, and sometimes the general public, to notify authorities if they believe a child is at risk of abuse. They are worthy laws serving a legitimate purpose, but combined with humiliation and the fear of public exposure, they serve to deter would-be paedophiles from seeking help.

Until 2008, SafeCare offered counselling to those who had offended, and those at risk of offending: so-called "gold star paedophiles". One participant in his early twenties spoke with Radio National in 2010 about his distress after emerging from adolescence with a sexual preference for children. After a period of depression followed by attempted suicide – a familiar pattern found in paedophile testimony from both the US and UK – he commenced treatment with SafeCare. Until, that is, the Liberal government of Western Australia cut its funding.

Similar programs overseas are promising. Some, like Stop It Now! (UK), B4U-ACT (US), or Circles of Support and Accountability (Canada), offer confidential counselling for self-identified paedophiles to help them avoid committing an offence. Virtuous Paedophiles is a start-up initiative which aims to provide an online forum for law-abiding

paedophiles to discuss management strategies. It creatively deploys the internet as a tool for self-help rather than a facilitator of child pornography.

Perhaps the most comprehensive program is Project Dunkelfeld (Dark Field) in Germany which caters to non-offending paedophiles. Initial participants were sought through a mainstream media campaign on television and billboards which posed the question, "Do you like children more than you or they like?"

... The Canadian Parliamentary Committee on Justice and Human Rights suggest that legitimate paedophiles account for as little as a fifth of all child sexual abusers.

Within three years, over 800 people had contacted the Project, and almost half travelled to the clinic to undergo assessment. And the program is expanding with a total of three dedicated facilities. Participants are encouraged to acknowledge their sexuality, and assume the perspective of their potential victims. Enrolment is conditional on weekly attendance and, if required, medication. With refreshing honesty, its motto reads, "You are not guilty because of your sexual desire, but you are responsible for your sexual behaviour. There is help."

DISTINCTIONS

Regardless of whether or not paedophilia is an innate sexual orientation, it is important the public distinguishes paedophiles from child sex offenders. Factors other than



Dennis Ferguson, left

biological attraction play a role in abuse, and it is dangerous to simplify sexual crimes to that alone. Many offenders are not exclusively attracted to children, and prey on them opportunistically given their accessibility and a pronounced power imbalance. The deferential relationship between a child taking Catholic

Communion and their priest almost certainly contributed to the proliferation of sexual abuse in the Church, according to Geoffrey Robertson. And in 61 percent of child sexual abuse cases studied by the ABS, the offender was a relative or family friend of the victim, to whom they had ready access. These abusers assault their victims many more times than the "lone stranger", who accounts for a mere 11 percent of cases.

Unfortunately, popular imagination is gripped by the lone stranger. When people think of sex offenders, they imagine a decrepit Dennis Ferguson, licking his lips. He was an easy target for the press, and for the NSW government, which hounded him out of public housing. He was "obviously" a paedophile – a crazed monster as much of the media's making as of his own.

I spoke with Brett Collins, coordinator of Justice Action, a criminal justice advocacy group, and a mentor to Ferguson. The two appeared together in a controversial photograph at Coogee Beach in 2009. Both men are giving a thumbs-up to the camera but Ferguson, with barely six percent of his vision remaining, is smiling in the wrong direction. Behind him, toddlers play in the waves. "We found the most excluded, most disgusting of criminals," explains Collins. "We came into the media circus with a sense of righteousness and stood beside him."

Offenders like Ferguson face a host of extrajudicial obstacles to rehabilitation. In 2009, the Labor government rushed legislation through Parliament in one day allowing the eviction of child sex offenders from public housing. "It was bullying of the worst kind. No non-governmental organisation would give him a job ... No member of his family would claim responsibility for his funeral." But in reality, Collins says Ferguson was an innocuous old man who had served his time. "He couldn't even raise an erection."

Noting that the majority of child sexual abuse occurs within the family, Collins concludes that "community behaviour requires community responses," meaning social attitudes to sex offenders are as much a part of the problem as the offenders themselves. Justice Action supports the introduction of a restorative justice system for dealing with child sexual abuse. It believes a Sex Offences Court should be established which would protect the privacy of both victims and perpetrators, give consideration to the stability of the family unit, and preferentially order psychological therapy instead of criminal sanctions. Through a process of "positive sham-

ing" in both the Court and mentoring support networks, offenders could confront their behaviour without ostracism from their family or local community. Moreover, says Collins, restorative justice is often more satisfying for the victim, who can better understand the mentality of their abuser.

TOWARD A SAFER FUTURE

In one important respect, the Archbishop of Durban is very wrong. Disorders and criminal responsibility are not mutually exclusive. Sufferers of any paraphilia still exercise choice in inflicting their fantasies on others, and those acts cause often irreparable harm. Yet living all around us are people who have been born into a class of perceived sexual deviants and desperately wish it was otherwise. They are paedophiles. Unable to seek support from family, the community, or the healthcare system, they are consigned to a life of torment, or alternatively, a life of tormenting.

In the prevailing political climate, exposure and punishment is the order of the day. It isn't easy to look beyond the horror of child sexual abuse, or

the repulsiveness of paedophilia, and consider questions of rehabilitation or restoration. But if paedophilia and sexual abuse are as widespread as the numbers suggest, prevention and rehabilitation cannot be overlooked.

Insisting on linguistic precision about paedophiles and child sexual offenders serves two purposes. Firstly, it may facilitate the

emergence of support networks for paedophiles without the stigma attached to child sexual abusers. Secondly, it will allow for a more sophisticated evaluation of child sexual abuse. Lumping all abuse together under the banner of paedophilia lazily defers some crucial questions. Why does so much abuse happen within the family unit? What is it about institutions like the church that make them breeding grounds for sexual predators? Are attackers attracted to age groups, body types, or the mere idea of coercive sex? The current Royal Commission will hopefully go some way to answering such questions.

Developing an effective response to child sexual abuse demands some appreciation for these distinctions. Against every instinct, it requires lending a compassionate ear to paedophiles and, occasionally, convicted offenders. The mass hysteria accompanying sexual deviancy and sexual criminality is counterproductive. Pre-empting and remedying abuse on its existing scale will likely entail some creative, uncomfortable thinking.



NEWS IN REVUE

Bro Reveleigh sings the Lovesong
of P. Maxwell Ruddock

*Avrei scritto un intelligente gioco di parole qui
Tradotto da Inglese a Italiano,
Ma non sarà sufficiente grammaticalmente
corretto
Per voi per decifrarlo e dire a nessuno.*

Let us vote then, you and I,
When the election is won under Septem-
ber sky
When Gillard is etherised upon a table;
Panels that follow like a tedious argu-
ment
Of perfidious intent
Let us go and give our consent.

In New Zealand they were relentless,
Singing *Pokarekare Ana* endless.

And indeed there won't be time
For the yellow-bellied bloke that tweets
over colonial-pains,
That thick Jensen bloke that rubs himself
over colonial-pains
Licked his tongue into the corners of
grieving,
Hissed that Abstudy was discriminatory
Before the taking of toast and tea.

In New Zealand they were relentless,
Singing *Pokarekare Ana* endless.

And indeed there won't be time
To wonder, "Do I chair?" and "Do I
chair?"
Time to turn back and keep my hair,
(They will bray: "How his power's grow-
ing thin!")
My morning goat: "father of the house"
now chalky din.
Do I dare
Perturb the Caucus?
So how should I presume?

In New Zealand they were relentless,
Singing *Pokarekare Ana* endless.

For I have known the primary, secondary
and tertiary goons,
And I have measured out my education
with coffee spoons
Above Gonski's voice from a farther
room.
So how should I presume?

Shall I say, I have watched "TV" at dusk
through Boston's streets
And heard the grief that rises from the
grates
Of lonely journalists that lean through
computerised windows?...

I think I'll stay a Minister of ragged
pause
Scuttling across the floors of Parliament.

Educating against sexual assault

Lucia Osborne-Crowley discovers the importance of rape prevention education

According to the Australian Institute of Criminology (AIC), we still live in a society where one in four women aged 14 years and older have had at least one experience of sexual assault or sexual violence in their lifetime.

The prevalence of sexual violence in Australian society is overwhelming, and it is becoming increasingly clear that Australia's attempts to protect survivors and prosecute offenders — most notably through the 2007 reforms to the *Crimes (Amendment) Act* and the Rudd Labor government's 2008 decision to place sexual violence as a top policy priority — simply do not go far enough. It is time for a new approach.

A study conducted by the Virginia Sexual and Domestic Violence Action Alliance has advocated shifting focus away from short-term and even long-term treatment of victims of sexual violence to instead focus on society-wide prevention strategies. It is no longer enough to treat victims for their personal damage; it is time to foster a society that does not damage them in the first place.

This also has been the conclusion of psychological studies conducted by government organisations such as the Australian Institute of Family Studies, which highlights two key problems with Australia's approach to rape prevention. The first is that current initiatives focus too heavily on treatment where they

should be directed at a society-wide primary prevention scheme, and the second is that the education systems currently in place concentrate responsibility for preventing sexual violence on victims rather than perpetrators.

To this end, the aforementioned study by the Virginia Sexual and Domestic Violence Action Alliance has shown that rape prevention education should

“[R]ape prevention
education should begin
to focus on targeting
the institutionalised social
attitudes that allow these
alarming levels of sexual
violence to persist.”

begin to focus on targeting the institutionalised social attitudes that allow these alarming levels of sexual violence to persist.

The aim of this kind of education initiative is to make lasting changes in attitudes and behaviours and to promote deep, empathetic engagement with the trauma sexual violence leaves behind. This study, conducted on college age men, showed that this type of education is most effective in all-male environments, with a focus on testimonies given by male victims of rape.

The study also showed that all-male education groups focusing on forging empathetic ties with victims of sexual violence both report and display lasting changes in attitudes and behaviours towards rape and sexual assault. Many men involved in the study reported that they had gained a newfound understanding of the true gravity of sexual violence, and that they understood the need to eliminate their habits of treating the subject lightly in daily parlance, such as in rape jokes for example.

Dr Patricia Eastaie of the AIC emphasises that “the principle means of rape prevention lies in changing social attitudes about sexual assault, significantly modifying gender roles and gender stratification, and changing the cultural emphasis on violence.”

It is these changes in lasting attitudes towards rape that our society desperately needs. Rigorous education schemes aimed at eliminating attitudes that treat sexual violence lightly, even in jest, as well as those that frame the prevention of sexual violence as the responsibility of the victim, are essential if we want to move forward in the hopes of achieving a decline in the incidence of sexual violence in our society.

In short, this research suggests that perhaps if we stopped focusing all of our attention on numbing the symptoms of sexual violence, we may finally have a chance at eliminating the cause.

Graffiti in the name of freedom

Sam Murray reports on the rise of Free Speech walls in North American colleges

“End the drone war.” “God doesn't exist so stop worrying.” “God made Adam and Eve, not Adam and Adam.”

These are some of the many comments that adorned the Free Speech Wall constructed at the University of Pennsylvania last week.

Free Speech Walls are temporary installations encouraging anyone to write whatever they want on the display. Constructed by the campus libertarian society, Penn for Liberty, the Wall is an attempt to celebrate the significance of free speech in liberal societies and its role in promoting a marketplace of ideas. For Zak Slayback, co-president of Penn for Liberty, it represents “the height of civic liberty and the core of public libertarianism”.

The University of Pennsylvania (UPenn) is not the first institution to construct free speech walls. In the past 12 months, several US and Canadian libertarian organisations on various campuses have contributed to the growing trend. The UPenn Wall was relatively welcomed by the campus who, amongst other things, drew pictures of Optimus Prime and wrote love letters on it.

At other universities, however, such walls have met considerable opposition. For example, campus security at Queens University in Canada shut the wall down within hours, citing homophobic remarks written on the wall. At Carleton University, also in Canada, it was torn down by student Arun Smith, who later publicly defended his actions on Facebook arguing that “unlimited free speech will always dissolve into hate speech.”

The growth of Free Speech Walls reflects the growing force and mainstreaming of non-partisan libertarianism amongst politically active students



in the US. This is perhaps best represented by the rise of the umbrella organisation Students for Liberty, a non-profit run by students for students that purports to be a network for supporting pro-liberty groups on campuses and communities all over the world. This ideological rise can perhaps be attributed to the growing skepticism of US college students as to the willingness of both political parties to safeguard individual liberties.

Slayback, also elected to the executive board of Students for Liberty, disagrees. He believes the mainstreaming of libertarianism is due to the role of the Internet in allowing the proliferation of libertarian materials and ideas; such that almost everyone has access to them. Such ideas have “long been there, they just haven't had this kind of exposure for years.”

And what does Slayback think about the potential for bigoted remarks on free speech walls?

“You see responses to these ideas; people firing back, providing logical, tempered responses. To me, that's a beautiful thing.”

Community campaigners save the Kimberley

The Kimberley has seen community environmental justice activists emerge victorious after a five-year struggle against irresponsible industry and government, writes **Amelie Vanderstock**

“Waylay and Delay. Educate and Mobilise. Stop it.”

Such were the objectives of the campaign won on Friday, April 12 with the withdrawal of Woodside Energy from the 45 billion dollar Browse LNG gas project. The local community managed to stop the world's second largest liquefied natural gas hub at James Price Point, near Broome.

The project threatened not only a pristine, biodiverse marine ecosystem, encompassing endangered and undescribed species by coral reef dredging and blasting, but also the largest humpback whale nursery in the world.

Additionally, 2400 hectares of rare monsoon forest and Pindan woodlands

was set to be cleared for infrastructure. Of immeasurable importance, the project would all but remove any remaining autonomy of the Goolarabooloo and Jabirr Jabirr peoples from their land, whilst dividing Aboriginal songlines and destroying sacred burial sites.

This would only serve to open the previously inaccessible Kimberley region to dirty, unconventional fossil fuel hunters.

Woodside CEO, Peter Coleman credits the project withdrawal with “economic unviability”. With construction due to commence in 2010, do we believe them when they deny the agency of unwavering protest? No.

In fact, we expect that of unethical

industry married to a corrupt government.

It is the steadfast protest by Indigenous custodians, community blockaders, independent scientists and national lobby groups which have succeeded in scaring Woodside out of developing without a social license.

Direct action at the Walmaden blockade not only prevented construction for days at a time, but asserted the presence of the land's true custodians, and a national community who joined in solidarity to support them.

Moreover, government corruption throughout the development approval process, where only one of five Environmental Protection Agency board

members voted to pass the project, was exposed. WA premier Colin Barnett's exploitation and coercion of traditional owners, through “compulsory acquisition” was also shut down in two successful legal battles, and a federal court case scrutinising the Kimberley coastline development rages on.

It is this broad community fight which shaped victory in the Kimberley.

It reminds us community action can, and does create change. Let us celebrate our win and use it to propel us further. The fight is not over yet.

Contact the Student Environment Action Collective (SEAC) on Wednesdays, 12pm at the Manning lawns to meet others on campus seeking environmental justice.

Students take to the streets against Gonski

Zeb Holmes reports from the picket line

On Wednesday, April 16 university students across Sydney protested the federal government's \$2.8 billion cuts to the higher education sector.

The protest was part of the NTEU's National Day of Action with rallies at UNSW and UTS, and a subsequent demonstration of Sydney University students outside Sydney MP Tanya Plibersek's office.

The cuts to Australian universities include a 2% “efficiency dividend”, taking \$900 million out of the sector, the removal of the 10% discount on the payment of HECS-HELP fees upfront, the conversion of student start-up scholarships to HECS loans to save a further \$1.2 billion, and the removal of tax deduction status for educational expenses.

This reallocation of federal

funding has been seen as a fundamental failure to recognise the education sector as a holistic enterprise, as cuts to tertiary education will limit graduate outcomes and access, entrenching current educational equality.

Rudi Bremer, the UTS Student Association's Indigenous Officer, believes

the proposed changes, especially to disadvantaged students on AUSTUDY would “open the gates theoretically but ensure that students are too stressed and too poor to enter them.”

For disadvantaged students, the loss of a range of income support measures and the difficulty of completing full-time study requirements will be compounded by the inevitable withdrawal of existing university services.

Student protesters were outraged over the possibility of further deterioration within the tertiary education sector which has seen over-crowding, casualisation or reduction of staff and courses cut.

As a percentage of GDP, Australia is 25th out of 29 advanced economies in

terms of public investment in universities. The recent Bradley review of Australian higher education recommended a minimum 10% increase in university base funding.

The student demonstration outside Plibersek's office also portrayed a growing dissatisfaction with the Labor government's inability to fulfil the expectations of the left-leaning constituencies who placed them in power.

“This is not what we want to see form a Labour government that is about equity and access, reportedly,” said President of the NUS Jade Tyrell. Although, Tyrell remained adamant that the Coalition's cuts to higher education would be more excessive.

If the Labor government continues to split the left vote with policies antithetical to their ideological base, Australian students may be forced to find out just how much more excessive.



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ARTS & CULTURE



where the wild things are ...

Samantha Jonscher goes in search of Martians

It started with a TED talk — by author and philanthropist Dave Eggers no less. The talk was a gloriously enthusiastic monologue about Eggers' San Francisco-based writing centre for young people, 826 Valencia.

It was a call to action.

Two years after the 2008 talk, former *Sydney Morning Herald* journalists Catherine Keenan and Tim Dick answered that call and opened Sydney Story Factory on Redfern Street. "I watched the TED talk, showed it to Tim and we both thought, 'Let's do that,'" Keenan told me. "We went to San Francisco, attended a course on how to set it up, volunteered for a week and did it."

Eggers founded 826 Valencia to offer one-on-one attention to students from marginalised backgrounds, kids who weren't at grade level, and kids who were lost in the system. He wanted to offer them the self-worth that comes not only from expressing oneself, but from being taken seriously while doing it.

Sydney Story Factory was founded on the same idea. The 826 Valencia storefront was a pirate supply shop, and behind the centre was Eggers' own publishing house. Poised on the line between gentrified and non-gentrified suburbs, much like Redfern, his aim was to break down barriers between communities: barriers between the cultural elite and those who would probably never have the opportunity to participate in it.

Behind the guise of a Martian Embassy, Sydney Story Factory is truly a whimsical and thoughtful homage. The Dr. Seuss-like interior is hard to miss;

the walls are backlit with a green glow and welcoming wooden curves shape the walls and ceiling into the inside of an alien spacecraft.

The gift shop offers a variety of products that a visiting Martian might need, from "sunscreen for the invasion" to "bottled gravity" and T-shirts that say "Take me to your leader." Past the conical flasks of "mutant wee-wee" and "android tears", in the bowels of the spaceship, is the tutoring centre.

Today, it is filled with 15 kids from a vacation care centre in Glebe and five volunteers. The kids, aged 6-12, were writing a two to three minute script they would later perform for their friends, with a little help from the volunteers and former high school English teacher Richard Short, the Storyteller-In-Chief.

I watch as Short breaks down comedic theatre into bite-size pieces, walking them through characterisation and plot.

"Kids find things they didn't know were inside them," Deputy Storyteller Helen Coolican, another former teacher,

explained to me. "You are allowing them to develop themselves and you are standing there, applauding them".

Another volunteer, Uma, whose background is in theatre, confessed to me, "It's addictive ... It's totally about them. They don't need to fight for our attention ... We are telling them that right now they are the most important thing."

And that really is the key to understanding Sydney Story Factory. There is a genuine belief that words, writing and creativity can change lives.

"We are reaching out to street kids, Indigenous kids and kids of all sorts of marginalised backgrounds ... We say 'yes' to them," Uma explained.

The centre recently gained the trust of organisations like the National Centre of Indigenous Excellence (NCIE), and the National Aboriginal Sporting Chance Academy (NASCA), both of which work closely with the Redfern community.

It's too early to say if Sydney Story Factory has changed the community, but

over half the students who participated in after-school tutoring at 826 Valencia saw their writing test scores increase. Ninety-one percent of parents reported that their child was getting better grades and enjoyed reading more.

When I spoke to Short after the workshop and asked if he was interested in expanding, he is realistic: "If we set up in say, Fairfield or Cabramatta, it would be instantly filled, but ... right now, I can't be in two places at once. Me and Cath [Keenan] agreed that was too crazy."

Mostly, he was uncertain about the number of volunteers he would have. "We couldn't run without volunteers and interns. We have about 800 on the books, but a core of 150 that do a lot of the volunteering."

Luckily, students and volunteers for Sydney Story Factory are never far away. Keenan is most proud of the fact that not only have 1000 kids visited the centre since July, but they keep coming back. "It's fantastic, we have one girl that came to our first workshop and she still comes every week."

I sat in on Uma's group at the script-writing workshop; she had two Year Six boys who at first seemed more interested in what the gift shop had to offer. But after some gentle cajoling on Short's part, the boys sat down and created a script. By the end, almost in spite of themselves, they were excited by their own ideas and had fun performing their story for the class: a moral tale about an exorcist trapped in a pixelated world. On his way out, one of Uma's boys told me he couldn't wait to come back.



No longer in hibernation

Max Garner Tucker falls under the spell of TonkSGreen at Hibernian House

GIG REVIEW

Amongst the graffiti-filled stairwells of a Surry Hills apartment block is Hibernian House, a surprisingly hospitable venue. Walk through a pokey hallway and you will find an expansive, high-ceilinged room with exposed pipes, windows along two-thirds of the walls, cushions on the floor and a small, well-lit space against one wall that serves as a stage.

When I got there the place was chock-a-block. On stage was a lap steel guitar, three beautiful semi-acoustic guitars, a large ukulele, a drum kit with a wonderfully cut cymbal that spiralled towards the floor, and seven half-empty cups of tea.

Suddenly everyone stopped talking,

as TonkSGreen stepped on stage. Syd picked up the lap steel and laid it across his knees. With a nod from Matt, he gently slid the metal gizmo over the strings, pulling a haunting, bluesy refrain across the peaceful awe of us onlookers.

Syd built the refrain, working little licks around a main idea—thickening the texture, solidifying the pulse. Matt started singing, adding a confident, heartfelt melody. The microphone caught every nuance and dip of his vocals, allowing him the freedom to shout, whisper, grumble and pitch into airy falsettos.

Syd encouraged wonderful noises from the kit and an assortment of percussion toys. The two friends acted like a single being, relaxing into that state between nerves and confidence that propels clear, unthinking focus.

As the song finished, the respectful quiet burst like a dam into one huge crash of applause. This excitement lasted throughout the hour-long set, though bums quickly went numb on the wooden floorboards.

The second song, called 'Horse's Head', was about being careful of prospective partners and their potentially awful relatives. People swayed and bopped their heads to the upbeat music and the morbid lyrics. This time, the applause was possibly louder than for the song before.

Matt was a little self-conscious about the awkward breaks between songs. After the applause died down, he re-

tuned his guitar and praised a police siren hurtling past the window for being a "well-timed tuning distraction".

The next song, 'Oliver Wins', was about Matt's son. It immediately made sense that Matt was a loving father: his practical Blundstones, faded jeans and political T-shirt all spoke of a man who seemed to deal in the facts of being a musician supporting a family, and who wouldn't trade those facts for anything.

The set progressed in a similarly emotive vein: 'Mary's Bells', a sweet ballad about falling in love with Sydney again (the city, not one half of TonkSGreen), 'Go to Ground', a cascade of bluegrass hammer-ons, and devilish fingerpicking from Matt, and 'Virginia', an anthem with long, catchy choruses hollered by Syd and Matt in unison.

There was a pervading spaciousness in their music that gave weight to every percussive jingle and fingerpicked melody. I was spellbound throughout.

After the last song, the applause didn't stop. I shouted "Encore!" and the cry was taken up, the applause accelerated into a roar. Poor Matt and Syd had no choice. They turned on their heels and sat right back down again.

Photo: Ezreena Yahya

Ashes to ashes

Samuel Small saw fear in a handful of dust

GALLERY REVIEW

The decrepit captures the imagination. Whether in the form of the crumbling brick walls of restaurants under the GPO on Martin Place, or Carriage-Works' rusted rail sheds, the decrepit aesthetic is in boom.

Tin Sheds Gallery's *Dirt, Dust and Ruins* exhibition, one part of *Emergen/city*, an exhibition series exploring changing forms and attitudes to the urban environment, describes the imprints and impressions of the contemporary city and places them in their regional and historical contexts.

Exhibiting international works by Jorge Otero-Pailos (USA) and Daniela Ortiz and Xosé Quiroga (Spain), as well as local contributions from Tina Havelock Stevens and Elvis Richardson, this is an exhibition that explores the role of ruins in the contemporary city and in the lives of those who inhabit them.

Otero-Pailos' *The Ethics of Dust: Cathago Nova, 2011*, a series of nine latex casts of dust from a mine in Cathago Nova, Spain, draws on the history of a region that once fuelled the wealth of the Roman Empire and has over the centuries been reduced to political and

economic impotence. The casting of the dust is an act of preservation for a body of history and memory otherwise forgotten; a preservation of a history of decay.

Ortiz and Quiroga's photographic documentation of the 1st of May Mining Camp describes the miners' housing by contrast with that of the company executives: the buildings are decrepit, the environment so poisoned by over four hundred years of uninterrupted mining that it has been proposed that the entire mining town be moved.

The artists offer a condemning social commentary on the domination of the Peruvian mining industry in this small community living in appalling conditions among the long-defiled ruins of the natural world.

Havelock Stevens and Richardson's *Detroit Drummer* video installation

explores the collapse of Detroit, once the pinnacle of the American automobile industry.

The city's journey into destitution, and conversely its contemporary demographic shift towards scrap yard workers' and artists' collectives looking for a bohemian lifestyle in cheap accommodation, is described through the counter-placement of ruined car factories, foundries, and shopfronts with the 'white drummer', symbols of the new urban class.

As a whole *Dirt, Dust and Ruins* is a highly effective exploration of the urban environment's impermanence and how history and memory, 'time-stains' in the words of the curators, affect the place of the ruin in society.

The exhibition is open until May 31.

Photo: Ezreena Yahya

PUTTING ON A SHOW

Adam Disney thinks you should see live music, even when it isn't Bruce Springsteen.

With summer well and truly behind us, and international musicians tanned and homebound, the time has come for some meditation. For me, the real takeaway came from witnessing Bruce Springsteen on his first Australian tour in a decade. Many rave and drool over the epic span of his concerts, but what really set them apart was their 'liveness' – the skilful blend of planned and spontaneous interaction that managed to engage even those on the outermost fringes of the audience.

Unfairly or not, it raised the bar. How can I return to the tried and true stand-and-deliver method of live performance when I've seen three hours of stage sprints, impromptu song requests, and fan-instigated vodka slugging? If you're lucky you'll get a bit of dry patter, or the odd stage dive, but you'd be hard pressed to catch many acts that convey such (seemingly) effortless and (seemingly) heartfelt exuberance in their interaction, and at such length.

This stand-out show begs the ques-



tion: when you sell a kidney for U2 or Springsteen tickets, are you paying for the type of performer, or the excitement per minute? With big name acts, it seems Australians actually pay for the opportunity; no one knows when they'll be here again.

Thus the local act with the killer show commands nowhere near the prices of a sing-by-numbers dinosaur group who can't be bothered to come here more than once a decade. Well, it's a cruel measure to be sure, but 'entertainment' is a slippery commodity, and what thrills one will bore another. John

Economist will contend that the truly dynamic local act will appeal to enough folks to ride the demand curve all the way to the top, but entertaining or not, foreign imports are rare, and any stamp collector will tell you scarcity trumps utility any day of the week. I guess I'm just lucky Springsteen sweats so hard for my dollar.

In a world where no one but me actually buys music anymore, this has ramifications for the working musician. For those not lucky enough to have their songs in an Apple commercial, getting people to fork out for the live experi-

ence requires a hefty serving of that unique live flavour – the showmanship, the human factor.

If we're to put up with Sydney Buses and overpriced beer then the live setting must offer something different, and it does. Though it pains my misanthropic heart to admit, the real appeal of live gigs lies in the presence of human beings. Whether sweating in the midst of a roaring crowd, or holding your breath during a soloist's perilous melodic expedition, the thrills and spills of the live gig are tied to the realisation that other people are taking risks, and that other people are being subsequently entertained. It's what makes the Springsteen concert worth the kidney, and x gig worth the bus ride.

However, many top acts charging just as much have seen fit to shuffle through their sojourn down-under with nought but a little gyration and a “we love you Australia!” After that it’s another five year absence, though many audiences are still glad for the opportunity.

SURG FM is back

Sydney University's very own radio station (SURG FM) is back on air this week. SURG FM is entirely student-run and student-operated with the support of the University of Sydney Union. The station broadcasts a huge variety of shows from music to banter to niche discussion topics.

SURG FM has gone through a number of incarnations in its time – from a permanent broadcaster to operating during Verge Festival for just four weeks on a Temporary Broadcast License. In 2012, SURG moved towards a more permanent online broadcast. President Annie Wylie says, “SURG FM provides an opportunity for students to expand

their education away from essays and lectures and learn practical skills for the future. By creating a radio community at Sydney University, we foster the broadcast talents of students as well as provide an important catalyst through which local bands and events can get a voice.”

Tune into SURG Monday to Friday from 8am to 10pm at www.surgfm.org/listen or through the app TuneIn on iPhones and Android. You can also catch SURG live in Manning Bar from 3pm and 4pm on Mondays to Thursdays. To get involved, 'like' them at facebook.com/SURGFM.USYD or email surgfmpresident@gmail.com.

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
8-10am	Breakfast with Tom and Blythe	Breakfast with Rob & Friends	Breakfast with Shami	Breakfast with Zoe and Georgia	Breakfast with MECO
10-10:30	SURG Arts and Music	Through the Mocking Glass	The Leonard Inquiry	Real Talk	Chinese Show
10:30-12	Metal Gods: A History of Heavy Music	Catch the Waves	Kozio!	Hit The Showers'	Damn Right, I've Got the Blues with Jack Savage
12-1pm	Tech and Eggs	The Midday Break	Ish & Nick's Spaceship to Venus	Probing the Adventure Sphere	The Hour of Shower Power
1-3pm	Pick 'n' Mix	Radio Cereal in the Morning (In the Afternoon)	The Experience Project	Anzac Biscuits	2 Girls, One Mic
3-4pm	Guilty Pleasures	Live a Little	Across the 60s	Naughty Nineties with Alisha	Schloppy beats
4-6pm	On the Bus with David, Gareth, and Mary	On the Bus with Alex Tighe	On the Bus with Chris + Cranley	On the Bus with Richard and Lizzie	On the Bus with Nick
6-7pm	The Architect's Corner	The Greatest Cover Up	Biscuits in Britain	Post-Movie Bar	Driving Advice with Rob + Felix
7-8pm	Afro Blues Infusions	Excursions	Pizza tapes	The Hip Hop Show	Ten Years Gone: Decades of Rock
8pm-10pm	Brother Fox	Chalets, Apartments and Bungalows	Kinked! Radio	Welcome to the Weekend	Good Lovin'

MEGASTICK

FANFARE

Give us a little introduction of your band. Who does what? We play experimental pop. Shaun plays bass and percussion, Zwi and Adam vocals, Robbie and Adam guitar and samples, Zwi and I play synths and drums.

What do you guys do outside of Megastick Fanfare? Zwi and I are both USYD Law students and work at the ABC. Shaun is a Masters of Urban and Regional Planning student and currently the subject of a bidding war between several modelling agencies. I'm Sam Goldsmith, studying law. Adam recently quit a job as a foley artist to watch eSports tournaments in Thailand and ride horses in Mongolia. Robbie is a Time Lord or whatever you call them at Apple, and plays in a much more successful band than ours. Kiss, date, marry?

Your album, *Grit Aglow*, was produced by the renowned Jonathan Boulet. What was it like working with him? Was it weird not having complete control over your work? Jono actually only came on board for the mixing process, so all the recording and the bulk of production was



done before he suggested we scrap the ten sublime radio hits we'd written and just stick to the experimental pop stuff. Unfortunately for Jono, there was no point at which we didn't have creative control, because we sat with him in his famed garage the whole way through the mixing process, breathing (loudly) down his neck. We don't mix like that anymore. Jono is a good dude and musically like-minded in all the important ways. We're working with him on our second album at the moment.

How does your environment influence the music that you create?

We do most of our songwriting when we're all in a room together, so being out of the city and away from competing study/work commitments makes a big difference to productivity. For that reason, we spent 10 days or so over the summer in Turondale, about an hour north of Bathurst, recording the second album/swimming in creeks/fishing (not catching).



HONI HOW-TO

MAKE HASTE WHILE THE MOONSHINES

Samantha Jonscher turns water into whiskey

Like all great DIY projects in this modern age, making your homemade hooch starts with a visit to a place called the internet. You will need an airlock (available on eBay for \$3.50) and some yeast. The best value for money is StillSpirits Triple Distilled Turbo Yeast (available all over the web for about \$10 a packet).

Next, get your hands on some juice. Any juice you like, as long as it has a sturdy plastic bottle and screw top. Nothing cardboard. Mango is a personal favorite; the sweeter it is to begin

with, the better.

Just as bathtub gin has a tendency to blow up, this home brew has its downsides. To make sure you aren't breeding the next zombie virus, sterilise your equipment.

Now for the fun part. For each litre of juice you will need 330 grams of white sugar. Pour about 100 millilitres of juice into a bowl and use a whisk to dissolve the sugar into the juice. If it's not fully dissolved, it could stop fermentation.

Pour your sugar solution back into your juice bottle along with 15 grams per litre of yeast.

Seal your bottle with your newly purchased airlock and leave it to ferment for one to two weeks. You need your concoction to stay between 18°C and 24°C, so dark places are best.

When the day comes to drink your moonshine, use a strainer to remove any sediment from the bottom of the bottle. Aaand you're done.

Congratulations, bootlegger! Enjoy at the speakeasy of your choice over ice, in a cocktail or with soda water.



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FIRST PERSON

The art of the open-mic

Chelsea Reed walks into a bar...and writes an article

I recently had a nightmare where I was forced into doing stand-up comedy, and as happens in nightmares, I totally sucked. But it got me thinking about comedy. If you don't suck, the pay off would be well worth the fear. So nightmares aside, I decided to immerse myself in all things funny.

To get in the mood, I watched a special, one-off show recently, called *Talking Funny* where Jerry Seinfeld, Ricky Gervais, Louis C.K., and Chris Rock sat around and, well, talked funny.

Hearing these giants of the World of Jokes chat about how they got started inspired me to go see where it all begins for the fledgling comic: the open-mic competition.

"Comedy is a subtle craft. The funny, loud guy in your group of friends who wears a Borat style 'man-kini' at parties is not likely to be the next Seinfeld."

Wednesday night at The Roxbury is a long way from Letterman. A dozen nervous nobodies take it in turn to 'kill' or 'die'. With five minutes to win the audience over, The Roxbury Hotel's Comedy competition is a cutthroat test for comic timing. The biggest surprise for me on the night was the variety: poetry, a theatrical sketch, singing, dirty jokes and quite a few clever, insightful observations. Despite the inexperience of the performers it was a quality night – helped by a supportive audience.

Competition honours went to Alex Pisani, whose dry, Mitch Hedberg-style one-liners and awkward endearing personality won the audience over. Alex has had a lucky introduction to perform-

ing, with two successful gigs under his belt. "It's been wonderful so far. People seem to really get into it once they realise I'm not a very serious comedian."

But it's a long way from midweek pub spots to celebrity and riches. In *Talking Funny*, Louis C.K. says his desire to "be one of those guys" is what drove him to the open-mic in the first place. I doubt any comedians want to get up on stage for the first time because they know for sure that they're funny.

"I was always into music and writing ... comedy felt like another artform I could suss out," says Pisani. "I heard of the Raw Comedy competition and just signed up on a whim, then forced myself to write as much material as possible ... I chickened out and didn't go on stage until two years later."

Comedy is a subtle craft. The funny, loud guy in your group of friends who wears a Borat style "man-kini" at parties is not likely to be the next Seinfeld. Alex Pisani's jokes are clever, and an insight into someone with an original and strange world-view. But a good gag can still fall flat if the context isn't right. "My first gig was to a crowd of about 100 and I was the opening act ... It went well until I misworded my closing joke ... it came out more offensive than I'd intended. I hated the feeling of offending my audience. That joke is dead to me".

The open-mic competition is an emotional experience. It's the emotions that create the show. The feeling of being on the edge of your seat waiting for the first joke of the set is followed by that relief when you can let go and trust the person on stage to make you laugh.

And for the comedian? It goes like a dream.

This is the problem faced by Corinne Kaplan and Malcolm Freberg, core members of the 'Stealth R. Us' alliance – the most successful alliance of *Caramoan*. In covertly making plans to defect from their numbers-heavy Stealth associates, Kaplan and Freberg attempt to unite with the dilapidated but dogged Reynold 'n' Eddie, former members of Gota tribe's short-lived and creatively named 'Cool Kids' alliance. The impetus for Kaplan's and Freberg's action is just that: the desire to act, to display key *Survivor* virtues of wit, playfulness and lastingness.

It's a move that does not pay off for Kaplan, but illustrates how preferable it may be to go for the win and lose by ten points, rather than lose by one point while playing it safe. For observers of *Survivor*'s politics, the schema of alliance systems routinely defies common sense notions of how we might play the game ourselves. When those on the bottom

of an alliance continually agree to vote in line with their party, ignorant of the fact that they're merely cementing their sixth or fifth place in the show, the audience's experience is usually one of frustration and disbelief. How *Caramoan* pans out for Cochran in particular – who has played *Survivor* like Hamlet by way of Woody Allen – will attest to the wisdom or ignorance of this back-seat strategy. The law student of diminutive physical prowess has relied largely on his conservative social game and good humour to win friends and influence people. However, with "Tubby Lunchbox" Shepherd, now relocated to the Jury in an unexpectedly bloodless coup, one gets the sense of Cochran's imminent thrusting under the spotlight.

But, of course, there is only one true Sole Survivor, the man who's played every season and come a way with the million every time: its host, Jeff Probst.

Game theory in paradise

Miranda Smith is the sole survivor of watching this show

For any of the twenty 'castaways' routinely washed up on the shores of some far-flung island paradise, a working knowledge of game theory might help them win the cool milli.

In its twenty-sixth incarnation, CBS's *Survivor: Caramoan* has proved a fruitful season for the *Survivor* diehard; in it's pitching a group of 'Favourite' former players against everyday 'Fans' of the series, the show plays like astronomers against astronauts in a race to the moon. One by one, as players vote each other out of the running for *Survivor*'s million-dollar prize money, the question looms as to how spitefully spurned former players will treat those left standing. Had Walter Benjamin lived to watch *Survivor* (which he certainly would have loved) he would have praised *Caramoan*'s literary montage: history is incomplete, forever brushing the present. In having the loose threads of seasons past wefted into *Caramoan*'s narrative – with the ongoing distrust between contest-

ants Phillip Shepherd and Francesca Hogi, in Shepherd's continual pantomime as 'The Specialist' CIA operative, and in Dawn Meehan's unlikely alliance with John 'Cochran' Cochran (considering his selling her out in *Survivor: South Pacific*) – this serves to enrich the show's self-referentially ritualistic nature.

But *Caramoan*'s real triumph is in its articulation of the prisoner's dilemma: to shaft or share. How does one negotiate the desire to get (and stay) ahead of fellow contestants by knifing them at the Tribal Council vote, while struggling to maintain even a scrap of personal integrity? How does one remain chummy enough with a player whom one has personally ousted? It is on those relegated to the otherwise impotent Jury panel that the final three *Survivor* contestants rely on to determine who should ultimately be crowned 'sole survivor.' Is it better to play *Survivor* with a bloody-minded autonomy, commanding the respect of deposed castaways?



In other(kin) words

Rafi Alam investigates the world of humans with animal spirits

In the preface to the 1957 edition of *The Book of Imaginary Beings*, Jorge Luis Borges conceptualises the “necessary monster”. The dragon is not an accidental product, he opines, but intentional. The monsters discovered by Borges all share this *necessity*. They appeal to our condition – to instincts of exploration, of hypothesis. We yearn for these creatures as a child yearns for monsters beneath the bed – with exhilarated caution.

But the narratives of today aren’t found in books; they are produced online, where authorship is collaborative, texts are unstable, and the mythologies of the 21st century look firmly on the immediate moment, not on the past. The necessary monsters of today lurk amongst us – on blogs, on our News Feed, in our notifications; we can ‘like’ them, follow them, reblog them.

‘Otherkin’ is a community of people who believe their true authentic existence is non-human. There are a vast array of otherkin groups: therians are spiritually animals; fictives believe they are fictional characters, whether it be elves, dragons, or even characters from *Zelda*; and machinekin, from those who think – almost plausibly, after seeing *Bladerunner* – that they are robots, to those who believe they are shovels. This isn’t to mention *multiple systems* or *headmates*: the belief that multiple souls exist in the same body, each living in peace.

Myths of humans as *other* aren’t unique. Even today there are those in Japan who believe in *kitsunetsuki*: people possessed by foxes.

What makes otherkin unique is how the community was developed, and what it has morphed into. The first otherkin communities were formed through mailing lists and Usenet. While other ‘90s subcultures were hosting their loneliness on Geocities, otherkin were thriving amongst themselves, mostly hidden from the human-kin outside world.

The otherkin community took another turn when more public, and more proliferate, web platforms emerged, such



Symbol of the otherkin community

as LiveJournal, and later Tumblr. The community was exposed and appropriated identity politics; it took a defensive social justice-oriented turn.

While the otherkin were at first more spiritual and religious, defining themselves with metaphysical phenomena of astral planes and reincarnation, the 21st century has politicised the otherkin. Otherkin is self-identification; it is, they advocate, the right of a person to define themselves as they please. Thus, otherkin – along with categories such as transethnicity – are often criticised for

undermining the trans movement by employing trans discourse.

Take Roger, interviewed in the book *Your Next-Door Neighbour is a Dragon*. He speaks of the ‘awakening’, where one realises they are – in his case – an elf, and he knows not due to physical appearance, but due to “personality traits.” Not only is gender a construct, but so is one’s species; otherkin is the necessary monster of a world exploring the limits and scope of identity politics.

It isn’t difficult to see why these communities are regularly ‘trolled.’ Various cases of “otherkin” have been exposed as hoaxes, such as Prince-Koyangi, who was a “transethnic, autistic, pangender, asexual, demiromantic cat” before outing himself.

These trolls are clearly problematic for the same reason that motivates them – a distaste with identity politics. So, while perhaps legitimately undermining *otherkin* and *transethnicity*, the troll also undermines queer sexuality, gender diversity, and neurodiversity.

The anonymous and ultimately trusting nature of the internet inevitably attracts trolls. The trolls can be seen as possibly undermining the wellbeing of otherkin by exposing them to ridicule.

The term ‘clinical lycanthropy’ is applied to people who believe they can transform into, have transformed into, or always were non-human beings. Understandably, otherkin tend to reject the disorder, often using the term ‘species dysphoria’ instead, to imply that the true

disorder is in pretending that one is human regardless of their feelings.

Indeed, groups such as the Equine Dream Foundation advocate for the right to change one’s body to suit their species identification. Once again, trans discourse is used to justify this; @TumblrTXT once tweeted a user saying “trans privilege is having sex reassignment surgery be a real thing, while nowhere offers ‘species reassignment surgery’ for otherkin.”

There are currently no studies correlating otherkin to clinical lycanthropy, but it isn’t hard to see the parallels. However, the necessary monster of otherkin is perhaps, ironically, a product of the necessary monsters of the past. Children, adolescents, and even adults can’t help but be consumed by the stories of fantasy, of different worlds and different beings; we have all pondered on being someone *else*, living somewhere *else*, being able to do something *else*.

Not all otherkin may be afflicted with a severe psychiatric disorder, but the delusion may be rooted in escapism. In Julie Gonzalez’s *Wings*, the main character believes his body is hiding wings beneath his skin; he soon changes his name to Icarus. Otherkin may be no different: attempting to explore the limits of the world and their self, escaping the mundane and alienation, but flying too close to the sun and falling from fantasy into hallucination.

@rafialarm

Edgy comes full circle

Alternative is dead! Long live alternative, heralds Lulu Smyth

I remember remarking to a friend back in England, with derision, that being at Sydney Uni felt “a bit like how I imagine American colleges would have been in the mid- to late ‘90s.” Amongst the mass of tie-dye students and chalked-up pavements, I experienced a feeling akin to that of a Doctor Who apprentice landing in a bygone era for the first time.

It was remarkable. Circular sunglasses, stumpy boots, bug-print leggings and backpacks bobbed around me like chunks of neon goo in a lava lamp. Backwards caps seemed not only acceptable, but the norm.

It was extremely disorientating, as though I’d been dropkicked (by a Heelys platform roller-shoe) onto the set of *Malcolm In The Middle*. Why, I pondered, were people skateboarding in 2012?!

In the face of such madness, I yearned for the normality of my native Britain. Having been back to England, I am forced to retract my assumption that this ‘90s look is exclusively Australian. Dressing like Screech from *Saved by the Bell* is, it turns out, a global sensation. All the cool kids are doing it. Even some of my friends are doing it, and none of them are cool.

Naturally, I seem to be the last person to have hit upon this realisation – and it’s perhaps only now that it comes to me because, more disconcertingly, this is no longer just an alternative look. It’s swiftly becoming the norm.

The full impact of this dawned on me last weekend, during a dubstep/trap/electro night organized by one of the posh clubs on Darling Harbour. As anyone who knows me will confirm, I am a boring and unimaginative person, and I like to reflect this in my dress sense. I’m about as edgy as a melting amoeba.

To me, ‘Make Luv’ by Room 5 seems a good example of house music. But at 1am on Sunday morning, as I drunkenly gazed into the bathroom mirror, I was surprised not to be faced with my usual look: a sort of hybrid between Julia Gillard and a twelve-year-old. Instead, I noticed I was wearing crucifix earrings. Glitter on my face. Tennis shoes. In a club. Evidently, alternative isn’t alternative anymore. Edgy has come full circle.

For those who consider themselves to be original hipsters, ‘mainstreamisation’ of edginess poses a serious problem. How can one remain looking eccentric, when all the disingenuous conformers

(like me) dress in the same manner? On the one hand, you could go to intangible extremes, such as wearing strategically sellotaped tin-cans instead of clothes. But this has been overdone – mainly by mainstreamers like Lady Gaga – and smacks of effort and desperation. Instead, consider the other end of the spectrum: if edgy is now mainstream, then mainstream is edgy.

There are several ways to begin this transformation; perhaps most significantly, and in light of my drunken revelation: ditch the crucifix earrings. In fact, all crucifixes are now off-edgy limits. Try a cute pair of pink diamante studs instead. Similarly, steer clear of glitter, and swap maroon or black or blue lipstick for Nivea’s ‘Pearl and Shine’ lip balm.

In terms of advice for males: a devas-



tatingly reliable article in Cosmo Campus informed me – via Kim Kardashian – that eyebrows shape the face, and definition is vital for emphasising that manly, manly jaw. So take out the piercing, start growing back that shaved bit, and keep them Zac Efron-esque with your “sister’s” tweezers.

Since edgy is not simply a look, but a lifestyle, you should also consider ways of applying this to all aspects of your existence. You know your profile pic, the sepia one of you reading a second-edition copy of Ginsberg to some orphans in the Himalayas? Replace this with a webcam selfie captioned “<3 Tuesday”.

You can also stop going to house nights. House has become mainstream and it’s no longer cool to be seen at them, so end that god-awful pretense of “enjoying” the Nearthandal nonsense music and opt for something actually intellectual. As an example, I’d suggest something like 2005 Jonas Brothers, or Las Ketchup’s debut album. They’re not old enough to be classified as part of a mainstream ‘90s night, but you can be sure nobody listens to them anymore, and it’s about time they enjoyed a revival.

Basshunter is also really underrated.

POP CULTURE

Your Assessment and Appeal Rights

As a University of Sydney student you have many assessment rights

University policies entitle all students to full information about course goals and requirements and this information must be given to you before the end of the first week of a course. Information you are entitled to includes:

- assessment criteria;
- attendance and class requirements
- weighting – breakdown and calculation of assessment marks;
- explanation of policies regarding 'legitimate co-operation, plagiarism and cheating', special consideration and academic appeals procedures
- early and clear statement of sanctions and penalties that may bring your mark down, and fair application of these penalties;
- balanced and relevant assessment tasks;
- fair and consistent assessment with appropriate workloads and deadlines;
- written consultation before the halfway point of the unit if assessment requirements need to change;
- changes must not disadvantage students;
- adequate arrangements to cater for disabilities and other requirements
- access to staff out of class time at reasonable hours;
- fair and relevant marking procedures;
- anonymous posting of results (or arguably deidentified at least);
- timely return of assessments;
- helpful feedback;

- access to exams up to four months after the result;
- the right to appeal up to three months after an academic decision;
- enough time for remedial learning when there is reassessment.

Appeals - University Procedures

If you believe a mark or University decision is wrong and you want to appeal you must lodge an appeal within 15 working days.

The first step is to talk to the person who made the decision – often your lecturer. See if you can go through the assessment and discuss your performance with them. Make sure you know how the mark was worked out – including any scaling or marks deducted or changed for reasons not directly related to that particular assessment. Your questions and concerns may be resolved at this stage, helping you understand how you can improve in the future. Alternatively, you may feel the matter is still unresolved and wish to continue with your appeal.

1. Make your appeal in writing and make sure it is easy for other people to understand.
2. Listen to or read staff comments and reasons for a decision closely. Keep these in mind when you write your appeal letter.
3. Base an appeal on a process matter rather than an academic judgement.

4. Know your desired outcome.
5. Familiarise yourself with the relevant policies.
6. Know who you are appealing to - Lecturer/Unit of study Coordinator; someone higher in the appeal chain within the Faculty; and then the University Student Appeals Body (Academic decisions only, and only where there has been a breach of process); You must be given reasons for each person's decision.
7. If you cannot resolve appeals internally, you may be able to approach external bodies eg. NSW Ombudsman, the Anti-Discrimination Board etc. Administrative decisions made outside of the Faculty have appeals to different people. Speak to the SRC for advice.

Your Appeal Rights

According to University policy, appeals should be dealt with:

- in a timely manner
- with confidence
- impartially and not disadvantage you in the future
- procedural fairness
- free access to all documents concerning your appeal

For help drafting your appeal talk to an SRC caseworker.

Ask Abe



Hi Abe,

I had an absolutely shocking time last semester and failed every subject I attempted. I have previously had an excellent record, but had a lot of family problems last semester. Is there any way that I can have last semester wiped off my record so my bad marks don't spoil my record?

DS

Dear DS,

If you had a serious illness or misadventure (your family problems may be described as this) that was out of your control, became worse after deadline for DNF and seriously affected your ability to study, you can apply to have those fails or absent fails changed to DNF (Discontinue not to count as fail) grades. You will need to be able to explain how your illness or misadventure affected your study. Naturally you will need documentation from a doctor or counsellor, a community leader or someone else who knows about the issues your family have been dealing with. Remember that this is not just a method to "clean up" your transcript, but rather for students who have not had a genuine opportunity to demonstrate their competency in the subject.

You may also consider talking to an SRC caseworker about having your HECS/fees refunded. The deadline for applying for a fee refund if you are a local student is 12 months, but it's so easy to forget that you'd be better off dealing with that straight away too. Fee refunds for international students are not as straight forward as they are for local students so come and have a chat to SRC HELP.

Abe

Abe is the SRC's welfare dog. This column offers students the opportunity to ask questions on anything. This can be as personal as a question on a Centrelink payment or as general as a question on the state of the world. Send your questions to help@src.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.



Preventing Racial Vilification

Not Just a Legislative Responsibility

There is recent footage which shows a Caucasian man hurling abuse at, and maliciously humiliating Korean tourists on a Sydney bus. Especially disturbing is the way in which the Korean tourist seems compelled to apologise in an attempt to diffuse the unconscionable situation. Of course, this is not the first episode of its sort, nor are these horrible incidents unfamiliar to the media at large. To be sure, racial vilification is a criminal offence in New South Wales, in compliance with Australia's international agreements with the Convention on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD). Section 20D of the Anti-Discrimination Act 1977 (NSW) provides:

"A person shall not, by a public act, incite hatred towards, serious contempt for, or severe ridicule of, a person or group of persons on the ground of the race of the person or members of the group by means which include:

1. Threatening physical harm towards, or towards any property of, the person or group of persons or,
2. Inciting others to threaten physical harm towards any property of, the person or group of persons.

In the case of an individual committing an offence, punishment can be up to six months imprisonment. On the other hand though, The Law Society Journal in its terse report entitled, "Racial Vilification should remain a crime in NSW" points out that the Anti-Discrimination Act seldom results in a successful prosecution in NSW. The chief reason for this is not too difficult to trace perhaps – the threat of physical harm must be incorporated into the offence. Notwithstanding the right to free speech, some amendments to the legislation might be useful then to prevent verbal racist abuse. For instance, the Law Society Human Rights Committee submission

that the NSW legislation add the terms "including but not limited to" in the subsection providing that offences be committed by "means" of threats or incitement of physical harm is particularly significant I think, and could lead to more successful prosecutions. But still common sense dictates that the burden of social change rests not on political legislation alone. Especially in today's unprecedented globalised world, we must all do our bit to recognise the intrinsic value of each human person and to work towards solidarity. We must, in the well known idiom of W.H. Auden – "[s]how an affirming flame", by treating each person with respect and equity.

By Kyu Won Timothy Kim

If you feel that you have been a victim of discrimination, drop into the SRC office in the Wentworth Building or ring us. We can assist you with a complaint.

President's Report

David Pink discusses cuts to higher education

The federal government's decision to cut \$2.3 billion out of higher education funding is a disgrace. The idea that the only way we can fund public education is by robbing Peter to pay Paul – to cut university funding and student support, in order to boost Gonski – is absurd. It's definitely going to see the quality of your education decrease, and without a doubt harm educational opportunities for new tertiary students (even if their schools are great).

Last week, at Academic Board, I had an opportunity to ask the Acting Vice-Chancellor, Stephen Garton, what sort of cuts we were looking at. His answer: something in the order of \$50 million. Where were these cuts going to come from? All areas, including faculties. Would this affect the EBA negotiations? It would sharpen discussion about what was realistic. Would there be redundancies? The University would obviously like to avoid dismiss-

ing anyone, and priority would go to simply not filling vacancies, but staff cuts would definitely be on the table. General staff cuts and administrative efficiencies would be prioritised over cuts to teaching and research.

The SRC really wants to avoid a fight with the University over cuts, like we had last year. Our side won that battle, but there's no guarantee the outcome would be the same this time around.

We want to keep this fight national, against the government and their disastrous cuts.

So what will we do?

Both staff unions, the NTEU and the CPSU/PSA, and the national student union, NUS, have indicated there will be a real and powerful fightback.

The National Union of Students has indicated that May 14 will be the day for a national student strike. Whether this will involve student pickets around every university in the country, or

something more resembling a massive rally in every capital city, is yet to be determined.

The NTEU will be discussing at their National Executive meeting the prospect of calling a Community Day of Action on May 14 in co-ordination with the NUS. It is as yet unclear whether or not this will involve industrial action.

The CPSU/PSA have indicated that they will be "consulting with [their] members state-wide to identify the areas of greatest risk to jobs and services and develop a plan to protect university education in NSW."

The SRC is fully behind NUS' plans for May 14. As a snap action, we will be holding a speak out with the Cross-Campus Education Action Network next Wednesday April 24 at 12 pm outside Fisher Library.

The EduFactory! Conference being held at the University of Sydney from this Thursday-Sunday (April 25-28) will

president@src.usyd.edu.au



be an important opportunity to organise the national student strike. There will be over 300 activists from around the country all in one place, and the timing could not be better.

Check out the Facebook event: <https://www.facebook.com/events/489445797742449/?fref=ts>

It's not too late to register. And there has never been a better opportunity to get involved.

General Secretary's Report

Dylan Parker gets a little self-referential



If there are three slogans I've heard over and over across the course of my time involved in uni activism, there are three that really stick out in my mind. The first is the lofty yet frankly ambiguous demand for fair education because frankly fair for the son of a QC in Lane Cove is going to look very different

to fair for the daughter of fish shop owner in Lakemba. The second, is the even more amorphous claim of political 'independence', a misnomer if I've ever heard it. Claiming ideals without ideology, practicality that rejects political pragmatism, fighting factionalism as a faction. The third is student control of student money. Honestly, this too is repeated ad nauseum just like the other two. However, it is by far the clearest message and in my mind the most important message we should making.

I'm for student control of student money not because I think that students have a God-given or inherent right to total autonomy over our affairs free from University oversight and suggestion to run pet political projects

around fringe issues or use student associations to stack CVs, but because I honestly think students understand what other students want and more importantly need.

A 21-year-old who's been screwed over in one of their classes is going to understand that lecturers are more likely to side with an unscrupulous tutor they have to work with, than a student they're never going to see again. Ask a student a student and an impartial casework service seems like a no-brainer. Ask a uni bureaucrat, and well, it's got to be put to a cost benefit analysis to meet a strategic plan. We also get that when you want need an emergency loan you might be a bit embarrassed, and might need it on the spot rather having

to jump through hoops justifying X, Y & Z.

One thing that really impressed me when I started as General Secretary at the SRC was actually how lean & trim an organisation the SRC is. Student control over student money has meant the SRC has been able to, on a shoestring run a casework service that each year sees more students, a free legal service that will take you from advice to representing you in court, on the spot emergency loans, an *Honi Soit* that pumps out hilarious papers for you to read every week, diverse activist departments that fight for your rights on and off campus, and a second hand book store where you can pick up dirt cheap copies of your textbooks.

general.secretary@src.usyd.edu.au

Queer Officers' Report

Eleanor Barz explains the rainbows popping up around campus

Over the past week, you have probably noticed the hundreds of chalk rainbows that have been brightening up the streets of Sydney. Part of the DIY Rainbows movement, they were created in protest against the premature removal of the Rainbow Crossing on Oxford Street. The Queer Action Collective did not hesitate to bring this beautiful initiative to Sydney University last Sunday, when dedicated student activists and talented artists alike spent hours decorating Eastern Avenue and City Road. Anyone who has seen the product of our efforts will agree that the sunburn, chalk-induced sneezes, and raw fingertips were definitely worth it. This week's rain washed many

of our rainbows away, but on Thursday QuAC was at it again, and Eastern Avenue is now covered in beautiful drawings once more.

Aside from contributing to a Sydney-wide chalk shortage, QuAC has also been busy celebrating. Earlier this month, the SRC's submission to the New South Wales Legislative Council's Inquiry into same sex marriage was published the Parliament of New South Wales website! Of the 10 000 submissions, only 1300 were published. To help us continue the fight for marriage equality, be sure to join us at the next rally, which will be held at 1pm at Town Hall on the 25th of May. See you there!

Of course, QuAC isn't just about activism. For the first time this year we have united with the Women's Collective and the USU Queer Events Coordinators to put on a female-focused afternoon tea. This queer-friendly autonomous women's event is open to anyone who identifies as female or has lived experience as a woman. This Wednesday we will be serving tea, cakes and other (non-alcoholic) refreshments from 4:00 pm at Verge Gallery. Afterwards we will head over to the Hermann's Bar Lawns for Queer Beers. Kindly organised by QuAC's Officers of Fun, this very successful fortnightly event usually takes place every other Thursday at 6pm, but has

queer.officers@src.usyd.edu.au



been moved to Wednesday because of ANZAC Day.

QuAC meets in the queer space every Monday and Tuesday at 1pm. If you would like to know more about the collective, please feel free to email either myself or Fahad Ali at queer.officers@src.usyd.edu.au.

Education Officers' Report

Tenaya Alattas writes about EduFactory

Welcome to 2013. Welcome to the university, in which you get to pay for the privilege of your participation (especially if you are an international student). Welcome to the tertiary education system under a Federal Labor Government, looking every day more like a production line geared towards the "needs" of a capitalist world economy. Welcome to a university system that is groaning under the weight of cutbacks and suffering a lack of democratic decision making. Welcome to a user-pays education, where you pay money you may never have for an education that is meant to be a commu-

nity benefit.

Welcome to your education – to a time when it you have the opportunity to be politicised and critical about what it means to be a student in the current university system. In a society rife with sexism, racism, able-ism, homophobia (etc.) and other profound social inequities, an aim of Edufactory 2012 was to challenge both the political economy and the able-bodied, gendered and racial nature of the educational institution. In 2013, the conference will use this starting point to branch out further into the realms of critical discussion.

The Edufactory Conference 2013,

comprising three days of political discussion, skill sharing, and debates on the future of national education activism. Whether its finding out more about international struggles against the corporatisation of the university, discussing alternatives to user-pays education, or plotting mischievous actions that expose the extractive-industry funding tactics of our university administrations, everyone is welcome. Faced with a fucked-up higher education system we ask all students concerned with the current crises in university education to converge at the sandstone enclave that is Sydney



University for Edufactory 2013!

When: 25-28 April

Where: Gadigal country at The University of Sydney

Registration / cost: \$10 or \$30 if you're feeling supportive

For more info: visit <http://edufactory2013.wordpress.com> or get in touch with the organising collective: edufactory2013@gmail.com

education.officers@src.usyd.edu.au

Women Officers' Report

Hannah Smith lets you know about Blue Stocking Week



From the 29th of April, student unions around the country will be celebrating Blue Stocking Week. Blue Stocking is a week-long celebration of women in higher education run by the National Union of Students. Blue Stocking has been celebrated by student unions since the 1980s (with a brief intermission due to Voluntary Student Unionism).

The term 'blue stocking' was reportedly originally a derogatory term leveled at women in education. It was meant to

infer that those women pursuing tertiary education were doing so because they were less physically appealing to men. The term was eventually reclaimed and proudly owned by women leading the charge into universities, working towards better conditions and fairer representation for women students and academics.

In 2013, Blue Stocking is most definitely a celebration. Women have made many great achievements in higher education, education more broadly and the wider world. The NSW Women Students Network will be celebrating women with an exhibition of our personal academic heroes and a forum on education and feminism on the 1st of May at the Old Teachers Assembly College Hall from 6pm.

Despite being a celebration, Blue

Stocking Week is also a time to pause and consider the great challenges ahead for women in education. Just last week, the federal government announced \$2.8 billion of cuts to higher education. Since women take longer to repay HECS debts, these cuts will hurt women and other vulnerable groups the most. With a federal election coming up, things are looking even bleaker. Tony Abbott has promised to cut student start-up scholarships and there is speculation that he will deregulate university fees. In addition to this, women graduates still face immense wage gaps- despite graduating from university in larger numbers than men.

The theme of this year's Blue Stocking Week is "Our Blue Stockings on the line". Through this theme, we hope to take into account the amazing strides

taken by women before us, but also to appreciate the immense challenges we have before us in assuring women's place in education is not put under threat.

On campus, we will be celebrating with the forum and exhibition, as well as doing some activities throughout the week. The collective is still deciding on what events we would like to run, but it might be a game of "career snakes and ladders" or a bake sale that reflects the gender wage gap.

If you are interested in getting involved in Blue Stockings Week, or Women's Collective, get in contact with us via email usyd womens collective@gmail.com, or twitter @SRCwomens, or in person by attending Women's Collective at 1pm on Wednesdays in the Women's Room (Manning House Level 1).

usyd womens collective@gmail.com

International Students Officers' Report

Jay Ng explains two issues that are particularly relevant to USYD international students

Motion at SRC

Last week, the SRC had a council meeting and there was a motion being discussed that is important for international students:

The SRC urges the Dean of each Faculty of the University to exercise their discretion and allow the international students who are members of the Council as defined by Part One of the SRC regulations, to study part time should such requests are made and their memberships to the Council are verified by the President of the SRC.

AND

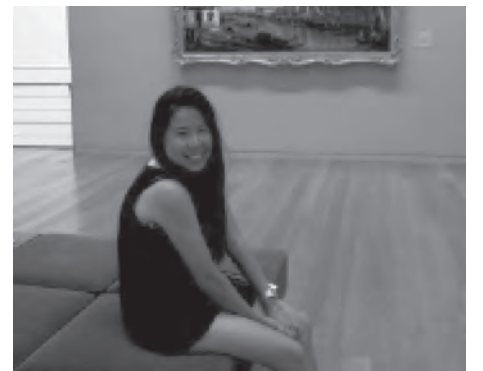
The President of the SRC to verify a person's membership to the Council as defined by Part One of the SRC regulations upon request.

It had been pointed out by a few council members that this motion is not viable due to the fact that international students' study visas to Australia

have restrictions in terms of study load and work hours. (International students must study full-time, no less than 4 units of study and work no more than 40 hours a fortnight). However, as an international student, I support this motion in the sense that international students should have their own freedom to choose the study load they desire to engage in – especially when we are paying ~\$12,000 per semester. It has been absolutely difficult for the other international students officers and I to carry out campaigns to help international students having to balance between university work and SRC campaigns. Therefore, I am hoping that there will be more discussions open on this subject matter and see what could be done. Please feel free to send the SRC an email to let us know your opinions.

Alan Jones' Comment on Boston Bombing:

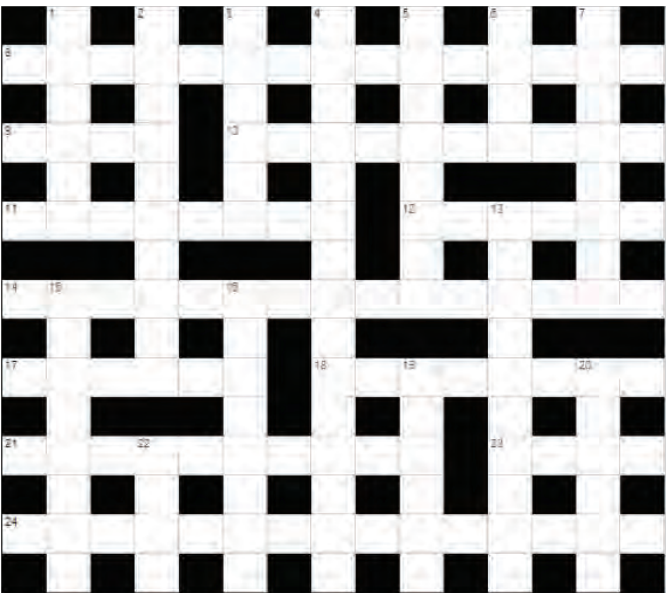
Alan Jones has made a ridiculous comment on the Boston Bombing tragedy on Channel 7 Sunrise the other day. He links the tragic incident to foreign students, gave a racist presumption that the foreign student population initiated the bombing and that the Australian government has to keep an eye on foreign students. His statement is completely horrific and inaccurate. The SRC International Students Collective thinks that it harms the relationship between the local Australian community and the huge international population. We strongly believe international students from all over the world come to Australia for the quality education and a different life experience. Education service for international students is an important and growing industry in



Australia that cannot be undermined. Recent statistics show international students contribute an estimate \$15 billion per year to the Australian economy. Furthermore, international students do not solely contribute to Australia's financial benefits. The population helps shape the nation's multiculturalism, contributes to labour and volunteering as well.

international.officers@src.usyd.edu.au

QUICK CROSSWORD



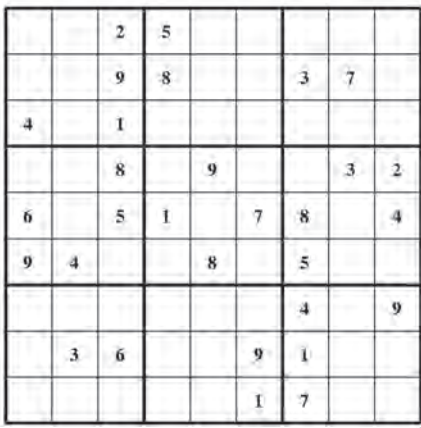
ACROSS

- 8. Large naval vessel (8,7)
- 9. Adam's son (4)
- 10. One partial to one spouse (10)
- 11. Capital of Malta (8)
- 12. Not accessible to view (6)
- 14. Philosopher of celestial teapot fame (8,7)
- 17. Scottish knit (6)
- 18. Swollen (8)
- 21. Lastingness (10)
- 23. Official language of Pakistan (4)
- 24. Large pachyderm (8,7)

DOWN

- 1. Shedding insect (6)
- 2. The worship of sacred images (10)
- 3. Suit worn around nuclear materials (6)
- 4. Highwayman's demand for money (5,3,7)
- 5. Eastern Chinese city (8)
- 6. Dour (4)
- 7. Conch (8)
- 13. Deeply upset (10)
- 15. Aural warmers (8)
- 16. US resident (8)
- 19. Hot natural spring (6)
- 20. Finish (6)
- 22. Having keen interest (4)

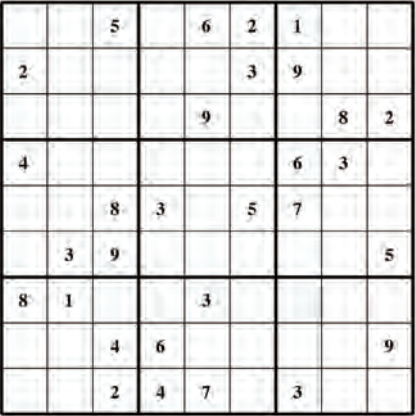
Janice



Easy



Hard

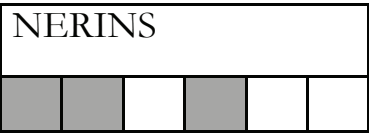
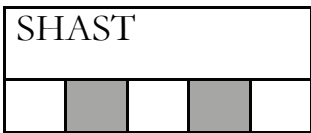
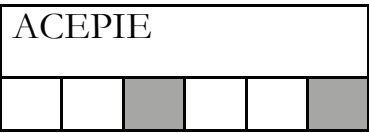


Easy



Hard

WHAM, BAM,
ANAGRAM!



Use the shaded letters to answer the riddle

Q: What do you get from eating Christmas decorations?

A: [shaded letters] - [shaded letters]

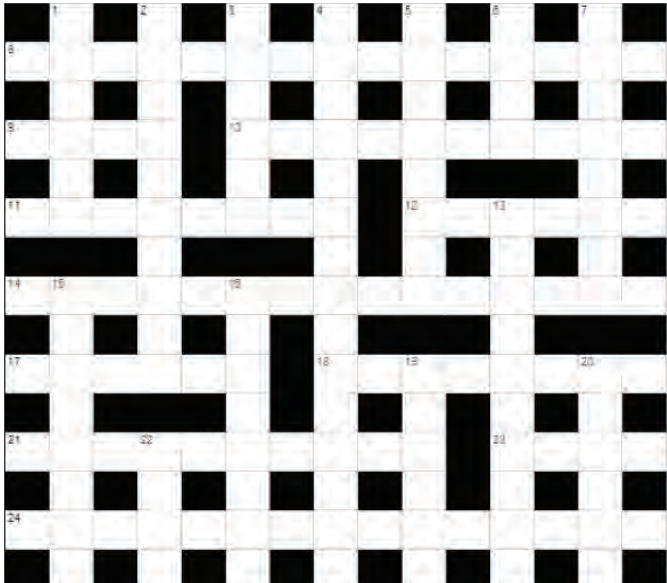
CRYPTIC CROSSWORD

ACROSS

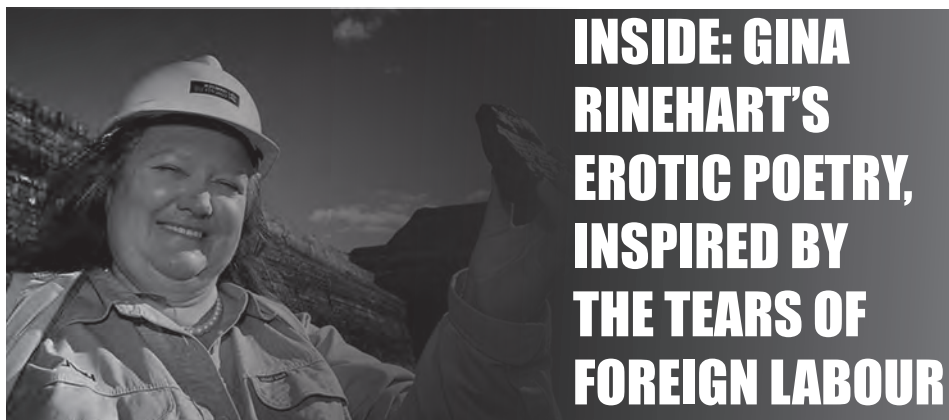
- 8. Became Union loon jokingly on a rare occasion (4,2,1,4,4)
- 9. When is a door not a door...? (4)
- 10. Lighter pair bind together (10)
- 11. Taint, thank you, the hol(e)y hands (8)
- 12. Lost fish about suburb? (6)
- 14. Compartmentalised organization actually disorganized intimate ass toys (15)
- 17. Shorten Spanish slowdown with energy (6)
- 18. Councillor Thorpe ate cereal with Slav (8)
- 21. Mentioners slander brothly dish (10)
- 23. Hymnless Albanian coin (4)
- 24. H-bomb nitrites consume unsoft figure of speech inflammation (15)

DOWN

- 1. Target approved before printer (6)
- 2. Rotates up without model, surrounds Greg with divider (10)
- 3. Extract stunted Moriarty from unholy unfound deficiency (6)
- 4. Summary report of notional retelling (8,7)
- 5. Cruel-headed truth? (8)
- 6. Must dirty dirty things (4)
- 7. A classical performance is a recital with love (8)
- 13. An essay about an essay on ion exchange? (10)
- 15. It sounds like you're cold at the Jewish text academy (8)
- 16. Abnormality for cur with a particle (8)
- 19. Duck wrote aloud and unsealed (6)
- 20. Even Anderson is junction-dextrous (6)
- 22. Consumes decapitated poets (4)



Janice



SOIN EXCLUSIVE



“FUCK YOU, MOM”

ARM FETUSES, SAYS CONGRESSMAN

Republican Congressman Steve Stockman has today launched his re-election campaign with the release of a pro-gun bumper sticker that reads: “If babies had guns, they wouldn’t be aborted”.



Conservatives everywhere have hailed Congressman Stockman’s logic as “flawless” and “extremely advanced,” while the National Rifle Association has adopted the phrase as its official motto.

In a radical display of support for the campaign, NRA CEO

Wayne LaPierre has had the slogan tattooed across his chest, while reportedly exclaiming: “It just makes so much fucking sense!”

Campaign officials have intimated that the following weeks will see the release of similar bumper stickers, as Congressman Stockman ramps up his pro-gun rhetoric.

Civic-cleanliness themed sticker “If the footpath had guns, then no-one would spit gum on it” is tipped to be next, while “If the institution of marriage had guns, there wouldn’t be gays”, will soon follow.

In a statement, Stockman said that his campaign was just based on common sense.

“It’s about arming everyone and everything in the event of any and all eventualities eventuating. Guns save lives.”

If babies had guns they wouldn’t be aborted.

Jokes aside, this is an actual thing... Google it.

TRACKS TO BE DEMOLISHED TO BUILD STATIONS

The Infrastructure and Transport Minister Anthony Albanese has recently announced plans to sell off the metal used to lay down train tracks in order to fund the building of further stations. The minister says he was inspired by the innovative approach of his colleague, the Tertiary Education Minister Craig Emerson, to redirect funds away from universities in order to implement the Gonski reforms in schools.

The minister told The Soin, “Alongside education, access to cheap and reliable transport has been identified as one of the key ways in which the negative impact of socio-economic disadvantage can be offset. So it makes sense to apply the same solution to both sectors. Besides, if it’s good enough for Craig-o, it’s good enough for Albo.”

The project is felt by many to be an attempt to court voters in Sydney’s western suburbs. Under the minister’s plan, at least three stations will be added to the North Shore and Western Line and two to the Cumberland

line. The tracks from both lines that take residents into the city centre will be pulled up and sold off in order to pay for the stations.

As a concession to the Greens, the stations will be built entirely by a female/gay/refugee/differently-abled workforce. Construction is expected to take sixty years. Each station will also be equipped with state of the art surveillance equipment and several of the larger stations will have holding pens included for the use of local police departments.

However, the plan has not been without its detractors. Michael Townes, a Blacktown resident, expressed concerns that have been echoed across the region, “These stations should be built by Australians,” he said.

The minister has responded to his critics by saying, “These stations are crucially important. The time for politics is over. But we’ll be trialing the plan in one of the country’s less important capital cities first. Probably Adelaide.”

GILLARD CURES CANCER IN SPARE TIME, APPROVAL RATING PLUMMETS

**VERY UNEXCLUSIVE
SOIN POLL**

Federal Labor reached a new low in the polls this week, with the female unmarried atheist red-haired immigrant Prime Minister's approval rating dropping almost ten percentage points after it was announced she had successfully developed a cure for cancer. Pundits have suggested this slump is most likely a result of the highly successful scare campaign run by the opposition, highlighting the flaws of such a move.

When questioned at a press conference as to whether she saw any meaning in this slump, Ms Gillard responded "Fuck them. Fuck the lot of them. They deserve Abbott those fucking hyper-critical sheep. I mean seriously, he hasn't even got a platform to run on; all he's done is criticise every single fucking move we make and then failed to meet us halfway when we try to actually govern the country for you fuckwits. I give up. Enjoy your dial-up internet and corporate overlords. I'm moving to New Zealand." Gillard's press team later issued a correction to this statement, clarifying Ms Gillard had actually mean to say "No".

Liberal Party members were quick to criticise this outburst

by the Prime Minister, pointing out that they had in fact already developed their own alternate plan for curing cancer, utilising an existing radio therapy technique that is fractionally faster and only has a failure rate in the mid-range double digits. Shadow Health Minister Peter Dutton prepared a speech to



be read by more popular party member Malcom Turnbull, but was stopped at the door by spin doctors who were concerned it might actually look like a policy.

Broadcaster and philosopher Alan Jones used his radio program to raise the concern that curing cancer was little more than a jaded attempt by Federal Labor to reduce the ratio of staff to patients in public hospitals. "They're just trying to run away from their commitment to increase the number of beds and doctors in public healthcare. Typical Juliar at it

again." said Jones, somewhere in the middle of a two hour rant detailing the excessive lint on his socks and the high price of roasted chestnuts.

Nationals spokesman Barnaby Joyce unleashed a particularly virulent attack on Labor's new plan to cure all cancer, stating "It just doesn't apply to the common person on the street does it? I'm sick of the Labor party overlooking real everyday problems, like stopping those bastard asylum seekers from fleeing wartorn dictatorships, and instead pandering to fringe issues like cancer. I've never even known anyone who's had cancer, but I sure as hell run into asylum seekers on a daily basis, and this has got to stop!"

When stopped in the street for comment, average bricklayer Joe Citizen explained "Well at first I thought curing cancer was a good policy, but Turnbull just seemed so sure that this was a ridiculous plan that just push us further into debt. I mean he wouldn't have had Tony standing next to him nodding so assuredly if they weren't right, eh? And god knows I haven't got the free time needed to actually look into the merits of the policies of the people who govern our

country, so I guess I'll just take their word for it."

Major pharmaceutical companies have also played a key role in the success of the Liberal's campaign, running a series of ads depicting the average working doctors who will be affected by this policy, played by a number of paid actors standing in farmland wearing Acubras. Pfizer spokesman and part time boogeyman John Watkins explained "Well, it just worked so well for the mining companies, and no one even noticed that miners don't actually walk around farmland all day wearing Acubras, so we figured we'd give it a go too. These days people'll swallow any old drivel as long as it's on TV, just look at The Project!" The campaign has been highly successful.

The Liberal Party is expected to launch their new advertising campaign "Stop the boats, not the cancer." early next week, in time for Labor's next leadership spill.

(Tony Abbott was approached for comment in relation to this piece, but was unavailable due to a prior commitment of laughing maniacally at the gullibility of the average voter.)

Smokémon

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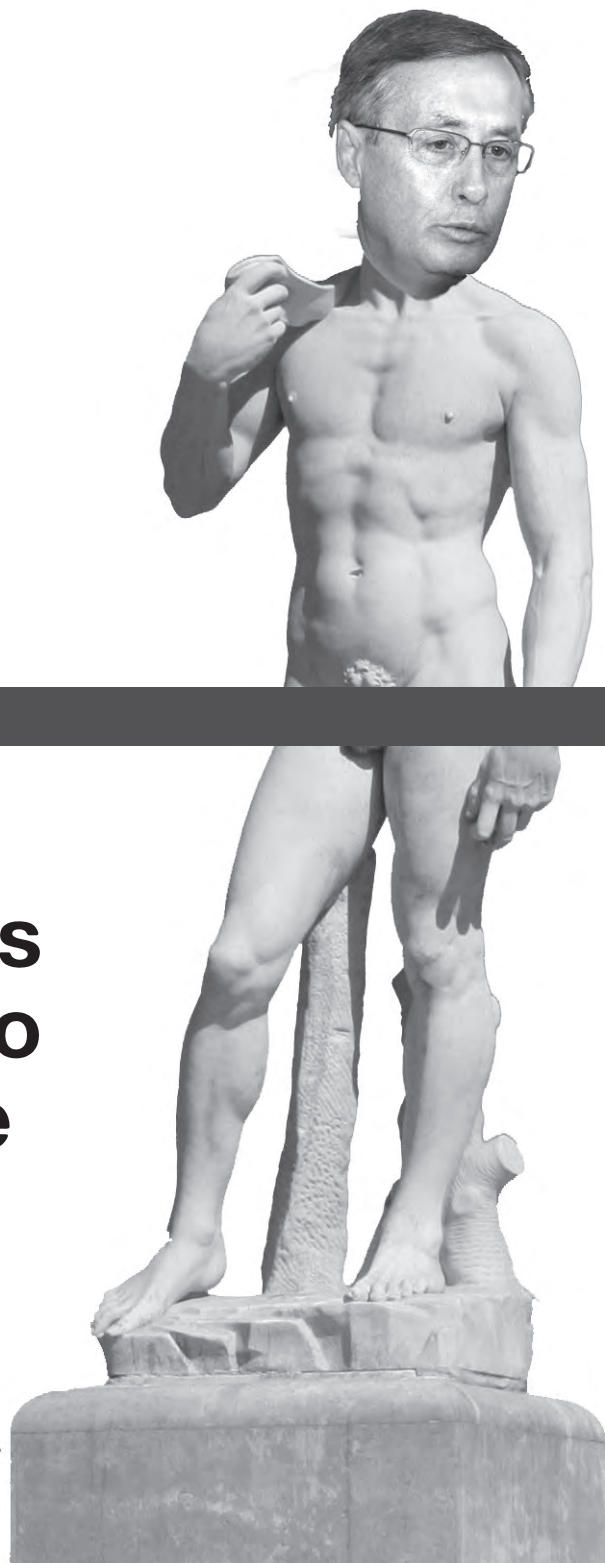
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