

Queer Honi

Week 8, Semester 2, 2014

HONI SOIT QUEER MAL Y PENSE

QUEER EDITION
HONI SOIT
EXPLICIT CONTENT



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HONI SOIT
QUEER EDITION

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We acknowledge that *Honi Soit's* office is located on the traditional lands of the Gadigal people of the Eora nation. We would like to acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the land on which we work and pay our respects to the Elders past and present.

Editorial

It should be self-evident that the state of the queer community is reflected in the media that we produce. The content churned out by SameSame, the Star Observer, and other queer media outlets generally takes on one of two forms: "ANOTHER CELEBRITY COMES OUT AS GAY/LESBIAN, WHAT A SHOCK" or "TWO GAY MEN ARE IN LOVE, CAN'T GET MARRIED, HOW SAD". In nearly every case, the focus is on people who are middle or upper class and white.

With some regret we must admit that this edition of Queer Honi is no different. In the process of collecting submissions, it became increasingly obvious that issues of race, disability, and class were not adequately represented in our content.



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Finding Queer Community

Getting involved is hard but worth it, write Charlie Jackson-Martin and Amy Davis.

Getting involved in the queer community, on or off campus, can be difficult. There's the risk of outing and having to explain your whereabouts to friends and family. There's the social anxiety of going to an event alone and meeting new people. Perhaps you're still exploring or questioning your sexuality or gender or presently in a heterosexual relationship. Maybe you don't own Doc Martens or your hair isn't blue. And ultimately there's always the worry that maybe "I'm not queer enough".

Rest assured, we have all felt this

way at some point or another. Persevering through the awkwardness and anxiety and self-doubt is totally worth it. There's new friendships to made, skills to share and learn and most of all space removed from the heteronormative bullshit of the outside world, an opportunity to be around people who just get it.

Our experience of being involved in the queer community:

Amy: As a bisexual woman who often dates cisgender men I was nervous about getting involved in queer things

for a long time because I was worried people would think I'm 'not queer enough'. Since getting involved in this wonderful community, however, I've discovered that a lot of other people worry about a similar thing and actually one of the best things about getting to know other queers is learning that I'm not alone in this and so many other respects. I'm so grateful to be part of this fabulous, queer thing.

Charlie: I grew up in a rural area, for me queerness offered a community that accepted all my weirdness and offered me a treasure trove of radical ideas and

beliefs I'd never heard before. When I later came-out as trans the queer community became a place where I could find family when my own family turned me away and feel safe and accepted.

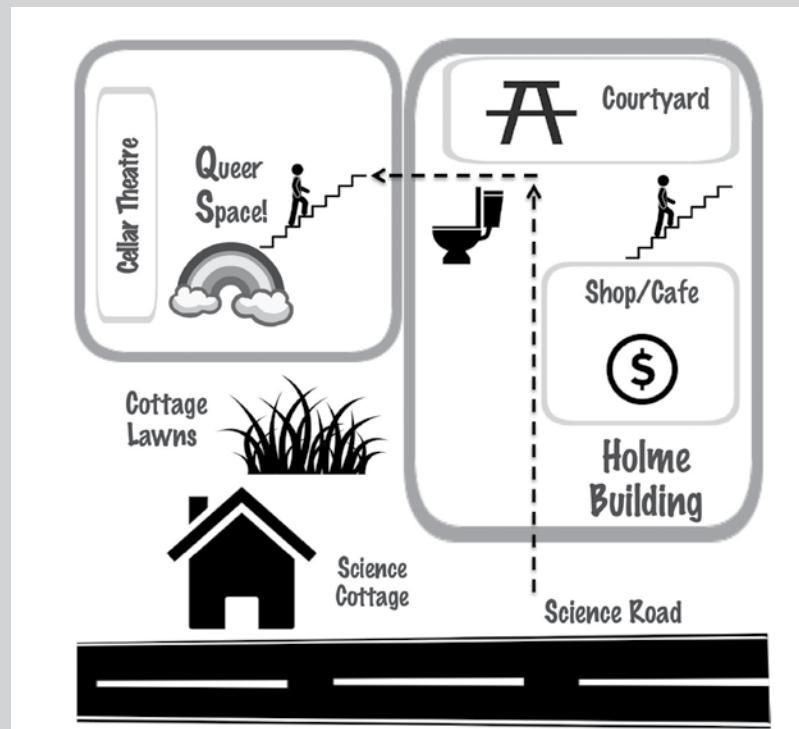
If you want to get involved but are not sure what to expect or where to go, or you just need a friendly queer to show you the way, you can contact the Queer Officers on: queer.officers@src.usyd.edu.au

Here's an outline of what's queer on campus to get involved in!

The Queer Space

Looking to hang out with some friendly queers or just want access to the most LGBTIQ frequented microwave on campus? The Sydney Uni Queerspace is a cosy lounge and study space, complete with a kitchenette, set-aside for queer and questioning people.

It's not the easiest place to find so we've drawn a map! We're currently in a temporary space (Holme Meeting Room 1) while our usual Queerspace undergoes renovations but we expect to be back in our usual room before the end of the year.



Who, what, when, where, how?

QUEER ACTION COLLECTIVE (QuAC)

QuAC is an SRC collective dedicated to making the university and wider community a better place for queer and questioning people. QuAC holds weekly meetings at 1pm on Tuesday in the Queerspace and is a great place to meet people, make new friends and learn new skills.



*Queer students attending the launch of the Pride Week Zine, a Queerkats and QuAC project.
PHOTO: Jennifer Yiu.*

on Friday, October 24 at 7pm in The Refectory. It will be a formal night including a 2-course meal, bar tab and DJ. Price: \$40 for Access card holders, \$50 for general admission.

QUEERKATS COLLECTIVE

Queerkats aims to create a safe and welcoming space for people who are queer or questioning and who experience oppression on the basis of sex and/or gender (e.g. trans women, trans men, cis women, intersex, transfeminine, transmasculine, two spirit, hijras, third gender, non-binary, genderqueer, genderfluid, agender, bigender, etc).

Queerkats meet on Thursdays at 1pm and host an event every second Tuesday at 5pm.

USU QUEER COORDINATORS

SHADES is a society at the University of Sydney that organises social events for LGBTIQ students and their friends. We hold a range of social

events throughout semester, including (but not limited to) parties, movie nights, drinks, BBQs, trivia and Speaker Nights.

The next SHADES event is their Mid Semester Party on Saturday 27 September at The Vault Hotel on Pitt St. To get updates on all future events like the 'Sydney University Shades' page on Facebook.

THE QUEER REVUE

Queer Revue is an all-singing, all-dancing comedic production put on at the Seymour Centre every year by queer and queer-friendly students. There are plenty of ways to get involved, whether you want to strut the stage (acting, singing, dancing) or help out behind the scenes (writing, design, working backstage).

Join the Facebook group ('Sydney University Queer Revue Society (SUQRS)') to get updates on how to get involved in next year's revue!

How to be a good ally...

A guide to things you really should be doing already.

... to a queer person.

1. Tell them that you love and support them. (Not “despite” their queer identity. Just that you love them for who they are.)
2. Don’t out them to other people unless they ask you to. (This includes: your family, friends, workplace.) You might not have a problem, but this world isn’t totally safe for queer people. Don’t be surprised if they’re comfortable being out with their friends, but not at university, or with their family, but not at work.
3. Call out other straight people when they do something fucked up. If someone says “that’s so gay”, tell them, “You shouldn’t say that. It’s hurtful.” Use your privilege for good, but don’t speak over queer people.
4. Don’t shout your straightness to the high heavens while defending queer people. “I’m not gay, but I support them!” “I’m in favour of marriage equality – but I’m not gay!” By doing so you’re implying the queerness is something distasteful that you need to distance yourself from.
5. You’re going to fuck up. Accept that. Because you’re straight, you (unintentionally) benefit from a bunch of systemic oppression, and there’ll be moments when you say something hurtful and don’t realise it. Be graceful. Respect that queer people are the best and only authority on what is hurtful to queer people.
6. Learn to apologise. “I’m sorry” is enough. Not “I’m sorry you were offended”, or “That’s not what I meant, but I’m sorry.”
7. Queer people are not here to educate you. If there are things you don’t know, or are curious about – google it!
8. Don’t assume that everyone is straight until proven otherwise. There are probably queer people in your life that you don’t even know about.
9. Being an ally to queer people is the bare minimum of human decency – not something that you get rewards or cookies for. Don’t make it about you. The A in LGBTIAQ is not for Ally.
10. Above all, ASK! Ask how you can help and support them. Everyone has different needs.



No.

Glossary

This glossary includes terms used in this issue. A more complete queer glossary can be found at honisoit.com.

- AFAB/DFAB:** Assigned female at birth/designated female at birth
- Ally:** Someone who supports anti-oppressive structures (such as queer rights, feminism, or anti-racism) and actively confronts structural oppression.
- AMAB/DMAB:** Assigned male at birth/designated male at birth
- BDSM and Kink:** Bondage and Discipline, Dominance and Submission, Sadism and Masochism. A range of activities, experiences, and relationships that are not always sexual but usually erotic, and usually non-normative in some way.
- Cisgender/cis:** someone whose sex/gender matches the sex/gender they were assigned at birth.
- Cishet:** Shorthand for cisgender and heterosexual.
- Gender:** categories of organisation based on identities such as man/woman. Gender is assigned at birth in accordance with perceived sex. Gender and sex are not the same thing, but they are deeply interrelated
- Heteronormativity:** the belief in

a distinct gender binary, which dictates the alignment of sexuality, gender roles, and gender identity. The structure that enforces this belief systemically.

Intersectionality: A term used by people who try to address intersections between various oppressions (e.g. the unique oppressions faced by black women vs black men or white women); an anti-oppressive movement that attempts to include every form of oppressive structure and their connections.

Intersex: An identity label for someone who experiences one of a variety of physical conditions that result in someone being unable to be identified conclusively as either male or female.

Queer: An umbrella term used to

refer to all LGBTAIQ+ people – i.e. anyone who identifies as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, asexual, intersex, questioning, or otherwise outside of the normative bounds of a cishet identity.

Sex: categories referring to the appearance of bodies/genitalia

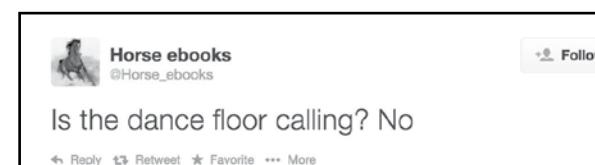
Trans: a fairly broad term – sometimes used as an umbrella term – for a range of gender identities that do not easily fit into binary categories, or that are contrary to the gender that has been assigned at birth.

Ace_ebooks: An Introductory Course

Nadia Bracegirdle and Emma Leslie
give an asexuality/aromanticism 101.



relationships are assumed to contain.



Ace: short for “asexual”

Aro: short for “aromantic”

Allosexual: someone who feels sexual attraction to others.

Grey-asexual/Grace: someone who identifies as being on the asexual spectrum, but feels capable of sexual attraction to others.

Demisexual: someone who identifies as being on the asexual spectrum, but feels capable of sexual attraction to others only after the establishment of an intense emotional attachment or relationship.

Asexual people do not feel sexual attraction. To anyone. No, not even you. Some of them might feel romantic attraction, but you shouldn’t assume that any ace person you know is going to be romantically inclined, or, for that matter, that any allosexual person is. It’s important – for ace people especially – to differentiate between romantic and sexual attraction as being able to exist independently of each other or not at all, as well as to acknowledge that ace and aro people are perfectly capable of having meaningful relationships with friends, family, romantic partners, sexual partners, and every other kind of partner.



Worms – oh my god WORMS

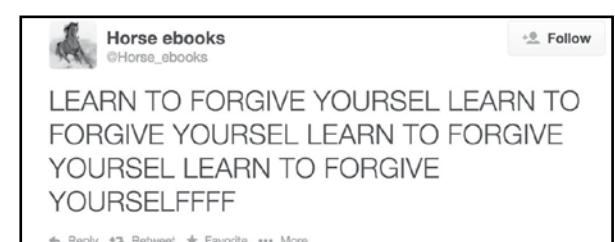
Squish: a platonic crush, or intense desire for a friendship with someone.

Zucchini: a word sometimes used to describe a queerplatonic partner.

In addition to the usual awful things that queer people often hear from well-meaning-but-ignorant cisgender/heterosexual people, there are a few phrases that are especially directed towards ace/aro people which should never actually be said. These include:

- Being accused of being frigid, prudish, broken, heartless, a tease, or leading someone on
- The attitude that “I can fix that!”, or that they just haven’t met the right person, or had “proper” sex
- Asking about their sexual/masturbation/pornography-consuming habits
- Encouragements to see a doctor or get their hormones checked

Being a good ally is a worthy goal, and it’s important for asexual and aromantic people to know that they have support both in and out of ace/aro communities! Ace/aro people face plenty of the same struggles as other queer-identifying people, their communities certainly have their own problems, and there’s still the ongoing difficulty of mainstream invisibility. But it’s important to remember and support ace/aro people in all communities and walks of life, and especially to remember: the A in LGBTQIA+ is not for Allies!



Queer Honi Resources

QLife
<https://www qlife org au/>

The Gender Centre
(02) 9569 2366
<http://www gendercentre org au/>

Parents, families and Friends of Lesbians And Gays (PFLAG)
Phone: Judy (02) 98691454 or Narelle (02) 9874 3624
<http://pflagaustralia org au/>

The Asexual Visibility and Education Network (AVEN)
<http://www asexuality org/>

GenderQueer Australia
<http://www genderqueer org au/>

Sydney Bisexual Network
<http://www bi nsw org au/>

Organisation Intersex International – Australian Branch
<http://oii org au/>

Lifeline
13 11 14
<http://lifeline org au/>

BeyondBlue
1300 22 4636
<http://www beyondblue org au/>

Invisible and Forgotten: Queer Youth Homelessness

Homelessness policy is failing queer youth, finds Amy Davis.

To date little research has been undertaken in relation to queer youth experiences of homelessness in Australia. It is difficult to estimate the rate of homelessness among this population since homelessness statistics are not collected on sexuality and gender identity. However, in NSW it has been estimated that although only 7-11 per cent of people are same-sex attracted or gender diverse they constitute roughly 25 per cent of the young people who are homeless.

Parental rejection and family violence based on sexual orientation and gender identity have been cited as causes of homelessness for young queer people in Australia. Research indicates that queer youth report higher rates of negative outcomes associated with homelessness including physical and sexual victimisation, substance abuse, mental health issues, suicidal ideation and 'risky' sexual practices.

Most state and federal homelessness policies fail to demarcate queer people as having particular needs when accessing homelessness services. In most policy documents queer

youth homelessness is seemingly subsumed within generalist youth homelessness policies. This fails to recognise or attempt to rectify the structural and institutional factors that may prevent queer young people from having full access to homelessness services.

Violence, harassment and discrimination

Research from Australia, the US, and the UK has consistently found queer youth regularly experience harassment, violence and homophobic and transphobic abuse when accessing accommodation services, from both workers and other service users. For many queer people, this not only means that they do not feel comfortable disclosing their sexuality or gender identity when accessing services, but also that some young people prefer to sleep rough rather than access accommodation services.

Inadequate provision of resources

Research from the United States recommends that services should be funded to provide housing programs specifically for queer people as queer youth are significantly less likely to be assaulted in such facilities. Queer youth homelessness is currently significantly underfunded in NSW with funding to accommodate only 140 young people despite estimations that 5,000 and 6,250 same-sex attracted youth are homeless in Australia on any given night.

Conclusion

Queer youth are an invisible and forgotten population within homelessness public policy, however, this is not to say that they are unaffected by these policies. The department of Family and Community Services and Housing NSW should develop and implement programs and strategies to make homelessness services more accessible for queer youth. Young queer people should be actively involved in this process as they know best what can make a difference in their lives.



There Are No Rules

Anonymous

The first rule of sex
is there are no rules.
(This is not the only way
in which sex
differs from Fight Club.)

Sex between two people
with vaginas
(not two women, mind you)
is not elementary.
There is no peg
that fits perfectly
into a hole.

As if a guide
could ever supply
that kind of information.

Just two (consenting) people
who can fit perfectly
into each other
if they try.

My first time was,
to be honest,
like all first times
(awkward and overwhelming)
but,
thanks to heteronormativity,
it was minus
the endless tutorials

representation on repeat
how-to-guides
booklets
explaining how
with the peg, and the hole,
to make any,
arbitrary, person
feel good.

Useless for straight people
but even more so for me
(because of the fixation on the pole,
you know how it is)
but the sex was
happening.

So I pressed my lips against their neck
ran my fingers through their soft hair
felt the curve of their hip pressing on
mine
pulled them close
and kept experimenting.



Queer

A thoughtful
poem by Sarah
Jamieson and
Alison Armitage.

Queer
U are queer
Everyone is queer
Especially you
R



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Tuesday offer. Only one discount per table (to a
maximum of 10%). One valid student card must
be presented per table.

Medicine, Gender and Sexual Health

Leigh Nicholson has some tips for better sex.

Despite there being a slow but definite increase in queer sexual health awareness over the years, there are still a plethora of reasons why queer people can tend to avoid getting health checks or why we are just not getting the information we need. The medical profession has always had an almost unwavering approach to using gendered language in the clinic, which is extremely off-putting for those of us triggered by misgendering. There is a very long history of Medicine treating queer people, sex workers and oppressed groups as 'sexual deviants' and failing to provide them with equal sexual health care and essentially stigmatising them for decades. Even within queer communities, the sexual health information provided is disproportionately weighted towards cis men, and stereotypes about non-cis male sex and susceptibilities are perpetuated freely and frequently.

Whilst it's still super important to understand which acts and which bodies might inherently have an increased risk of contracting some conditions, it can also be potentially damaging to pick and choose which information different groups get. It's not helpful to neglect some bodies' certain information on symptoms just because an assumption has been made about those people and the sex they are having. Creating an environment where people are made to feel uncomfortable about their identity and sexuality and then on top of that creating the misconception that some bodies can't get some things is only going to make queer people

more reluctant about discussing sex and sexuality with a GP.

Basically, any type of body can catch almost anything from different types of fucking. Queer identifying women and non-cis men are constantly given limited sexual health resources due to shitty misconceptions about the sex they're having. There's no point in telling a group that they have 'lower susceptibility' if there's still a chance they can get it. If you have unprotected sex with someone whose sexual history you don't know, best to get checked. There is no way I can provide a quick summary of STIs as an alternative to a practitioner visit, but here is a summary of a quick summary:

STIs

Urine Test

Chlamydia: Mostly invisible symptoms, but could have pain urinating

Gonorrhoea: Identified by discharge, pain urinating or swollen testicles

Blood Test

Syphilis: Causes ulcers, rashes and flu-like symptoms in everyone

HIV/AIDS: Can be invisible for ages, then develops slowly.

Swab

Herpes: Identified by genital blisters, swollen glands and fever symptoms

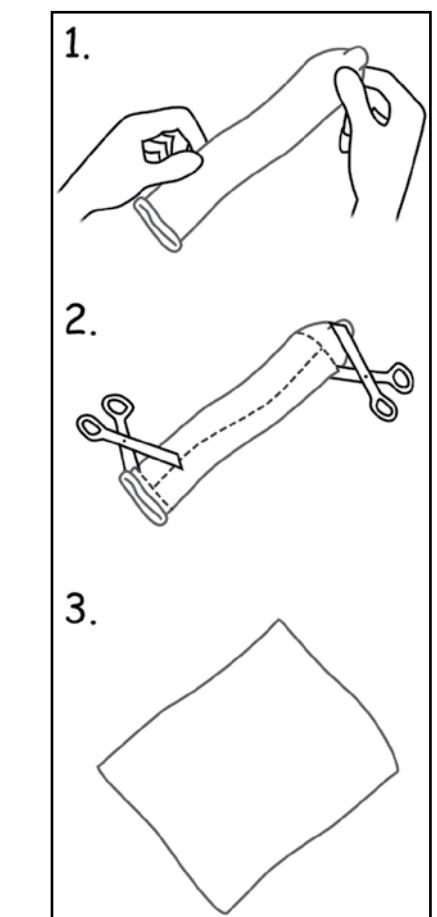
Other

use a different condom each time you swap person or orifice.

- Soapy water won't sterilise your toy. Use isopropyl alcohol, chlorinated sanitiser or viraclean.

- Store toys away from direct light and try not to let them touch.

- Make sure the lube you use with a toy is the right one. Eg. Don't use silicone based lube with a silicone toy.



How to make a dam from a condom.

TOYS

- If you're using penetrative toys,

What I like about the word queer

1. "I'm queer" is a full sentence. I don't need to explain anything more.
2. People don't question how sure you are when you come out as "queer". If I come out as "bisexual" I will inevitably be asked if I know for sure, or is it just a phase.
3. It sounds more interesting. People use the phrase "how queer" meaning something intriguing, I quite like the connotations of that, I want to be intriguing.
4. It humanizes me. If I come out as bisexual, or really if anyone comes out as anything ending in "sexual" the questions always seem to be about sex.

When I say I'm queer, people ask about relationships or what being queer means to me as an individual. Sure, this may be a way for them to categorize me, but it's better than "oh, how do you have sex?"

"It's our word... so it's our word to redefine and use how we want."

5. "Queer community" just has a way better ring to it than "LGBTQIA community" or the dreaded "gay community".
6. Inclusivity! Lots of people can be queer,

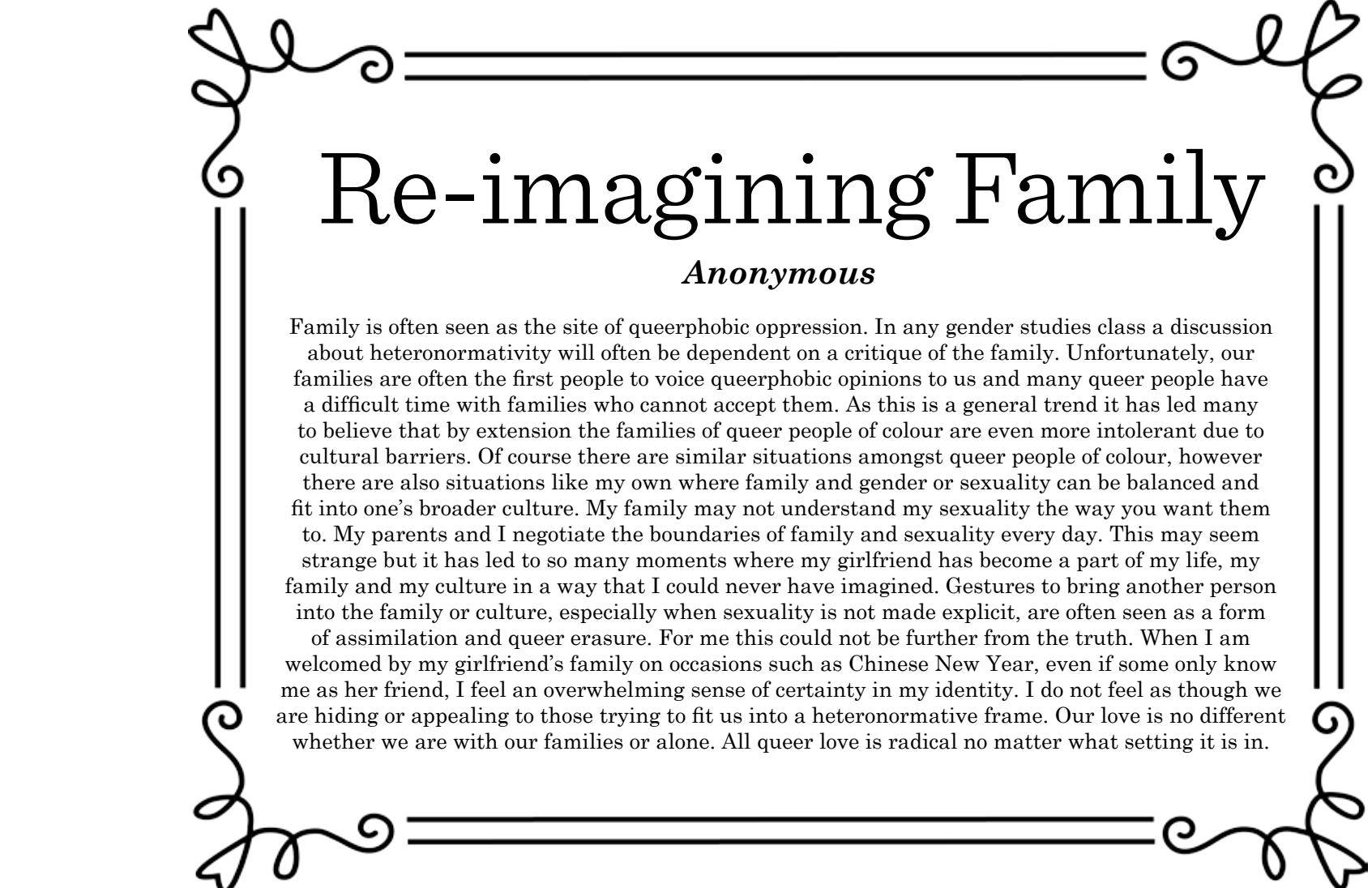
Thoughts from a bisexual woman.

it's much easier to self-identify as queer than with the alphabet soup, particularly if you're questioning a part (or parts) of your identity.

7. It's our word. Queer is a word that is in the process of being reclaimed, so it's our word to redefine and use how we want.

8. So many ways to use: queer community; queer people; the queers (which you should only use if you are queer); queering something.

9. Your queer identity can cover a lot more of your personality than your sexual or gender identity.



Re-imagining Family

Anonymous

Family is often seen as the site of queerphobic oppression. In any gender studies class a discussion about heteronormativity will often be dependent on a critique of the family. Unfortunately, our families are often the first people to voice queerphobic opinions to us and many queer people have a difficult time with families who cannot accept them. As this is a general trend it has led many to believe that by extension the families of queer people of colour are even more intolerant due to cultural barriers. Of course there are similar situations amongst queer people of colour, however there are also situations like my own where family and gender or sexuality can be balanced and fit into one's broader culture. My family may not understand my sexuality the way you want them to. My parents and I negotiate the boundaries of family and sexuality every day. This may seem strange but it has led to so many moments where my girlfriend has become a part of my life, my family and my culture in a way that I could never have imagined. Gestures to bring another person into the family or culture, especially when sexuality is not made explicit, are often seen as a form of assimilation and queer erasure. For me this could not be further from the truth. When I am welcomed by my girlfriend's family on occasions such as Chinese New Year, even if some only know me as her friend, I feel an overwhelming sense of certainty in my identity. I do not feel as though we are hiding or appealing to those trying to fit us into a heteronormative frame. Our love is no different whether we are with our families or alone. All queer love is radical no matter what setting it is in.

Queering Marriage

Anonymous reflects on their experience of being temporarily married in the ACT.



When phrasing your gay marriage

proposal, it is best to use a question. As I recall, I mumbled 'I think we should get a civil partnership' while jetlagged. Later I changed it to 'I want to be as married to you as I legally can be'. This is mainly paperwork.

Our relationship was first recognised under Defence Instructions (General) PERS 53-1. It was a catch-22: you needed to be living together for 90 days to get it, but she couldn't live off base until we got it. Instead, shared bank accounts and wills and life insurance beneficiaries happened

too early. We go through pre-cana questionnaires with a chaplain. For Defence, this counted as a marriage; we kept the paperwork with the Commandant's signature.

Centrelink did not recognise the relationship at all; I was not independent. I reduced my course load to work for eighteen months.

We got an ACT

civil partnership with family and flowers five years ago. The Deputy Registrar of Births, Deaths and Marriages officiated for us. He'd sat us down earlier and discussed the words we weren't allowed to use – spouse, wife, married. 'Civil partnered' does not roll off the tongue. I keep the receipt in my wallet.

On our honeymoon a hotel manager phoned our room twice, then came to our room to explain that there was a man downstairs for us. I said no, we asked the taxi to return tomorrow morning, it's a mistake. He came to the room

again, insistent, you need a man. We left. He was upset that we wouldn't pay – we had only checked in an hour ago – and the cleaner restrained him. From the hotel across the road we wrote reviews and emailed the tourist board; three months later the hotel was operating under a different name.

"Queer relationships are seen as not as real – not as serious, not worth supporting, not worth using meaningful words, something that exists for sex or titillation."

hopeful – surely they wouldn't overturn marriages that had just happened. We pulled our dresses (crumpled) out of the wardrobe. Our celebrant did a dozen weddings that weekend. I waited at the Office of Regulatory Services on Monday morning while they recalibrated their wedding certificate printer for 'wife and wife'.

Our marriage lasted five days. We were one of four couples who requested the refund on the certificate fee; I pre-emptively spent the money having postcards printed of our wedding photo with pink heart stamps. I wrote on the back: this is me, getting married, this is my wife, this is important to us. I mailed them to politicians. I never ended up cashing the refund check.

I've collected so much paperwork because queer relationships are seen as not as real – not as serious, not worth supporting, not worth using meaningful words, something that exists for sex or titillation. Equality of marriage means equality of paperwork and equality of our relationships: one certificate.

Editor's note: It's important to consider that the current legislation in Australia is for 'same-sex' marriage and not 'marriage equality' - as it stands the legislation explicitly excludes intersex and non-binary people, and it is important to strive for marriage equality that is inclusive of people of all genders and sexualities.

Different closets, same feelings

CONTENT: Discussion of coming out; discussion of death of close family member.

Coming out is hard and complicated sometimes. There's the awkward stage of trying to figure out how the person will react, the worrying about how to say it, that they will judge me for it. What if they react in the wrong way? You worry about how it's going to change their opinion of you, and whether you've been interesting enough beforehand that they won't find this new revelation the most important and interesting factor

of your personality.

Sometimes you barely mumble out the words, other times you internally yell "fuck it" and make the announcement like ripping off a week-old band-aid. You can't do it once: every single person you meet is another damn person you have to figure out how to tell. New things are discovered and you have to accept it within yourself, sometimes never divulging these details to others.

Before, and even after you come out, you may be faced with emotional challenges like coming

Coming out isn't just about gender and sexuality, writes Hannah Pankau.

to terms with it for yourself. Some people may face serious problems along with this, such as depression and anxiety. You find yourself questioning cause and effect of these things and worrying if people will make judgements based on this.

Hiding feelings becomes an automatic action, because telling people the truth is too hard for anyone to deal with. Learning to change names to make stories less awkward is commonplace in everyday situations, which most people wouldn't even be thinking about.

You'll get it one day

Respecting someone's pronouns is the bare minimum, writes Nadia Bracegirdle.

He's cis. He might even be straight. I didn't meet him through a queer society, he's not a friend of a trans friend, he's not even from class; he's extra-curricular. We're at the pub and he uses the pronoun "they" when recounting something I've done – and my heart swells.

It's an uncommon enough occurrence. Between my family, who after two years still don't seem to be even trying; and my QUILTBAG friends, who always get it right – this is like a minor miracle. I can feel myself liking him just that little bit more, feel the growth of my affection and respect for him. He's not even the only one! There are others from that group who sometimes get it right, or who correct themselves without me having to remind them. There are the ones who have said to me "I'm so sorry I sometimes stuff it up, I promise, I'll get it someday!" And I believe them – I want to believe them – and console us both with the reminder that there are others who totally fail, who don't even try. "You're trying!" I tell them. "That's great all by itself."

I shouldn't be saying it.

As a transgender individual, I have to constantly remind people – strangers and friends alike – that their assumptions are wrong.



be a mere stutter-and-correction in a sentence that makes me grin my encouragement. Correct pronoun use is surely the lowest possible bar for trans allies. – the Bechdel Test of a trans person's interactions – and it's horrifying that I should congratulate my friends for it, and rarely question

that congratulation, and that I do still feel such a swelling of happiness and pride at a mere pronoun. After all, who needs gender-neutral bathrooms, or access to proper medical treatment, or comments from strangers in clothing stores, or the masculine-skewed imbalance in accepted forms of "androgyny", or the correction of other gendered language, or legal recognition, when I have friends who sometimes get it right?

We need to move beyond this paltry standard of trans allyship; but at the same time, when there are so few other victories in my life, to give up those small joys would be ruinous. It's exhausting enough to endure the people who don't get it right, let alone to stop savouring the ones who do. Surely – surely – my allies can do better.

For now, however, I'll be keeping my small joys. But I'm also going to keep those cookies.

Living in the face of biphobia

Eden Caceda is not confused.

I've never really come out as bisexual to my family. When I was sixteen I remember hearing my cousin say; 'bisexuality isn't real. Bisexual men are just gay and bisexual women are only lesbians. You can never like both genders.' It was a very bizarre viewpoint for my cousin to take (and my relatives to agree with) considering that we are a very progressive family. B, but it was a comment that ultimately stopped me from openly telling my family I was bisexual and was my first experience of biphobia.

The truth is I like people of multiple genders. I find all people attractive and can see myself be in a relationship with anyone. My sexuality goes beyond simply sex. When people are doubtful or question me, I explain that I have a changeable emotional and sexual attraction to people and the gender of the individual I like is not a defining factor. One would think it's a relatively simple thing to comprehend.

Instead when I told some of my friends and acquaintances, many of them were quick to point out that I was just going through 'a phase'. I was also told that I was trying to 'avoid homophobia' or 'believed in something that was not

real'. According to one of my close gay friends I was 'straight, gay or lying'. Ultimately what I found was that many of my straight friends were accepting of homosexuality as involved an attraction to just one gender, however in their eyes it was 'impossible' to be attracted to

a reflection on what sexuality I 'chose' - I was gay when I was seen out with another guy and straight when I hooked up with a girl. The gender of the person nearby me seemed to confirm or deny the status of my sexuality rather than my own coming out.

"Once I began dating a girl, it seemed as if I had 'settled' on what I wanted, while others murmured that I had gone into denial. It now appeared as if whom I dated was a reflection on what sexuality I 'chose'..."

more than one gender. It appeared as if homosexuality blossomed in our community but bisexuality was fading into the background of acceptance.

Once I began dating a girl, it seemed as if I had 'settled' on what I wanted, while others murmured that I had gone into denial. It now appeared as if whom I dated was

Facing biphobia inevitably means that I forced to explain to many people that I am indeed bisexual and not a gay man in denial or going through a phase. I also struggle to explain that all humans are not simply heterosexual or homosexual, but that there is a deeper connection that can permeate gender boundaries. I am not undecided on what gender

I am a Palestinian, I am gay

Fahad Ali on discussions of queer rights in the Middle East.

Recently, a popular anti-homophobia Facebook page shared a post attacking the Palestinian Authority's treatment of gays. This was less of an indictment on the status of LGBTIQ rights in the occupied Palestinian territories, and more of a blatant attack on the "backwards" nature of Palestinian society. One of the comments drew attention to the fact that "the Palestinians" were twisted to call for Lady Gaga to cancel her Israel tour in line with the Palestinian civil society call for boycott, divestment, and sanctions measures to be applied to Israel until it complies with international law.

How dare could the Palestinians call for such a thing? It was unquestionably a sign of their brutish nature. Since Gaga's fans (who are here being equated with all queers for some reason)

were subject to such harsh persecution in the Middle East, the Palestinians had committed an even greater affront. Those poor, gay Arabs! If only they could be baptized in the sounds of 'Born This Way' they might finally throw off their desert rags and join civilization.

There's something Western discussions of queer rights in the Middle East miss without fail: the voices of queers in the region. White saviourism, of course, cannot allow these voices their own agency. How can you save something that can so clearly save itself? We are only legitimate targets if we are cut down, helpless, and voiceless.

Where do I fit? I'm gay, and I'm also a proud Palestinian. There is no self-loathing in me for reasons of my sexuality, nor is there any

I prefer. I am not greedy or promiscuous. I will not be 'more likely to cheat' because of my openness to both genders.

The bisexual community, myself included, face discrimination from both heterosexual communities and homosexual communities. Studies have found that bisexual people suffer higher rates of mental health than lesbians and gay men. This can be thought of as linked to biphobia, bisexual invisibility, low levels of support and acceptance, and the 'double discrimination' experienced by bisexual people, where we are rejected by heterosexual and homosexual people alike because we do not fall into the two separate categories.

Fighting biphobia isn't easy. There are long standing attitudes within the community that you can like only one gender but not multiple genders. This type of ignorance must end. As a bisexual individual, I am proud to be part of a society that is slowly accepting homosexuality. But at the same time it is difficult to live in a society that thinks the ability to love and be attracted to a person of multiple genders does not exist. The truth is that bisexuality does exist. I exist.

numbering some three-quarters of a million. Remember the blood split in the Holy Land. We call it 'Nakba'. Catastrophe. Remember too why we have been made to live like this: it was greed that stole our land and imperialism that codified hate.

I am an Arab, I am a Palestinian, I am gay. My gay haven is not a glittered parade in Tel Aviv. It is a liberated Palestine.

THE QUEER SUPERHERO PRIMER

Robin Eames and Elliot Mucsnik explore the fabulous world of queer and gender diverse superheroes.

BATWOMAN

Possibly the highest-profile lesbian superhero in comics right now and the only queer comics character with her own titled series. Controversy emerged recently when the writers wanted her to get married, but DC forbade it.



MYSTIQUE

Mystique is the queerest, most genderfluid shapeshifting-est character in comics history – no matter what Jennifer Lawrence says. In the comics she has a long-standing relationship with psychic blind mutant Destiny (Irene Adler).

THE YOUNG AVENGERS

The Young Avengers series is the latest and arguably most prominent all-queer superhero team, including Hulkling, Wiccan, Miss America, Hawkeye (Kate Bishop), Noh-Varr, Prodigy, and Loki (see page 14).

WOLVERINE

Wolverine appears in a spin-off 'What If?' comic where he marries Hercules and the character's creator has confirmed that he is canonically bisexual across all universes. He's always grumpy because of biphobia.

LOKI

Loki "My culture doesn't really share your concept of sexual identity" Odinson is queer and genderfluid in mythology, queer and genderfluid in comics, and obviously temporarily closeted queer and genderfluid in the MCU. Loki appears in various genders, ages, and shapes, and he is too pretty for you.



BLACK CANARY (SARA LANCE)

CW's Arrow recently had Black Canary reveal that she had relationships with both women and men, making her Marvel and DC's first explicitly queer cinematic character. She shared a kiss onscreen with her terrifying ex-GF Nyssa al Ghul. And yes, our tiny queer hearts did indeed explode.

NORTHSTAR

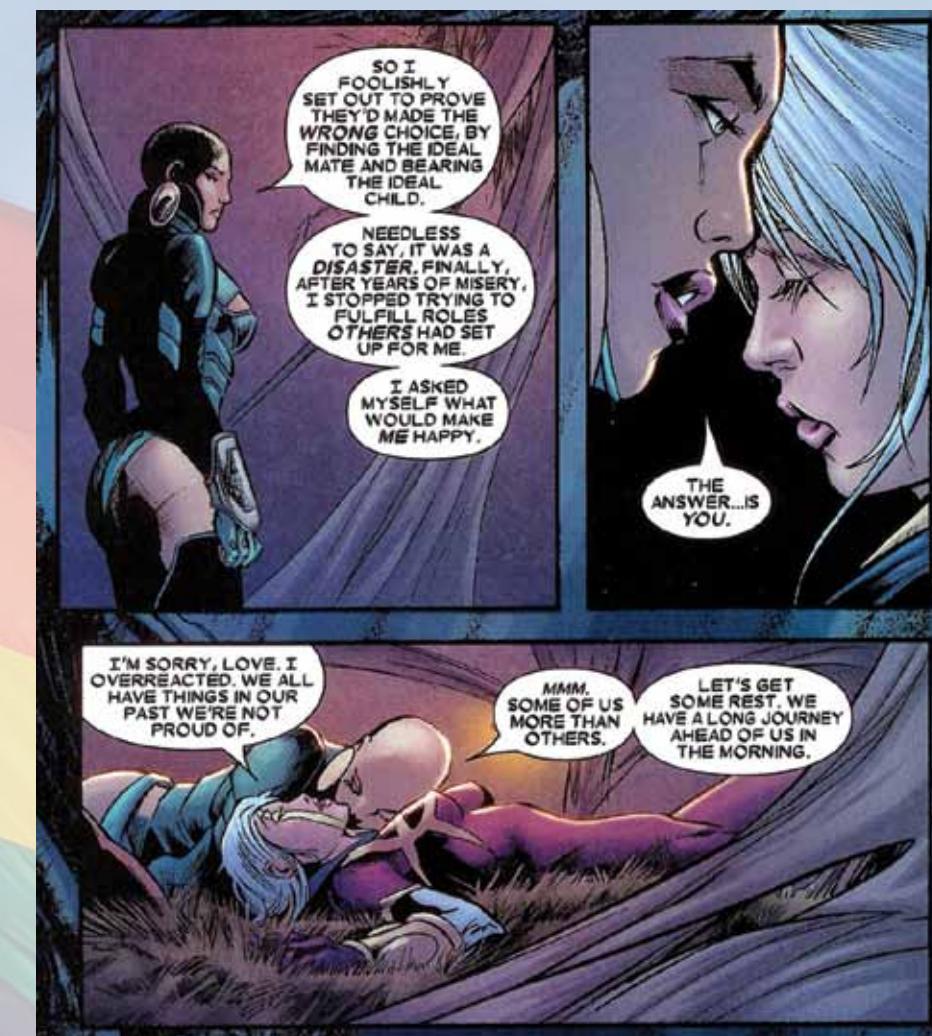
Arguably the first "out" mainstream superhero ever. He married his male partner in an issue of Astonishing X-Men in 2012.

MOONDRAKON AND PHYLA-VELL

Moondragon and Phyla-Vell are two queer women who were cut from the Guardians of the Galaxy cinematic line-up for NO FUCKING REASON AT ALL. Yes, we're bitter.

ALYRIA YEOH

Alyria Yeoh was revealed to be DC's (arguably) first transgender character in Batgirl #9. She's also one of the first non-fantastical trans characters in comics.



KAROLINA AND XAVIN

Xavin is a genderfluid Super-Skrull who appears as a black man and then later as a black woman. She is in a relationship with acknowledged lesbian Karolina Dean.

CONSTANTINE

John Constantine is really fucking bisexual. NBC will acknowledge this one day. Probably. Hopefully.

GENDER FUCKERY

I love makeup. I didn't grow up loving makeup. I still don't have any particular makeup-applying skills; I don't own fancy makeup brushes or complicated sets of things; I don't know how to put a "face" on; I don't know what contouring is or how to apply eyeliner without ending up looking like a sad, sooty-eyed Bucky Barnes. But I love lipstick. I love the shape of it, and I love the textures, and I love experimenting with weird and unexpected lip colours like blue and green and orange.

This was a source of great anxiety to me for a very long time.

It sounds ridiculous, but my love of lipstick prevented me from realising my gender identity. I knew that non-binary people existed – heck, I lusted after non-binary-hood, it made sense to me, it felt like home – but I assumed that I had to be a cis woman if I still felt even the most tenuous connection with femininity. Because that's what androgyny looks like, right? Androgyny for AFAB people can't include lipstick and dresses and high

Robin Eames has feels about lipstick.

heels because AFAB androgyny always looks masculine. Binders, bow ties, short scruffy hair. Fuck that.

I'm not saying that there's anything wrong with binders or bow ties – binders are a life saver and bow ties are the raddest item of clothing there is. It's just that there shouldn't be a presentation requirement for any kind of identity. You shouldn't have to look "masculine ENOUGH" to "PASS" as a man if you're AFAB, and trans women shouldn't have to be femme all the time, and non-binary people of any flavour

HOW TO: GROW YOUR OWN PRONOUNS

Gabriel Hanrahan-Lawrence has a foolproof method for discovering the pronouns that work for you!

Method:

1. Start with a thick paste of Complex Gender Metaphors and Relentless Misgendering.
2. Add Confused Relatives™, to taste.

3. Mix in Certified Androgynous Clothing™ (Note: DFAB people can substitute with Casual Masculine Clothing™, DMAB people can substitute with Casual Masculine Clothing™, With Standard Black Skirt™!) Refrigerate.

4. Jump through Unnecessary Loopholes to receive an X marker on your documentation. This step is vital because, as we all know, if it isn't legal, it isn't real.®

5. Combine "You're Either A Man Or A Woman" Tumblr Messages and People You Thought Were Trans Allies© until the consistency resembles that of Confused Family Relatives™. Heat on low for a few minutes, or until it reaches a green-

brown colour resembling fresh baby shit. Add to existing mixture.

6. Transfer to a small flowerpot.

7. Place the flowerpot inside a mushroom circle and leave to germinate for 3 weeks.

8. At the end of the 3 weeks, bring your flowerpot to the river in which the ancient, powerful and terrifying water spirit lives. Present the mixture as an offering and ask for the spirit to invoke a new set of pronouns for you.

9. Wait for the banks of the river to rise to your shins, begin to chant the words "you can't use them as a singular pronoun". Try to use the whiniest voice you can muster.

10. When the water recedes to a normal level, your new, natural pronouns will be inscribed on the river bank. Congratulations! You have succeeded.

Alternate method:

1. Fuck anyone who says that non-binary people aren't "really trans". There is no 100% true trans narrative, and people who say that there is are dense and not worth your time.

2. Throw anyone who disrespects your pronouns and/or name straight into the actual trash. Maybe while they're in the trash they can find some trash friends to talk about their trash heroes like Ayn Rand and Cathy Brennan.

3. Use whatever pronouns you like, no matter how made up they are. Don't do this just because literally all of language is "made up", but because you should be allowed to do whatever you need to make yourself comfortable in your gender.



IMAGE: Amanda B, via Flickr, CC BY 2.0.



LET ME TELL YOU ABOUT ‘THE YOUNG AVENGERS’

Elliot Mucsnik wants you to know about his favourite superhero team.

I came out of the closet at a young age. Not the sexuality closet – well, that too – but the nerd closet. I am a geek. More than that, I am a pop culture nerd. If you make a reference to a TV show or a movie, I will get it. My friends call it a talent; my parents call it a waste of time, I call it my “geekdom”. Now as a pop culture nerd there were many aspects to my “geekdom”: anime, cult-classic TV and films, underground-nerd-community-celebrated shows, cartoons, manga, fantasy books, science fiction, console gaming, table-top games, and role-playing games (only occasionally the dirty kind). And yet one aspect of the geek community I struggled to get into was comics – until I stumbled across The Young Avengers.

“I am a gay Jewish fanboy obsessed with magic and superheroes, while Wiccan is a gay Jewish ascended fanboy superhero with magical powers.”

“Who the #*&% are the Young Avengers?” Well, you know The Avengers, right?



The Young Avengers are kind of like that, but instead of being centred around a group of cis het white men, we have a comic with an all-queer team that is hilarious, quirky, epic, and racially, sexually, and gender diverse. I was originally drawn to The Young Avengers due to the character Billy Kaplan (aka. Asgardian Wiccan). You see, I am a gay Jewish fanboy obsessed with magic and superheroes, while Wiccan is a gay Jewish ascended fanboy superhero with magical powers. So representation is really quite important here.

A brief description of the topics covered in the first volume of the Young Avengers: the media, youth empowerment and action vs adult oppression, misogyny vs female empowerment, time travel, shape-shifting, camaraderie, death of a family member, the feeling of being hunted, the importance of a

name, Iron Man and Captain America Being Assholes, destiny, changed and alternate futures, responsibility, technology, the importance of good styling, sexuality, parental disapproval and disappointment, drugs, dramatic irony, rebellion, trauma, bullying, the owning of one's self and sexuality, rape, idealism, the power of a group of individuals, a long lost twin, explosions, beating up bad people, beating up bad aliens, the rebirth of souls, clusterfuck super hero battles, wolverine's nose, love, blowing up important international buildings, and snark. Lots of snark.

The Young Avengers to this day is my favourite series, my favourite team, with my favourite storylines. This is a comic book beloved by newcomers and veterans of the comic-book community alike. It's a well-written, well-drawn portrayal of superhero mortality and life



The Tyrant

By Elena Zagoudis

With my greatest encouragement, I will coerce
The nature of the graceful beauty Time,
For her ageless beauty stands
Tonight in the path, as blinding light,
Between the girl's heart and mine

While the toils of the sunrise are dealt
With in a world away from mine, I lay in
My arms and imagine an image absent
From that before my eyes

With howling of foreign wolves and crowing
Of morning birds, I am trapped in this
Mid-darkness, from which the moon
Refuses to rise and the sun hides

In this queerest hour I evoke the lady Time,
And I coerce her to obedience – for she
Is momentarily mine –
I plead for the resolution of the girl's
Arms in mine, and playfully, She declines

Never a more mischievous spirit have I found,
That dances around my desires or thought, as
She runs through the wind in chimes, and
Trickles through slow droplets on my windowsill
Painfully stagnant as She goes, mimicking
Wintry condensations

She will not show me kind revelation, not tonight,
As my eyes search for the passage to Hers,
The undying, relentless Tyranny of Time

How To Write a News Article About a Trans Person

Gabriel Hanrahan-Lawrence has some helpful advice.

1. The first paragraph should be about a DMAB child you have met, who likes princess dresses and doll houses. Try to express how this child is, at first glance, just “normal girl”. Then, assert how abnormal this child actually is, just because they are trans. Give out the child’s birth name, state how she “is actually a boy”. Invalidate and other her gender identity. If possible, never use her preferred pronouns.

2. Talk to the child’s parents. Allow them to voice their ridiculous fears, how it felt like they had lost a child, how the father misses having a son to play sport and talk about cars with, amongst other stereotypical male pursuits.

3. Under no circumstances allow the child to talk about their experiences with their family and friends. Preferably, choose a child who is too young to talk about these issues.

4. Speculate on who this child will

be attracted to in the future, even though this is irrelevant to the story.

“Do not allow anyone to critique gender constructs at all. That is too drastic and may scare someone.”

5. Mention the child’s genitals, regardless of how invasive and creepy this is. Allow a medical professional to describe Sexual Affirmation Surgery, even though the child is too young to make this decision and may never want to undergo this surgery.

6. Talk to a few older, well-off, white trans people. Use the

phrases “born in the wrong body”, “sex is between your legs, gender is between your ears” and “he used to be a man”. Reassure your readers that trans people are completely, 100% normal.

Never mention non-binary people, or trans people who aren’t heterosexual. Do not allow anyone to critique gender constructs at all. That is too drastic and may scare someone.

7. End on an uplifting note about how you hope that this normal girl can live a normal girl life, and be accepted by other normal girls into their normal girl cliques, in a

perfect picture of white, cisgender, heterosexual normality.



Shevvi Barrett-Brown reflects on the most fabulous revue of all.

Queer Revue

I auditioned for the Sydney University 2014 Queer Revue, Nightmare Before Mardi Gras, on a whim. Four months later I was standing backstage with a cast I had grown to love, sick with excitement, moments from stepping on stage.

From the aptly named ‘Camp Camp’ to the after party of feels-

heavy speeches, my experience as a cast member of Queer Revue is one I’ll never forget. We don’t get anything material out of the revue – we’re not getting paid, it’s not necessarily the most prestigious thing to put on your CV – we do it for us. To meet great people and be creative and sometimes to make ourselves laugh so much we can’t breathe. To come into university on a bright Sunday morning, dance to “Singing in the Rain” and get showered in condoms.

Despite all the long days, the very average lunches, and the shitty funding/rehearsal space/treatment we received as a cultural revue, it was so, so worth

it. The moment we exited the theatre after a successful opening night performance, cheered on by our family and friends, was when I realised the potential of cultural reviews. For all the love of faculty revues, there’s nothing like a performance supported and empowered by a community of individuals united by who we are rather than what we study.

A queer person will likely be welcomed in the cast or crew of most faculty revues – sometimes the script may even stray from the dominant format of heteronormativity and embrace queer relationships as a central, respected part of a skit. So why bother with a Queer Revue?

Why spend months of work on a tight budget with no faculty support? For me, the answer is because queer-focused, queer-run entertainment is rare. Public celebration of the queer community is still an integral part of our movement towards equality. We are still told by some of our politicians, parts of society, even

our loved ones: “It’s fine if you’re queer – just not in public”. Of the three revues I witnessed this season, only one explored a queer love story, and none attempted to deal with queer issues. We dealt with parental homophobia, we mocked the cliché gay narrative, our opening number critiqued queer culture and our closing number celebrated it. Would these skits make it into a non-queer revue? Would audiences be comfortable with them, knowing that the performers are most likely straight cis people mixing queerness with comedy?

Audiences of Nightmare Before Mardi Gras could assume the cast and crew likely had lived experience of the themes being discussed, as in a show like ours queerness is assumed. Our stories and our voices are at the forefront, not in the background. My experience with Queer Revue was hilarious, exhausting, overwhelming, supportive, creative, loving and ultimately political.

Queer Refugees

This Thursday, September 18, marks exactly one year since Operation Sovereign Borders was introduced by Scott Morrison and the Liberal Party. In mid-June, Abbott proudly claimed his asylum seeker policy as a victory as it had been six months without any refugee boat landings on Australian shores. But what he failed to tell the Australian public is just how many boats were forcibly subjected to the dangerous operation of tow backs from the Navy. He failed to say what happened to the asylum seekers on these boats who attempted to reach Australia's shores. And he also failed to mention that his racist, xenophobic, and homophobic policy has killed and injured more asylum seekers who have arrived by ocean than it has processed claims and resettled.

Australia may not be a large imperial force on the world stage, but it's a superpower within the Asia-Pacific region, bullying neighbouring impoverished countries such as Cambodia and Papua New Guinea to take on Australia's international obligations. It is truly disturbing that this government thinks a policy victorious when it is responsible for the brutal murder of Faili Kurd, Reza Barati. The billions of dollars spent on Operation Sovereign Borders could have instead been used to fund government services and important public sectors such as tertiary education, instead of locking up asylum seekers in offshore detention centres which breed severe mental illness. Perhaps what is most atrocious is that this government is more than willing to exploit the world's most vulnerable people and use them as a racial scapegoat to get through their viscous, neoliberal agenda that attacks us all.

Asylum seekers who have fled persecution on the basis of their sexual orientation suffer particular adversities. On top of the mental stress of being locked up indefinitely, many also suffer from the added anxieties of being locked up on Manus Island (Papua New Guinea), a country where homosexuality is illegal and can land you in jail for up to 11 years. This results in a catch-22 for asylum seekers – either forced to take the risk of coming out and being exposed to PNG's laws, or to stay closeted to avoid exposure to

these laws, but risk being returned to their country of origin from which they were fleeing.

"Asylum seekers are not only made to forcibly disclose their sexuality to strangers, but also have to 'prove' they are queer by answering intimate questions about their relationships and their engagement with the queer community in their country of origin."

Martin Bowles, the secretary of Immigration and Border Protection, said earlier this year that although there are queer asylum seekers locked up on Manus, not one person is to claim refugee status on the basis of their sexuality. This is a bizarre statement, considering not one person has been through the process of making their claims for refugee status. Although no claims at all have been processed under this government, claims for queer asylum seekers under past policies have been extremely problematic. Coming out is one of the biggest steps for any queer-identifying person to take and it is usually done so with careful consideration of whom and whom you disclose your identity to.

According to an Amnesty International report, a lesbian asylum seeker from Uganda in 2011 was denied protection because although she had been in a long-term relationship with another woman, she supposedly lacked interaction with the queer community back in Uganda and was consequently deemed to have "merely adopted the persona of a homosexual". Asylum seekers are not only made to forcibly disclose their sexuality to strangers, but also have to 'prove' they are queer by answering intimate questions about their relationships and their engagement with the queer community in their country of origin. They then have

to prove that being queer is the reason they're seeking asylum – a horrifically daunting process.

Refugee rights are a queer issue too, writes Gabrielle Pei Tiatia.

facade is a sheer desperation to hide the inevitable self-crumbing of their quick-fix policy. This government has already spent \$7.2 billion on expanding and maintaining offshore detention centres, but has slashed \$2.8 billion from the public university sector.

The enemy isn't those who come by boat, but the politicians sitting in parliament with warped priorities. Resistance within detention is absolutely fundamental to destroying Operation Sovereign Borders, but as pro-refugee students, we have the responsibility of standing in solidarity with asylum seekers by constantly voicing dissent to anti-refugee racism and to make refugee bashing an electoral liability for either major parliamentary party

More than any other issue, the Abbott Government has staked its political credibility on 'stopping the boats'. Make no mistake, behind Abbott and Morrison's tough



Youth Allowance: How to Qualify as "Independent"

Youth Allowance is a payment available to Australian full-time students who meet a certain set of criteria. Sometimes it is available to students who are considered dependent on their parents. However this is assessed on your parents combined gross income. There are a few ways of being considered independent, and therefore not assessed on your parents' income, but rather your own.

The easiest way to be deemed independent is to be 22 years or older. If you come from a country area you may be able to claim independence through previous work. However this is fairly rare. You may also be able to claim independence by virtue of being in a marriage like relationship. You will need to have been in this relationship for no less

than 12 months while sharing a home, sharing bills and income, having a permanent outlook to your relationship, and being able to show that your family and friends view your relationship as permanent. Another way to prove independence is to show that it is "unreasonable to live at home".

There are a few ways of being considered independent, and therefore not assessed on your parents' income, but rather your own.

"Unreasonable to live at home" is a specific term that has a particular definition. It indicates that there is

extreme family breakdown or other similar exceptional circumstances. It may indicate that there is a serious risk to your physical or mental well-being due to violence, sexual abuse or other similar unreasonable circumstances. It is also considered unreasonable to live at home if your parent/s are unable to provide a suitable home owing to a lack of stable accommodation.

Of course there are lots of details and conditions that you should know about. Contact an SRC caseworker if you would like to apply.

To see an SRC Help Caseworker call 9600 5222 to make an appointment or email: help@src.usyd.edu.au

TWENTY 10

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CENSUS DATE:

The last day to withdraw from a subject without incurring an academic penalty or financial penalty*

*International students may be charged an administration fee

WHEN IS IT: This semester ONLY, it has been extended to Fri 19th September, due to University administrative difficulties.

WHAT SHOULD YOU DO: Check your enrolment. Make sure you are only enrolled in classes you want to attend.

http://sydney.edu.au/current_students/student_administration/session_dates/

http://sydney.edu.au/current_students/student_administration/hecs_fees.shtml#due

twenty10 GLCS
A PLACE TO BE YOU

Twenty10 Supports and Works with young people, communities & families of diverse genders and sexualities.

They also provide a range of services that everyone over 18 can access, including the broader community. These include Information, Referrals, Support & Advocacy, Groups & Projects, Family Support Services, Community Education & Schools' Support, Specialised Training and Support for service providers, Regional & Rural support and Telephone support.

You can find out more about Twenty10 by visiting their website or giving them a call.

Twenty10: 02 8594 9550

The Gay and Lesbian Counselling Service of NSW:
02 8594 9500

Bowlcut Girl

Mira Schlosberg and the one that got away.

Stockholm, mid June. I was in the gift shop of the modern art museum lamenting over the fact that none of the vaguely lesbian paintings were available as souvenir postcards when I saw her. It was magical. You know when you see someone so fucking good-looking that it hurts to look at them and your lungs tighten up and you're happy but you also want to drop dead? It was like that.

I mean, now I can't even remember what her face looked like, but at that point it was love at first sight. She had a silky platinum blonde bowlcut and she was dressed all in black and white, with those heeled clog sandals that everyone in the city was wearing. She was gorgeous. Glorious. Even hotter than the tall American in Berlin, who also had an arty blonde hairdo and was dressed head to toe in black, and recommended vegetarian sausages to us in an organic shop and laughed when she heard us swooning over her as she walked away.

But this Swedish girl was at the end of her shift and I watched her wave goodbye to the other girls at the desk and walk slowly away. I was imagining a future where we lived together in the hip suburb of Södermalm with one or two pet sausage dogs in pink sweater vests.

I spent the next ten minutes staring at a black and white postcard of an Alexander Calder statue mentally drafting the romantic note I could write her and leave with her coworkers before I chickened out and left.

I spent half an hour after that sitting on a bench outside staring out over the water while pining after her until the sky turned a weird pink grey colour and it started to rain.

In the end I mailed her a postcard from the next city I went to. A friend helped me write it while we were drunk off the cheapest white wine we could find in the store. It sounded ridiculous. I told her she was my muse. We googled my name before signing it to make sure my tiny online presence seemed cool enough. I addressed it to the museum and left it with my friend to mail because I was too scared to do it myself. I don't know if she looked me up, or if she even got the card. I hope so. Either way, though, it makes a pretty good story, right?



Artwork by Alexandra Mildenhall.

Queerkat Collective Report

Elsa Kohane



to and cared a lot about QuAC, we were both fairly dissatisfied with the cis male dominance of the collective and the lack of effort or success in fixing it or even acknowledging that it was a problem. Beyond that, I am very proud of how active we have managed to be for such a new collective. Our most recent endeavour is planning an Art Party for the end of semester. To be held at the Red Rattler on Wednesday the 29th of October (Wk 13), it will aim to celebrate and showcase the creativity and scope of non-normative queer experiences. We are always looking for new perspectives! If you would like to submit an artwork or perform please contact the Queer Officers at queer.officers@src.usyd.edu.au.

Queer Officers' Report

David Shakes, Elsa Kohane, Ed McMahon, Holly Parrington



When Holly and I first talked about the idea of an autonomous non-cis male collective last year, I don't think we ever could have imagined the huge success Queerkats would ultimately turn out to be. While both of us felt incredibly connected diverse and engaging festival. In the last couple of weeks, Queer Revue put on an incredibly clever show, The Nightmare Before Mardi Gras. The USU ran Radical Sex and Consent Day for the first time ever, which was a very visible, valuable, queer-inclusive event; basically it was what sex education should have been in high school. SHADES hosted the amazing afterparty, featuring some of Sydney and the University of Sydney's best drag and burlesque acts. There are gender neutral bathrooms under construction in the Holme building by the queerspace. The USYD Queer Arab Film Festival has free screenings every Wednesday at 4pm. Our newly refurbished space will soon be ready for occupation. It's a good time to be queer.

Pride Festival in week 2 of this semester was an incredible success, with many different corners of the queer community contributing to what was a very

The university affords queer

students a multitude of ways in which to engage with queer programs, and a huge focus of this year for the Queer Officers was to encourage a more accessible collective environment, as a more inclusive political organising space. Collectivism is so important to the queer struggle, without it my understanding of queer politics would probably be restricted to gay marriage. We need to ensure that our entire community is supported, heard, and respected. Community is super important. Queer Honi made explicit attempts to make this edition "intersectional": as representative of the broad spectrum of queer identities in our community as possible, and their efforts should be noted. Intersectionality is the study of intersections between forms or systems of oppression, domination, and discrimination.

While it's difficult, potentially impossible, to foster a collective environment completely free from -isms and -phobias, I'm confident in saying that the queer collective has taken important steps towards challenging the patriarchal and white supremacist perversions of our safer space, and I only hope that we can remain self-critical as this trend continues throughout the rest of the year.

There's much more to look forward to this year in queer: between moving into the new queerspace, to Glitter Gala, to the Identity program currently being run at 5pm on Wednesdays in the queerspace, there are still plenty of opportunities to engage this year. Find us, "SRC Queer Department", on Facebook, and send us a message if you're keen to get involved.

Autonomous Collective Against Racism (ACAR) Officer's Report

Oscar Monaghan



they are at work structuring our relationships with each other and with the world. There is no space safe or free from them. This means, that for those of us at the intersections, the communities that are essential to our survival are also capable of causing great pain and doing great harm.

Our anti-racist organising will be nothing, unless we are actively trying to understand and organise against the many ways queerphobia manifests in our communities and our work. Our queer organising is nothing if our queer spaces are almost totally inhospitable to First Nations peoples and people of colour.

Our organising will be nothing if it is not always scrutinising the insidious nature of power.

'Intersectionality' is not a buzzword; it was coined by Kimberlé Crenshaw as she deconstructed the way Black women experience marginalisation along multiple axes to show the way this affects their physical, and emotional safety and survival. So it is not a buzzword to be used for credit in our activist spaces; it is a framework of liberation that centres Black women, and it has given us a way to conceptualise

a liberation that leaves no one behind.

We can start by making our communities safer: what economies of power circulate in our spaces? What norms are structuring how we live with and love each other?

Our goals should ultimately be bigger, but unless the communities we are working within are made safer, we are merely reinscribing oppression into the fabric of our activism. I want my queer community, anti-racist and decolonial; and I want my anti-racism decolonial and queer.

TYRANNY OF THE QUEER MONARCHS

JB Zachary might be talking about you.



I see it happening every now and then. It's that self-entitled, self-important manner that starts to creep in oh so subtly. That tone of voice, the rising up and claiming of space and settled authority. The inauguration of another self-appointed member of QUEER ROYALTY.

I know you know what I mean. We've all seen it. That nice and lovely person, who you mostly agreed with, whose politics you respected and who you enjoyed hanging out with. You haven't seen them for a few months and BAM! Now they're a dickhead. And not a dickhead in the way where they're rude to you, because no, you're queer and you have "their" politics (or at least you're too exhausted polite to say anything contradictory). You've been around the queer scene for a few years, so you can be a point of authorisation, a notch in their tally of social capital, another face they know.

This person is more like a dickhead in the way that they use their cred, their knowledge and their social power to make themselves the centre of the social network through ostracising others. It's that self-involved style, that way of talking that shames anyone with the "wrong" politics or who lacks a very specific Queer Tumblr Education.

So, how do you spot one of these Queer Royals? Well despite what may be the general consensus according to queer politics they're not always the most intersectionally privileged person in the room. Sometimes it's one of the most (on paper) 'un-privileged'

people. Sometimes it's the person who ticks all (or many) of the boxes on their application to the Oppression Olympics. Sometimes (but not always) it is a person who, because of their particular position, won't engage at all with their privilege or the complexities and nuances of their social position (we will get back to this in a bit).

Other times they will use the recognition of their privilege to further their social status because they're 'Just That Good'.

One thing that I have noticed, with almost every Queer Royal (or wannabe) is that they are linguistically talented. Their tongues are gold and their lips are diamonds and the words they exude from their mouths are the exact thing you always wanted to say but never knew how to phrase. They catch phrase like they're being paid for it, though of course they would never capitulate to capitalism like that. They always know the most "politically correct", "radical" thing to say, and sometimes they will manipulate the words of others to shove their politics in your face. They're obsessed with being the most up to date, the most intelligent thinker, the most actively critical person.

And the most frustrating part is that it's nearly impossible to contradict them. Establishing themselves as the MOST radical, the MOST well politicised, they set the community boundaries and eradicate nearly all possibilities for dissent or contradiction, which they shut down flawlessly, often imperceptibly.

So what to do about this whole situation? Call for a referendum? Stage a coup? Sadly, I'm not so optimistic. I see this, as I'm sure you do too, my fellow queer minions, as a pretty common occurrence. And sadly (call me bitter and old, as many do) as a part of pretty standard social conditions. So I'm not making any suggestions, I'm not giving an outline as to where to from here.

Now I'm all for discussion. Nothing gets me off like a conversation about the way in which a Deleuzian-Spinozist framework may be able to re-configure contemporary Western capitalist cultures construction of the human condition or the ways in which the patriarchal, racist, ablest, cis-centric and homophobic (and so on) society oppresses individuals, and makes us all culpable. But what I'm not into is

the way in which certain people use a whole bunch of intellectual and social privilege to situate themselves as the most ethical, the most critical and the most needing-to-be-heard person in any space or context, at the loss of any (many) other voices in the room.

And it is an intellectual privilege. They've probably been university educated, and if not, the intellect to be able to read a bunch of complex stuff, and regurgitate it as a means of cred and capital.

And it's also social privilege – they are people who are usually physically desirable in "radical" queer terms, and able to engage within normative social rules of engagement.

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Instead, I'm going to take this opportunity to address you, Queer Royalty, directly:

Hello Royals, you probably (maybe) know me, because I sure know you and I thought you should know that many of us... don't like you. Or at least we don't like who you've become. But don't worry, we won't call you out on it, we won't humiliate you like that, because we are too nice, or tired, or too worried about the social and emotional wrath you may enact on us, or we can't quite see you for who you are just yet.

And perhaps even sadder than this, you probably don't even know this article is about you. So perhaps, and here are my parting words, ones that good god I hope you'll never raise with me because I will probably lie and shrink and run away, scared of your wrath. If you're certain that this article isn't about you, think twice. Think about how much space you take up, how sure you feel of your politics and your right to speak, how you respond when people disagree with you – do you get angry? Do you try to self-righteously "educate"? Do you think you're a Pretty Great Queer? I might be talking about you after all...

I guess deep down, I'm wondering what kind of community we're trying to create here. Is it one based on exclusivity, on social cred, on denigrating others who can't talk the exclusive, carefully honed talk? Queer Royals live on these things, they thrive on hostility, competition and self-involved vitriol.

Maybe there are more resistant, generous futures to be imagined...

Grinding as an AFAB Trans Person

Benjamin Bolton gives some tips for navigating hook-up apps.

Using a sex app like Grindr, that largely caters to gay cis men, as a gender variant is a tricky business. Most of these apps are cissexist and it's often reflected in the users (as well as racist, fatphobic, classist etc) so what are my recommendations for getting the most out of these apps? Here's my top 10.

1. Trust your instinct- if someone is giving you bad vibes (also known as the squinks), block them, tell them you're not interested, or meet up with them in a public space first. Your instincts are probably spot on.

2. Share your possible hook ups with other people who are also using the app- if I had a dollar for every time I've been approached by dudes who seem alright at first, but have been outright rude fuckwads to trans dude friends of mine I would have like ten dollars, maybe twelve. That's like two and a half coffees!!!

3. Have your identity and body form (i.e. your bits) on your profile (or bring it up pretty quick). Obviously this is really bloody contentious. And I loathe the idea of having to declare what/who I am and the bits I've got, but for me I think it filters out at least some of the crap people and time wasting that really shits me off. That and feeling like you've got a connection/are on the same page with someone to then have them stop chatting to you cause you tell them you're trans is really fucking annoying.

4. Use the block function- these spaces are really weird, right? They are not like the 'real world'. And while you may have been taught to be polite and kind and considerate if someone's being a dick, block them. If you're not interested in talking to someone and they keep talking to you, block them. If you're just feeling a bit over it all block all of them. These are different rules and every-one else is playing by them, you probably should too...

but also...

5. Don't take anything seriously or to heart. You're going to get rejected and you're going to reject people. That's kind of just the nature of the interaction. Don't be a dick, and don't tolerate dickishness but also be ready for rejection. If you go into it with a certain amount of amusement and playfulness with limited expectations it'll probably be much more enjoyable.

6. Figure out your boundaries- and not just your bodily boundaries. What you want to do and with what bits (an important thing), but also your spatial ones. Are you going to meet in a pub/café first? Are you going to host, or are they and why? Do you feel able to kick someone out/ask someone to leave? Or do you feel more comfortable leaving? Does being in your home make you feel more secure? Or does someone knowing where you live squink you out? What makes you feel safest and how are you going to negotiate that. Figure it out and stick by it.

7. Tell people your boundaries- If you're going to have a NSA (no strings attached) encounter (ok, lets just say fuck), than maybe you want to think about telling people exactly, in detail, what you want to do. This can be god damn hot, but also sets people up to know what to expect. It also gives you options to tell people no to something without them being able to justify pressuring you (which is fucked up anyway) because you didn't clarify what you wanted to do prior to the encounter.

8. Have a safety person. Tell someone who you're going to meet, any details you've got, and where you're going. You can negotiate a text system for telling people when you're done, or that you've arrived and the person seems OK. Basically it's smart to have someone know what you're doing in case anything goes wrong.

9. Ask for face pics (even after they've given you one). If you're going to someone's place, or they're coming to yours its probably a good idea to get multiple face pics just in case (call me



paranoid) someone is being a bit misleading.

10. Think about hooking up with other trans people- and not because 'it's all you can get' but because these spaces often become super focused on cis men and I suspect there becomes this internalised transphobia that takes place with the idea that you should 'aim' for cis dudes as the more attractive and desirable bodies. Think about that, and then think about hooking up with other trans people and gender variants and why you would or would not do that. If you would then go for it, if not, maybe you got a bit of work to do on yourself.

11. And here's an extra special one, just for fun, use Urban Dictionary. There are a bunch of acronyms and slang that I for one have never heard of. Urban dictionary has you covered and you'll get to learn some interesting and amusing shit. And while I'm here there is a fucking excellent and super god damn hot blog called Trans Fag Sex Journals look it up, you'll thank me later.



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Going the Queer Distance

Brady Coyle tackles the stereotype that long distance relationships are nothing to write home about.

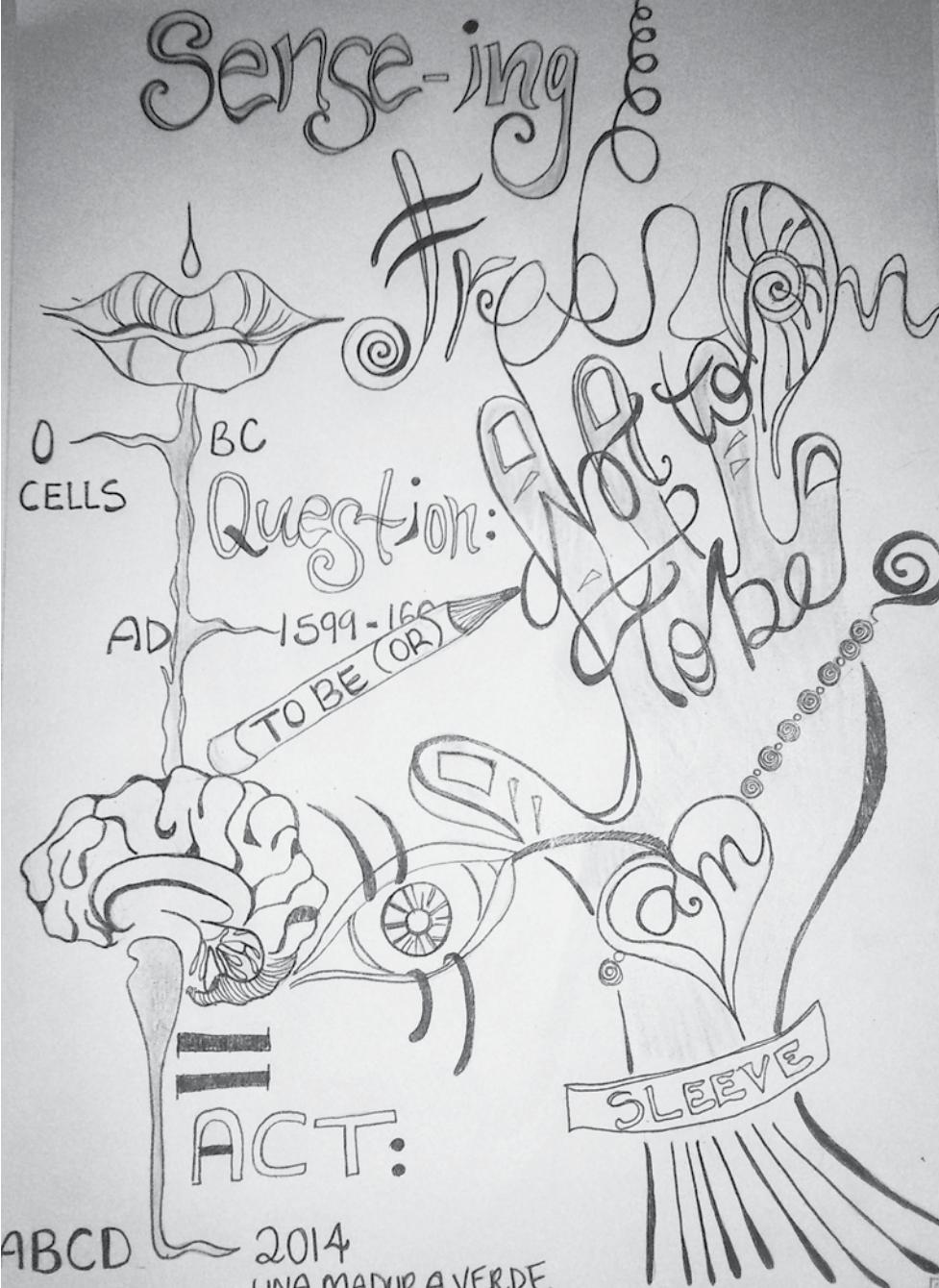
Most people believe that long-distance relationships are wasted effort. It's generally thought that a relationship without any physical contact cannot possibly be fulfilling and is therefore doomed to fail. Apparently it seems even more pointless, more queer folks; gay men especially are famous – inside and outside the community – for being unashamedly promiscuous. Most of the times I've been open to people about my LDR the first response I'm hit with is: "Is it an open relationship? No? But how do you survive without sex?"

This type of reaction does not surprise me. Having watched friends go down in tragically sinking LDRs I too once dismissed the concept and resolved to never get on board myself. But my attitude has completely changed after going through this experience with my partner.

My partner and I met last year during my gap year abroad. For a few months we spent the most unforgettable time travelling together, eating local food, practicing each other's languages, sharing our lives. But sadly my gap year came to end and I had to return to Australia for university enrolment and orientation. I was naively looking forward to student life, but was worried about leaving my partner. So I was thrilled when he asked me to continue the relationship, even if we had to live in separate countries.

So how does a long-distance relationship work? Isn't it unrealistic? The most common misconception about LDRs is that they don't function well, and that distance will cause all intimacy and closeness to fade away. In cases like ours this couldn't be further from the truth; our feelings have only grown stronger since we've been apart. This distance has given us (plenty of) time to talk, and to discuss our hopes, worries, and plans for the future together. It's given us the opportunity to revive the forgotten art of letter writing: that traditional platform of love and courtship. In reality it's actually quite a practical situation for us because we are both closeted from our families. Remaining low-key is one of the perks of a long-distance relationship.

There is no need to feel sorry for someone in a LDR. It is wonderful when you bond with someone, and even better if that bond can survive long-distance. Last month my partner and I celebrated our one-year anniversary together. That's a milestone for any couple, and we achieved it despite the challenges of being in a queer, long-distance relationship. Now I am equally proud of my queer identity and of my relationship. I daresay that we are the lucky ones.



'Sense-ing Freedom', by Elizabeth Mora.



Polling Booth Times and Locations 2014

Polling Location	Wed 24th Sept. 2014	Thurs 25th Sept. 2014
Fisher	8:30-6:30	8:30-5:00
Manning	10:00-4:00	10:00-4:00
Cumberland	11:00-3:00	11:00-3:00
SCA	12:00-2:00	No polling
Engineering	No polling	12:00-2:00
Conservatorium	12:00-2:00	No polling
Jane Foss	8:30-6:00	8:30-6:00

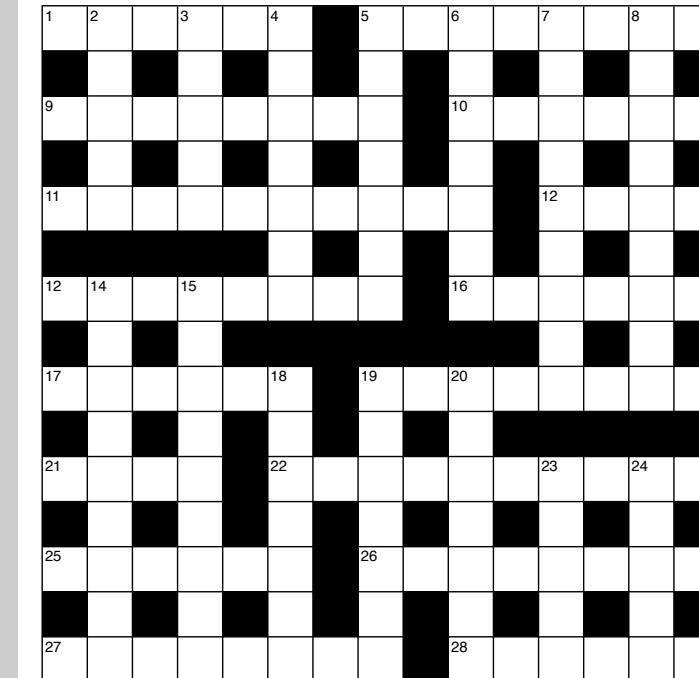
Pre-Polling will also be held outside the SRC's Offices, Level 1 Wentworth Building, on Tuesday 23rd September from 10am-3pm.



Quick

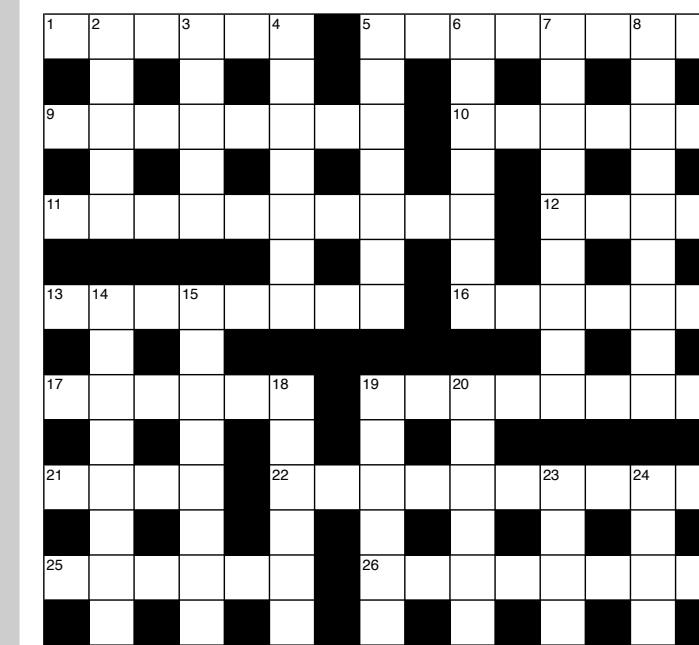
ACROSS

- 1 Rubs (6)
- 5 Of the underworld (8)
- 9 The effect of acid on pupils (8)
- 10 Medicine that makes you vom (6)
- 11 Superficial eccentricity (10)
- 12 Partial erection (4)
- 13 Expression of intention, offer (8)
- 16 Attractions, views (6)
- 17 Honcho (6)
- 19 Very feminine, as applied to a lesbian (8)
- 21 Burn, singe (4)
- 22 Holding back, oppression (10)
- 25 Went down on (3,3)
- 26 Simpsons' jaw problem (8)
- 27 Narcissists (8)
- 28 De Beauvoir's existentialist husband (6)



ACROSS

- 1 English, eventually deposed, put under guard? (6)
- 5 Mixed gin after time bulge subsiding (8)
- 9 Forgetful person confused names, two current abbreviations (8)
- 10 "Er," said a boor, "German Marks." (6)
- 11 Blown around, flour whips pious (10)
- 12 Image-conscious Virginia at home (4)
- 13 For example, gangsters' paradise opposite baby bird protector (8)
- 16 Carry out HSU inspection, lads (6)
- 17 19-down's target fighting boundless whole (6)
- 19 Short piddle, then show up most pleasant (8)
- 21 Carded the subconscious editor (4)
- 22 Desire in nightspot classified English railing (10)
- 25 Built without ego, shaped, 'her' has no beginning? (6)
- 26 Unnecessary compass begins swinging south (8)
- 27 Saint Arthur, the French nemesis, finally freaks out (8)
- 28 Food hurts when people don't appear (2-4)



Cryptic

DOWN

- 2 Japanese form of poetry (5)
- 3 Fancy mixing of 4 down (5)
- 4 Ghosts (7)
- 5 Coagulate into a solid (7)
- 6 Those who believe in a god (7)
- 7 Supervision, failure of supervision (9)
- 8 Fluent, non-literal (9)
- 14 Historic seat of German parliament (9)
- 15 One of the more obnoxious types of watercraft (9)
- 18 Spins, dances (7)
- 19 Lackeys (7)
- 20 Dickinson or Sappho, for example (7)
- 23 Clear-headed (5)
- 24 A skinny bear (5)

DOWN

- 2 Elephant makes bank initially in a pair (5)
- 3 Helps Abetz speak (5)
- 4 Ego in vote to kill a god (7)
- 5 Courteous thanks about rearranging pan-pipe missing an E (7)
- 6 Student union a supporter of our cause generally (7)
- 7 Prince, bike racing backwards inside, assaults an athletic avert (4,5)
- 8 Maliki be quiet - enfranchising Sunnis initially encourages growth (9)
- 14 Nanna - discourage your sister! (9)
- 15 Lawyer husband reverses prelude, missing the first sequencer (9)
- 18 Crazy Bibler (except for one), primarily against Labor? (7)
- 19 Lone loony takes out mixed-up bane? (7)
- 20 Starr, three extraordinaires instantiated Northern initially following record? (7)
- 23 Small streams right misfortunes (5)
- 24 Tonic note around shuffling cis dance music (5)

Queer Quiz

homosexuality?

1. How many countries in the world currently allow same-sex marriage?
2. What do comedian Janeane Garofalo, artist Edward Gorey, Booker Prize-winner Keri Hulme and The Smiths singer Morrissey have in common?
3. Who is the first openly trans person to be nominated for an Emmy?
4. What are the colours of the bisexual pride flag?
5. Which classic Australian love story is set to be released as a feature film directed by Neil Armfield in 2015?
6. Which of the following is NOT the name of a real gay bar?
 - a) The White Swallow
 - b) The Wild Pug
 - c) The Hung Jury
 - d) Big Rod's
7. Which farm animal is one of the few species to routinely demonstrate exclusive

Glitter Gala



FRIDAY 24 OCTOBER

7PM – MIDNIGHT

The Refectory, Holme Building

Official after party hosted by SHADES
At a secret location to be revealed on the night

ACCESS \$40 | General Admission \$50

Tickets available at the ACCESS Desk and online

SHADES

ACCESS

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