

# Honi Soit

SEMESTER ONE, 2016 • WEEK 4

FIRST PRINTED 1929



How does the University  
view students with children?

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Chinese  
students take  
on Business  
School

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## 9 / FEATURE

Amelia Birnie examines how new mothers can fall through the cracks at the University of Sydney

## COVER

So often the breasts we see in publications are sexualised. They are often designed to sell papers or cause a stir. We hoped that our cover would normalise breasts as non-sexual objects and show breastfeeding as the beautiful and natural act it is. Thank you to Olympia Walker-Galt, Juris Doctor student and mother of the lovely Pippi, for allowing us to capture this intimate moment between her and her daughter.

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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

We acknowledge the traditional custodians of this land, the Gadigal people of the Eora Nation. The University of Sydney – where we write, publish and distribute *Honi Soit* – is on the sovereign land of these people.

As students and journalists, we recognise our complicity in the ongoing colonisation of Indigenous land. In recognition of our privilege, we vow to not only include, but to prioritise

and centre the experiences of Indigenous people, and to be reflective when we fail to.

We recognise our duty to be a counterpoint to the racism that plagues the mainstream media, and to adequately represent the perspectives of Indigenous students at our University. We also wholeheartedly thank our Indigenous reporters for the continuing contribution of their labour to our learning.

## EDITORIAL

Victoria Zerbst

On the cover is a small infant during her oral stage of development. Aside from the obvious connection to this week's feature on breastfeeding on campus, the sucking baby provides for a greater metaphor.

As university students we are in an oral development stage of our own. Our brains are remodelling, our behaviours border on infantile at both parties and political meetings, and all while we suckle at the swollen teat of knowledge in lecture theatres and tutorial rooms.

At university we are rediscovering the rules of language through politically correct speech. We are making our opinions heard among the booming voices of baby boomers.

We are learning when and how to speak out against issues like the University restructure or the changes to the Safe Schools program. We are sharing our takes on multiple platforms, from the Letters page of this fine publi-

cation to the deep content mines of Twitter, that holy digital function of our own oral obsession.

Students want to be heard. This paper is our mouthpiece.

As always, *Honi* works hard to keep you abreast of the news. This week we bring you stories of self-proclaimed sugar babies, who milk their relationships with older men, first time opera-goers and an analysis of University funding of SUSF facilities.

Pay fine attention to the little touches, the DJ Khaled horoscopes, the carefully curated playlist, the educational guide to PowerPoint presentations, the existential babies. We are forever in development stages after all.

While we grow, and crawl and learn to walk, we look to the university for nourishment and support. At the end of this all, we hope to learn skills that enable us to feed mouths when we are a little older. In the meantime, *Honi* will feed its stories to the newsfeed. So drink up.

Eleanor Morley

## Standing with students

I write regarding the horrible photograph in *Honi Soit* of the Muslim prayer room in shambles after an attack. I ache for all those who returned to their sanctum and found it so violated. The desecration of a house of prayer is a desecration of the name of God. I pray the barbarity of these ignorant attacks may serve as a rooster's crow. May this horror rouse us to stand resolutely alongside our Muslim brothers and sisters. May Allah raise the downtrodden, and replace suffering with joy.

Yitzit Tuvel

# More Letters

## In defence of revolutionary socialism

Liam Donohoe's piece last week was an insight into a revolutionary organisation gone wrong. Liam's first-hand account of the inward looking, manipulative and cynically self-promotional political practice pedalled by SALT will leave many good left-wingers reaching for a bucket.

The left is effective when it combines both principle and unity. As Liam shows, SALT betray their principals in shabby and dishonest deals on the one hand and sabotage practical unity through their dismissive arrogance towards other activists on the other. Sadly,

it appears such an attitude is rendered through an internal culture that rests heavily on primary-school style peer pressure and messianic self-delusion. Such a distorted practice is a blight on the Left and weakens us in the face of the real fights against the Liberal government and corporate power.

It would be a mistake however, to let SALT's particular pathology tarnish Revolutionary Socialists as a whole. We live in a world of crisis, war, oppression, environmental catastrophe and gross inequality. As the world burns, the powerful reassure us that capitalism is the only option. They say any attempt to achieve radical change will lead to a tyranny far-worse than what we face today.

Tragically the behaviour of those like SALT gives ammunition to the conservative lie that socialism is authoritarian. The truth is, the capitalist system that produces the horrors we see around us is no more eternal than the feudal society that came before it. It is a society perpetuated by human action and human action can liberate us from it. Even in the United States people, are looking to the socialism of Bernie Sanders as an alternative to the racism and unemployment of global capitalism.

Solidarity is a Revolutionary Socialist organization. We believe those that work to produce the wealth in this world should control it, that the immense productive capacity available today should serve human need not corporate greed. We stand against all forms of oppression and are internationalist. We believe that the working class - whether white or blue collar - has a unique strategic power to win a better world. Most importantly, we believe the

seeds of revolution will grow out of real action today.

To this end we aim to build strong and united Left struggles against the exploiting, greedy, war-mongering bigots that run this world. We want to fight alongside Greens, other radicals and the ALP left, to advance the situation of the working class, students and the oppressed. We are involved in a concerted fight against our government's inhumane brutality towards asylum-seekers, to defend Medicare from the Liberals' attacks and to stop corporate restructuring that turns universities into degree factories.

We need real struggle, we need revolutionary organization and we need serious revolutionary theory and discussion. If you let SALT put you off revolutionary politics altogether the only winners will be the elites we need to overthrow.

Adam Adelpour  
Solidarity Student Club

## Tread carefully around youth politics

Dear *Honi*,

While it may be fun to make fun of the "salty" nature of our favourite Marxists, I don't believe that the problems outlined in Liam Donohoe's feature article are unique to Socialist Alternative, but a shared experience for those of us who gave up their youth in support of a political organisation.

I joined the youth branch of a political party at a very young age and like many others who join political parties in our younger and more vulnerable years, I joined because I wanted to make a difference. I'm not sure if it was residual excitement from the year six politics module in HSIE or something but I was really hopeful about my future in politics. I was excited by the prospect of being able to participate in the political process, of rebelling from my middle-class private school educated background and by the idea finding friends who shared my political views - I was young and naive, what can I say?

And at first it was like that. The people in the party were all so charming and they welcomed and included me. They made me feel like I had a purpose in the party and that I was important. They made me feel like I had a say and I was quick to want to please my new friends. Of course, this would all end quickly. It doesn't surprise me to hear

of Liam's experiences. I had the same experience as a foot soldier dealing with a stratified organisation and trying to reconcile hypocritical policy positions as he did, but I also saw much worse. I remember being bribed and emotionally blackmailed. I remember being complicit in backstabbing and the dirty deals of factional warlords. I remember being manipulated. I remember, essentially, being used as a pawn in a game I did not understand.

All politics, but youth politics especially, preys on the young and vulnerable and that's exactly what happened to my 15-year-old self. They use us because we're innocent. We're not stupid, but we still have that idealism – the assumption that everyone is good at heart. We trust our party elders to look after us but ultimately, our trust is abused.

I'm not saying that all people in politics are evil. Some people are absolutely lovely, but there's enough of the bad ones in politics to make it a dangerous place. There is a culture in youth politics that rewards amorality. To those who are thinking of joining, I'd tread carefully around youth politics. We've done it and saw the worst of it, don't repeat our mistakes.

A 17-Year-Old  
Political Drop Out

## EU v USU continues

Dear *Honi*,

The EU v USU conflict is one of the great tales of our time-though not quite as entertaining as the UK's own conflict with the EU. Although I don't have a position on this, I'd like to clarify some points raised by two letters in last week's issue.

Kerrod Gream mentioned that other religious societies are watching the EU's boss fight with the USU closely. One society, the Catholic Society, apparently has a similar "BELIEVE IN CHRIST THE LORD" policy to the aforementioned EU and is similarly involved in an "it's complicated" relationship with the USU. Gream notes that there's a double standard- the USU supports left-wing autonomous collectives (which were left unnamed, but include Wom\*n's Collective and ACAR) that are similarly exclusionary.

I'm sure that Gream is well aware that the autonomous collectives aren't affiliated with the USU as religious societies are. These collectives are departments of the SRC, representing

the interests of minority groups on campus. Even if the USU supports such collectives it's more like how I might appreciate cheesecake- with a thumbs up and from a safe distance. The USU is all about inclusion- from providing discounted ACCESS card prices, to including current board directors in the USU elections. Their concern about exclusionary policies that lock-out students from society participation is deeply rooted in the USU's mission statement.

Furthermore, anonymous writer "Supporter of Christian-Atheist Relations" brought up the Atheist Society. I'm surprised to hear that it's apparently still a thing! Last I'd heard, the outgoing exec had dissolved the society. They are, however, right that societies will want representatives who "ascribe to their values and ideals". It's a sentiment I'm sure that's shared by the autonomous collectives Kerrod Gream mentioned, who have a particularly left wing set of ideals and values.

Benjamin J O'Shea  
Arts V

## Gold, frankincense and more comment

Dear *Honi*,

In response to Michael Sun's article, "Gold, frankincense and more" (Semester 1, week 3) and the claim that the University's Multifaith Chaplaincy Centre was "largely inaccessible" The Multifaith Chaplaincy Centre located in Merewether Level 2 is generously provided by the University to facilitate the work of university authorised chaplains of all faiths for their work amongst all Sydney Uni students and staff.

Chaplains serve the campus by encouraging a culture of mutual respect, support and engagement with questions of life and faith. If you would like to talk to a chaplain at any time just drop in.

Caroline Andrews  
Multifaith Chaplains Convenor  
University of Sydney

## Let them stay

Dear *Honi*,

Liam Donohoe's piece on the transient #LetThemStay movement ("Let [her] stay", Semester One, 2016, Week Two) said precisely what all public com-

mentators should have been arguing. He noted the significant danger in ceding ground to the far right by suggesting that some asylum seekers are more worthy of protection than others. While children in detention face particular risks to their healthy development, Donohoe's argument reminds us that we must not let our legitimate concern for their welfare compromise our opposition to the indefinite and inhumane detention of any fellow human being. When leveraging sympathetic imagery and narrative in an attempt to build a broader coalition, asylum seeker advocates must take greater care to employ these subjects as representative of the whole war rather than as the (only) battle itself.

Benjamin G. Veness  
MBBS MPH 2014

## Want to continue the convo?

Send a letter to  
editors@  
honisoit.com  
but for fuck's  
sake keep  
it short.  
500 words  
maximum.  
We're serious.



"When you look into an abyss,  
the abyss also looks into you."  
- Kyle (3 months)

Art: Amandine Le Bellec

# Letters

## Taking Honi with a grain of SALT

Dear *Honi*,

Another year, another attack on Socialist Alternative in *Honi Soit*. It's a cycle as predictable as the earth's orbit around the sun, as welcome as a summer cockroach infestation. The most recent effort is written by Liam Donohoe, someone who was a member of Socialist Alternative for all of three weeks over the Christmas break. His resignation letter cited a tearful mother eager for him to succeed in the corporate world. It was all a bit of a non-event, privileged private

school boys like him come and go. He accuses us of "brainwashing" people. Like any political organisation, Socialist Alternative has a program, a set of principles that we try to convince people of. Our version of Marxism is a radically democratic one, which decries the authoritarian regimes that called themselves "communist" in the 21st century.

The introduction to Marxism discussion series that he denounces is deliberately structured as an opportunity for people to systematically study these ideas, and decide whether or not they agree. The course explores gender, imperialism, race, class and the Russian revolution, and that's just the start. It's like a university tutorial, but

with people who actually know what they're talking about, and are trying to understand the world in order to change it.

In a related criticism, Liam suggests that the purpose of these discussions is to force members into ideological unanimity. Once again, he's astoundingly wrong. There are many things on which members of SA disagree; the significance of Bernie Sanders, the attitude to take to Fidel Castro, the validity of Marx's "base and superstructure" analogy, the list goes on.

Part of the reason for this is that SA is the only group on the Australian left that is the product of a merger between two revolutionary organisations with different backgrounds, a fact of which we're proud.

Liam also accuses us of some bizarre hierarchy, despite the fact that the members who do the most stalls and poster runs are also those who he describes as





BIRTHS, DEATHS & MARRIAGES

*Not including the birth, death (and rebirth) of Jesus Christ*

I'm not racist but...

Michael Sun, a Media and Communications student, was asked by Sydney University staff to pose for a picture used in International Students public relations material. Sun, who is not an international student, was approached at an Arts faculty barbeque during OWeek in 2015.

Sun says that the photographer sought to capture a “spontaneous” moment between a racially diverse group of friends. In reality, Sun and friend Adam Ursino had sat down next to a separate group of students just moments before the picture was taken. Ursino and Sun expressed disappointment in the material’s mistaken and offensive depiction of students of colour as international students.

Glass houses redux

On Thursday afternoon, an area directly below the New Law building – by the border of Victoria Park – was taped off and shattered glass was found on the ground.

We speculate this may have something to do with the building’s pesky glass panels, which we reported last year as being “oft-shattered” with the potential to fall on unsuspecting students. At the time, the University told us everything was structurally sound.

But in the summer break, we spied construction crews atop a crane sneakily lifting damaged panels off the building. The mystery continues.

A late boarder

Following Week 1’s round-up of your prospective Union Board candidates – who will run in an election later this semester – *Honi* can confirm one more name is entering the shitshow.

SRC Councillor Cameron Hawkins (Independent) is running, managed by Cameron Caccamo. It’s a reunion of sorts for the two, who last year masterminded the successful “Camerons for SRC” ticket. But this time, Caccamo says it’s not a gimmick.

“While the SRC campaign was firmly tongue in cheek, this will be a serious campaign to elect someone with significant involvement in C&S and a more diverse university background,” he said.

Hawkins is expected to draw on support from various Science faculty-based clubs, and Caccamo has promised he would not seek help from current Board Directors or on-campus factions.

ISLAMOPHOBIA

More Islamophobic graffiti found on campus

Justine Landis-Hanley

More posters defaced with Islamophobic slurs were found on campus over the weekend.

Posters advertising an Evening with Ali Abunimah and the Palm Sunday Rally welcoming Syrian refugees were branded with offensive messages, including “Fuck off Muslims” and “Halal Funds Terrorism”.

On one poster, the image of a smiling hijabi refugee was vandalised with devil horns and

a goatee, with the words “Welcome Refugees” crossed out with thick black marker.

SRC Ethno-Cultural Officer Adam Ursino told *Honi* he discovered the posters on Saturday morning on Eastern Avenue noticeboards and the New Law Annex.

This is the latest in a string of anti-Muslim incidents on campus, which include the ransacking of the Islamic Prayer Room reported by *Honi Soit* last month.

Ursino said the University

Administration’s failure to take action against Islamophobia on campus is just as concerning.

“Only a fortnight ago I was asked to comment on posters that have been defaced with Islamophobic messages, so it’s troubling that this behavior is continuing,” he said.

“It’s equally troubling that the university continues to be reactive instead of proactive when faced with anti-Muslim sentiment.”

INTERCAMPUS

UTS Student Association sacks Vice-President, citing “harassment” and plagiarism

Naaman Zhou

The University of Technology Sydney Student Association (UTSSA) has passed a motion this week calling for the organisation’s own Education Vice-President, Madeleine Treacey-Maclean, to resign.

The March 14 motion, which passed with 14 votes in favour and four against, alleged that Treacey-Maclean’s behaviour constituted “bullying and harassment” and ran “counter to the aims of the organisation”.

Convenor of the UTS Women’s Collective, Beatrice Tan, said she approved of the decision and was “glad to be able to speak about this issue”.

Tan is a member of Student Unity, while Treacey-Maclean is a member of rival faction National Labor Students.

The motion’s mover and current Disability Officer, Andrea Zephyr (Independent Labor), told *Honi* Treacey-Maclean had “created stress for the organisation and herself, since starting the role in 2016”.

“I myself am relieved she is no longer in a position of power.”

Multiple witnesses described the council meeting as emotionally charged, with council members crying as they discussed the issue.

*Honi* understands the allegations of plagiarism revolve around sections of the UTSSA OWeek handbook, which has been taken off stands.

*Honi* contacted Treacey-Maclean and UTSSA President Sammy Howes, but neither chose to comment.

INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

“Tutors don’t even care”: Chinese students lash out at Business School over lack of support

Tom Joyner

Chinese students have voiced their growing frustration with the Business School’s response to last year’s mass failure of a postgraduate Commerce subject, saying it reflects an endemic attitude towards international students on campus.

Approximately 37 per cent of students who took BUS55000: Critical Thinking in Business in the first semester of 2015 failed the unit, with a vast majority of them Chinese.

Poppy Wang from the Sydney University Chinese Student and Scholar Association (SUCSA) said many Chinese students believed the way the course was taught disadvantaged international students.

“Professors and tutors don’t really care about international students. [Tutors are virtually saying to Chinese international students] ‘you don’t answer normally, just in Chinglish. I can’t understand you, I will skip you and move to the next valuable student” she said.

“I don’t think it’s fair. English is not [Chinese students’] mother tongue. They cannot respond like a local student, and that’s what most teachers criticise students about.”

An open letter signed by 309 Chinese students was presented to the Dean of the Business School on July 16 arguing the unit’s assessment criteria was not transparent and the final exam was too heavily weighted towards “grammar or expression” rather than content, unfairly disadvantaging non-English speakers.

Wang said the feeling of being overlooked by teaching staff wasn’t limited to the Business School. “It’s a sad thing. Chinese students always tell me that [they’re] being treated differently to the local students. We pay the money and get nothing. Even less than local students.”

Of those students who failed in Semester One last year, it is understood about 194 filed a formal appeal to the University, with only 16 succeeding in overturning their fail grade. Many more said their appeal was rejected by default after the Business School did not respond in time.

Deputy Dean of the Business School Professor John Shields denied the allegations, saying the School was “very diligent” about procedural fairness in students’ appeals. “To the best of my knowledge, no student was disadvantaged by the school or them not meeting the standard deadline,” he said.

Professor Shields added

changes had been made to the course in 2016, including English language support services and a restructured teaching staff, that he was “absolutely hopeful” would reduce the failure rate among international students.

“I think we do have a degree of intercultural awareness that needs to be developed but I wouldn’t agree that we can generalise those statements to the majority of the tutors.”

*Honi* understands the Chinese consulate in Sydney made a request to the University that failed students be granted the opportunity to resit the exam, but the Business School refused. The Chinese consulate was unavailable for comment at the time of publication.

Wang said Chinese students struggling with units like BUS55000 was a perennial issue, but only became the subject of wider discussion when mainstream media reported on it last year.

“I think the [Business School] understands the language limitations of these students, but they do not care about the students’ situations. We are not being noticed, we’re living in our own world.”

Professor Shields rejected the suggestion international students were treated differently from local students

in the classroom.

“I would dispute the suggestion that there is endemic disregard for the interests of international students here. The vast majority of my colleagues care about international students,” he said.

A letter from Adrian Cardinali of the postgraduate representative council, SUPRA, addressed to Professor Shields in July argued the Chinese students who took the unit were set up to fail.

“If such a large number of students apparently did not meet the standard required to pass the in class exam and pass the unit, why was more not done earlier?” it read.

Since 2015, SUCSA has facilitated group forums via massively popular messaging apps like WeChat and social network Weibo for students who have passed BUS55000 to provide support to students struggling under the stress of the subject.

*If you are an international student and you know more about this, you can get in touch with the editors at editors@honisoit.com, or international.officers@src.usyd.edu.au. Anonymity can be guaranteed and all correspondence will be treated in the strictest confidence.*

ACADEMIC POLICY

Reference lists to be included in Business School word counts

Mary Ward

Reference lists and citations will now be included in assessment word counts for Business School students, after the faculty announced changes to its academic policy at the start of semester.

The changes, which were revealed in this semester’s Unit of Study outlines, will apply to assessments submitted by both undergraduate and postgraduate students.

Under previous policy, reference lists and citations were commonly excluded from assessment word counts.

Business School Associate Dean (Undergraduate) Associate Professor Rae Cooper told *Honi* the change occurred to allow for an easier determination of word count when using Turnitin software for submission, so that markers did not have to manually determine the word count of a submitted assessment where its reference list was submitted in the same document.

Some business students have been upset by the policy change.

A change.org petition started by SRC General Secretary Lachlan Ward calls on the Business School to rethink the policy, which the petition alleges was implemented with “minimal” consultation and will discourage students from using a wide range of resources when researching an assignment.

Cooper told *Honi* Unit of Study coordinators had been “advised” to increase word counts to allow for the new policy. She also denied the changes had been implemented without student consultation, saying they were discussed at the undergraduate and postgraduate faculty board meetings, both of which have student representation.

But Ward said he doubted longer word counts would help. “[Students] are still forced to pick between more words and more reference, which is detrimental and punishing [to] more studious students.”

Ward told *Honi* that in a meeting with Deputy Dean John Shields on Friday, he was informed the changes were a pilot study for the semester. He added that Shields appeared to be amenable to student feedback.

He expects to submit his petition to the Dean later this week.

UNIVERSITY RESTRUCTURE

Students rally against university restructure

Ajay Sivanathan

Over one hundred people gathered outside the Carslaw building on March 16 to protest the planned restructure of the University of Sydney.

Michael Thomson, President of the USyd National Tertiary Education Union (NTEU) branch, delivered the first speech. “Sydney Uni leads the sector in one way, the Vice Chancellor’s pay [\$1.3M],” he proclaimed.

One of the biggest concerns raised was the newly proposed four-year Liberal Arts and Science degrees. Linda Connor, a member of the NTEU bargaining team, explained staff concerns regarding the plans. In particular, that there “would

be no funding allocated to the teachers of the additional year”.

The rally moved from outside Carslaw, along Eastern Avenue and into the Main Quadrangle. It finished with more speeches outside the office of the Vice Chancellor, Dr Michael Spence.

Dylan Griffiths, Students’ Representative Council (SRC) Education Officer, spoke of the how the University had “more than enough money to keep the SCA (Sydney College of the Arts) in Rozelle”, which is due to be sacrificed as part of the restructure.

The final speaker, a member of the NSW NTEU delivered a scathing blow to University management. “What seems to underpin everything is the

desire to jump ahead of the University of Melbourne on the world rankings,” he said.

There was a strong presence from activists across the University, representing a variety of different groups. The protest remained peaceful throughout and campus security did not intervene at any point.

The protest was organised by the Sydney University Education Action Group, in conjunction with the NTEU (National Tertiary Education Union).

Lachlan Ward, the General Secretary of the SRC, told *Honi*, “The rally was overall quite effective as it managed to engage students who had never been involved in student activism before.”



Photo: Liam Kesteven



# SUSF’s Grandstanding

Liam Donohoe looks into the funding of SUSF’s latest ivory tower



The Camperdown campus’ western side is exceedingly picturesque. Luscious green pastures complement an array of ivied sandstone buildings, a leafy throwback to local collegian’s private school days. Yet, for almost a year now, the construction of a new grandstand at Oval No. 2 has disrupted the stillness, as most passers-by would have noticed.

This project is a small part of the University’s “grand plan of sporting infrastructure developments” that aims to “take the spectator experience to another level”, according to Rugby Club President, David Mortimer.

Initial estimates made in April 2015 expected the project to be finalised by December 2015, though – as at Friday 18 March – construction continues with much still to be done.

There is no doubting the quality of the facility, which boasts a new 1100-seat grandstand, elite-athlete gym, outdoor entertainment areas, supporters’ bar, lighting for night games and training, and a new indoor cricket training centre. No expense was spared, with total costs in the order of \$12.5 million. According to Sydney University Sport and Fitness (SUSF) Executive Director, Robert Smithies, while the project is behind schedule, it has not exceeded its budget.

Unsurprisingly, SUSF contributed a significant amount towards its construction – \$5 million, some of which was sourced from the Student Services Amenities Fee (SSAF). “SSAF contributions make up less than 20 per cent [\$2.5 million] of the overall cost,” said Smithies, and were sourced from the SSAF “capital sinking fund”, established in 2013. Where SUSF acquired the remaining \$2.5 million is anyone’s guess but student money – either in the form of SUSF membership or SSAF fees – likely accounted for at least part of it.

In any event, that \$2.5 million is considerably more than the Students Representative Council (SRC) received in 2014 SSAF negotiations, and not too far off the amount received by the University of Sydney Union (USU).

The University itself contributed a further \$5 million towards the project, dipping into students’ pockets once more. Smithies said this figure was “compensation to SUSF for the bulldozing of the HK Ward gym”, which in 2012 cleared way for the University’s new Charles Perkins Centre.

The demolition of the HK Ward gym has been a catalyst, or, to be more cynical, a lousy excuse, for a number of SUSF projects since then,

including this one. SUSF’s 2013 annual report consistently bemoaned the demolition of the “unpleasant looking but still serviceable” facility. Smithies pointed out the “irony of bulldozing a gym to build a research facility for obesity”.

Indeed both the 2013 and 2014 reports read as one long whinge that disingenuously characterises SUSF as the victim, but in the same breath, triumphs Sydney as “standing as the number one sporting university in Australia, and indeed far beyond”.

The same report notes that the University “mostly” covered the funding for the Stage 3 extension of the Sydney Uni Sports & Aquatic Centre (SUSAC) back in 2012, again as “compensation” for the gym’s demolition.

Given the limited amenities associated with the unpleasant looking, 45-year-old facility, which only contained basic, dated martial arts and boxing facilities, one might question whether there was a debt to pay in the first place.

In SUSF’s mind, however, the University still owes it more, as it caused what President Bruce Ross called “an enormous dislocation of our sporting activities”, one that “imposed a significant financial burden.” Despite nearly four years passing, two facilities, and approximately \$20 million in remuneration for a facility of questionable and diminishing utility, SUSF expects more.

Ross had a different view of the Oval No. 2 development. “It is a precursor to other much needed building works such as the replacement of our boat shed, provision of a hockey pitch, relocation of the baseball diamond, installation of new cricket wickets, the laying of an artificial turf surface on The Square, and increasing the dimensions of the playing area on Oval No. 1,” he said.

It is natural to query whether this is an effective use of student money, especially since its amenities are ostensibly only available to members of elite rugby and soccer teams, many of whom, at least in the case of the former, are non-students paid to play in a semi-professional competition. According to Smithies, the indoor cricket nets and function room would “be made available to students for hire”, though students would still have to pay for them. The other facilities, apparently, would not be available.

Smithies argued this exclusivity would, in net terms, increase access for students, “free[ing] up much needed space at other sporting facilities for the general student population.” Smithies did not,

Artist’s Impression: USyd’s metastasising sporting facilities, circa 2050.

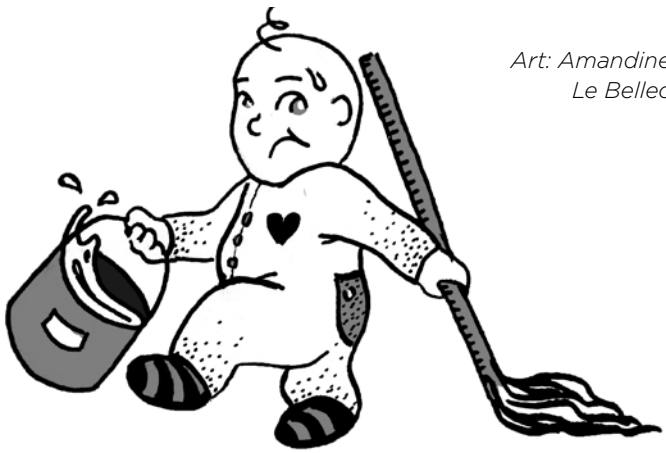
however, suggest that existing barriers to access – like price and talent – would be reduced in a way commensurate with this new space, making this suggestion, at the very least, a dubious one.

This is more than a question of accessibility. In a context where the University repeatedly bemoans a lack of funding, such frivolity is surely a cause for concern. Top academics move to other universities for a better deal, tutorials are packed and depersonalised, students stand at the back of lecture halls.

To prioritise non-essential sports facilities over improvements to educational quality seems odd at an institution whose primary purpose is, well, education. To do so in a way that provides little return to the bulk of students while using their money to largely support sport dominated by the privileged is troubling.

This is by no means the University’s most egregious misuse of student money. But it is certainly symptomatic of a broader problem, especially as SUSF looks to repeatedly exaggerate the costs associated with the demolition of a crumbling facility to expand.

Sometime in the coming weeks construction should end. When the scaffolds are removed, however, most students won’t get a sporting facility. Rather, they’ll get yet another shining monument to the ongoing frivolity, inequity, and downright silliness that is the University’s indulgence of SUSF.



Art: Amandine Le Bellec

“Man is condemned to be free; because once thrown into the world, he is responsible for everything he does.” – Joe (18 months)

# Political Economy at risk from restructure

ECOP is no stranger to struggle, Edward Furst reports



1976 protests in support of political economy. Photo: University of Sydney Archives

The study of Political Economy at the University of Sydney has a lively history, characterised by conflict, struggle and compromise. The fight to establish Political Economy courses at the University involved protests attended in the thousands, led by the student politicians who would go on to become today’s political figures. The Department’s seemingly perpetual struggle may be set to continue as the University finalises plans for its largest organisational restructure on record.

The fight to establish a department of Political Economy began in the early 1970s, when, in response to mounting discontent with the orthodox nature and limited range of economic courses on offer, staff and students held a “day of protest”. Their desire for a more holistic approach to economics that recognised the importance of societal institutions, power imbalances, historical contexts, and political ends inherent in any study of the economy, was at odds with the increasing dominance of orthodox economics. Traditional and mathematically-centred orthodox economics is more concerned with statistical and analytical elegance. It attempts to imitate the “hard sciences”, such as physics, and ignores the complexities of society.

In response to the dispute, the University was forced to establish a committee of inquiry that recommended creating a separate department of Political Economy. This proposal was rejected by the Department of Economics, who succeeded in diminishing the committee’s proposals and instead introduced a small number of individual courses on political economy to be taught within their department.

Unsurprisingly, the staff and students who had pushed for greater change were not satisfied, marking the beginning of a 35-year struggle to establish a dedicated department of Political Economy. Their vision was only realised in 2008.

The dispute between those advocating the study of political economy and those opposing it raged through the 1970s and 1980s. It featured increasingly militant student protests, multiple student suspensions, and the sacking of several academics. Indeed in June 1983, an entire issue of *Honi Soit* was dedicated to the issue. In 1979, as President of the Students’ Representative Council, Tony Abbott staunchly opposed the push for political economy courses, while Anthony Albanese took to the clock tower in the Quadrangle, along with fellow protestors, to support them. Malcolm Turnbull tried to play a mediating role between the Department of Economics and students, and succeeded in carrying a motion to establish a second committee of inquiry, but ultimately failed to ease tensions.

In 1987, a new degree, the Bachelor of Economics (Social Sciences) or BEc(SocSci), was introduced by the Faculty of Economics, successfully purging Political Economy from its main Bachelor of Economics (BEc) degree. The introduction of the BEc(SocSci) gave scope for the expansion of Political Economy units on offer and opened the door for an honours program. Enrolments in the new degree were strong from the beginning, and its requisite school leavers’ score usually matched that of the BEc. In some years, it exceeded it.

“Tony Abbott staunchly opposed the push for Political Economy courses, while Anthony Albanese took to the clock tower in the Quadrangle”

The 1990s and 2000s saw the BEc(SocSci) change form. A masters program in Political Economy was introduced, and the study of Political Economy was reallocated from the Faculty of Economics and Business to the Faculty of Arts. This paved the way for a dedicated department of political economy to be established, and saw the BEc(SocSci) degree evolve into its current incarnation, the Bachelor of Political, Economic and Social Sciences (BPES) in 2008.

As the University finalises its proposed restructure, due to be released early this year, challenges are once again posed for the study of political economy. The proposed restructure would scrap the BPES undergraduate degree, but retain the BEc.

Emeritus Professor Frank Stilwell, who joined the Department of Economics in 1970 and was central to the struggle for political economy over the subsequent decades, describes this decision as “pernicious”, saying “if the university restructure involves terminating the BPES degree, we [the department] will be worse off”. Despite students still being able to take Political Economy units within other degrees, Stilwell says that “enrolments [in political economy units] would suffer, and therefore in the medium term, our staffing would suffer under these proposals”. The introduction of the BEc(SocSci) alongside the BEc aimed to resolve the dispute within the Economics Department, and if its contemporary were to be abolished, it would create a “very unbalanced” system according to Stilwell.

The world after the global financial crisis is in greater need of alternative approaches to economics than ever before. Economic inequality, instability and climate change highlight this need, and according to Stilwell “if we don’t have institutional arrangements that focus on these complex problems in an interdisciplinary way, the University will not be properly carrying out its functions in society. And so it is absolutely imperative that we retain a department of Political Economy, a degree of BPES, that gives students the opportunity to study and research in these crucially important areas.”

For more than four decades, the political economy dispute has raged at Sydney University. The events of the past decade suggest the study of Political Economy is more relevant than ever.

# How long is the Redfern run?

Michael Sun

I exit onto the inevitably crowded platform, like a horse jolting from its holding pen. I walk with purpose up the stairs, playing dodgem cars with every other dreary-eyed student. My sight is blinkered, my hearing thoroughly censored by the angsty, MySpace-circa-2004 tune playing through my earphones.

Today is a smooth run. My Opal card is recognised by the machine despite the proximity of an RFID-chipped student card, and the lack of traffic means I can cross the street almost immediately.

I manage a quick time-check at the beginning of the boardwalk: seven minutes. I’m making good pace.

When I check my stopwatch again at Eastern Avenue Auditorium, it reads 12 minutes and 43 seconds exactly. Good time, better than the 16 minutes the day before (which I blamed on the rain).

I repeat this process three more times to obtain a Totally Objective And Scientific Average for the trip commonly known as the “Redfern Run”, the walk from Redfern Station to Eastern Avenue, of 14 minutes and 29 seconds (including weather anomalies).

Ask any regular Redfern Runner and they will tell you the trip takes a different amount of time; walkers’ estimates range from five minutes to half an hour. My theory? It all has to do with your outlook on life.

And thus begins my quest to determine, with complete accuracy, the psychological state of any individual based on one single question: “How long do you estimate the walk from Redfern to Eastern Avenue Auditorium to be?”

## EXHIBIT A: Philomena\*

**Time estimated:** “Umm...five minutes?”

**Analysis:** Overenthusiastic, overly optimistic, overachiever Philomena. After I explain to her that five minutes is the time needed to walk from Redfern station to Oz Turk Jr., her eyes widen in shock as she realises, too late, the reason for her consistent tardiness to her 10am English tutorial.

## EXHIBIT B: Aurelien

**Time estimated:** “25 minutes, it’s my daily cardio.”

**Analysis:** Unclear whether Aurelien is pessimistic or simply the victim of time dilation due to his faster-than-light-speed walking pace. Upon careful consideration, I decide that it’s a combination of the former, and the fact that Aurelien has never walked from Redfern to University.

## EXHIBIT C: Maurice

**Time estimated:** “13 minutes.”

**Analysis:** Bingo. A seasoned Redfern walker. His response, only 17 seconds off the Objectively and Scientifically Accurate Average leaves me curious as to whether he, too, has undertaken the same traumatising yet enlightening research that I have.

\*All names changed to protect these individuals and/or their embarrassing gaffes.



# Islamophobia: it's a feminist issue, too

Sahra Magan thinks intersectionality is key to any discussion of Islamophobia

Islamophobia. The knee-jerk reaction is to visualise the public spectacles of hate and hostility vividly reported in the media, the theatrics of anti-Islam rallies, the grotesque comedy of the anti-Halal movement and the bigotry of political policies that denigrate mosques. When it comes to the more insidious everyday experiences of Islamophobia, it is hardly surprising the silence is more resolute.

The primary victims of everyday islamophobia are those most “visibly” Muslim – women who wear the headscarf or hijab. These women are abused on a daily basis as their “oppression” is simultaneously used to justify denigrating their communities. The graffiti on USyd posters reported by *Honi* last week exemplified this, with some of it reading “Muslims rape babies”. A March 10 post on USyd rants shows the same “concern” for Muslim women used to justify racism.

A Muslim woman posted asking for men not to not hug or offer her, or other women wearing hijabs, a handshake. The post couldn't have been more polite, yet the response was sadly as expected. With 64 likes, one of the first comments reads, “It [refusing a handshake] makes me consider that your values are entirely contingent upon what religion your parents indoctrinated you into as opposed to a well thought out position on men not touching women.”

“Women need not be untouchable or unseeable objects,” the commenter concludes. The language of sexual liberation often used by feminists and sexists alike used to justify bigotry.

There's no inconsistency in the minds of Islamophobes who rationalise their vitriol towards Muslim women on the grounds of empowering us, yet in the same breath abuse us. It reflects our dehumanisation; we are not women, we are mere representations of their own ignorant perceptions of Muslims.

These perceptions of scarved Muslim women



Art: Steph Barahona

as oppressed and docile relics are not new. They persist in Orientalist understandings of Islam, where white men try to “save” Muslim women. All the while, they brazenly attack us on trains, in shopping centres and other public spaces.

Understanding these patterns of violence and abuse cannot be situated in a discussion that only addresses the “religious” motivations of these incidences. Islamophobic incidents cannot be divorced from the identity of the victims and

need to be understood in a matrix that recognises the relevance of sexism and racism in informing the ways scarved Muslim women of colour experience Islamophobia.

It does a disservice to victims when the framing of Islamophobia does not reflect the intersectionality of their experiences, because it implicitly validates the social narrative that regards their experiences and voices as less worthy of recognition.

## Do something

Will Edwards on why saving Safe Schools will require more than angry Facebook posts

You probably know a lot of people with strong political opinions. You probably know far fewer people who act on those opinions.

The Liberal-National government has imposed severe restrictions on Safe Schools, an anti-bullying program designed to make schools safe and inclusive for LGBTIA students. These restrictions are designed to undermine the program until it can be defunded in 2017, the latter pending the government's re-election.

I'm writing this on Friday night, the day these restrictions were announced. My social media accounts are boiling with outrage and condemnation of the government. I quickly lose count of my progressive friends' posts about the importance of the program. But I can count on just one hand how many of them actually tried to save Safe Schools.

Why do people care enough to use CAPS LOCK in their angry Facebook statuses but not care enough to actually do something constructive?

I'm not suggesting that people aren't entitled to hold political opinions. I'm suggesting that merely having views isn't enough. Believing in equality doesn't create a more equal society if it

isn't accompanied by actions which erode real inequalities. Thinking righteous thoughts is little different than thinking bigoted ones if you don't act on either of them.

We on the left shouldn't be so eager to congratulate each other for sharing politically savvy content inside our own ideological bubbles. Save the congratulations for when, by words and deeds, we actually achieve something.

Which raises the question: how? Effecting real social change is, of course, hard. I suspect that's why more people aren't doing it. But it is achievable.

Back to Safe Schools, the Liberals and Nationals have dealt it a wounding blow, but it isn't dead yet. This year is an election year, which means there's no time the government is more susceptible to being pressured or replaced. This is when the citizenry is most powerful and politicians are most inclined to heed them, so let's make ourselves heard. Here's what you can do.

Protest the Australian Christian Lobby at 12:30pm April 23 at the Wesley Conference Centre. ACL started the campaign against Safe Schools, so let's finish them before we finish it.

### Safe Schools stats

Number of schools signed up

534

Number of schools who voluntarily withdrew following the government's review

1

They claim to represent a silent majority; show them how loud a majority really is.

Teach those around you what Safe Schools is and why it matters. The arguments against it are predicated on lies, including the age-old maxim that gays are paedophiles, so the best way to fight them is with the truth. The more people know the more they'll care, and the more people care about something the harder it is for the government to take it away.

Advocate the program to your local MP. Every letter and email sent to MPs helps, because MPs prioritise (especially during elections) the issues they think matter to voters.

I wrote above that achieving social change is hard. And it is, for individuals. But collectively, if enough people just do a little bit each, this is one battle we can easily win. Support for LGBTIA rights is the majority position now. If a vocal minority has done this much damage to Safe Schools, surely a vocal majority can reverse it. We only need to make the effort, to support our beliefs with our actions. So don't just stand there, do something.



# The parent trap

The University of Sydney is an accredited breastfeeding friendly workplace, with detailed guidelines and support services – but only for staff.

Amelia Birnie talks to the students who fell through the cracks.

Art by Johanna Roberts



*“I rang up the main info line and asked who I should talk to about breastfeeding on campus and the person didn’t transfer me. She just said ‘I strongly advise you not to breastfeed publicly, there are rooms for that sort of thing.’”*



At just seven weeks old, the University of Sydney’s youngest law student sits quietly in the back row of a contracts seminar in the new Law School Building. Like many students, Pippi naps during class, giggles at inappropriate moments and occasionally throws a tantrum and needs to leave the room to calm down. But most importantly, the newborn is allowed to feed constantly throughout class, while her mum, Olympia Walker-Galt, listens, learns and lulls her daughter to sleep to the sound of the lecturer’s unintentional lullaby.

“If I hadn’t been able to breastfeed in class, it definitely would have made me feel guilty about trying to juggle work and uni and children,” says Olympia, who is taking her post-graduate studies part time.

“Because of the way the part-time Juris Doctor is structured, I would have had to defer for a year and it would have felt like I was never going to finish. I kind of assumed that I could feed, but I was concerned about whether I could actually bring her to class with me, but everyone was really positive and supportive when I asked.”

28 years earlier and 300 metres away, another mother had quietly nursed her daughter during a tutorial in an upstairs classroom of the Quad. Jill White would go on to lead Sydney’s Faculty of Nursing and Midwifery as Dean, before being awarded an Order of Australia Medal in 2011 for services to nursing and midwifery.

But in 1988, she was studying her Masters of Education with her daughter Ally in her arms. “I did it, but whether breastfeeding in class at the time was actually acceptable or not is another question,” Professor White says. “It was the 1980s and society was different, but it was a small post-graduate class, so I did it anyway and despite a few quizzical looks, everyone was fine.”

Unfortunately, not every student’s experience has been so positive. Last year, Kate Bullen had just been appointed Board Director of the University of Sydney Union when she found out she was pregnant. At 22 years old, Kate was admittedly terrified at first, but decided to continue with the pregnancy and contacted the University for advice.

“I rang up the main info line and asked who I should talk to about breastfeeding on campus and

the person didn’t transfer me,” she tells me. “She just said ‘I strongly advise you not to breastfeed publicly, there are rooms for that sort of thing’. I was really angry, I mean of course the legal right of every parent is that they can feed their children anywhere, anytime, but I was too scared to confront them about it.”

The University of Sydney was accredited as a breastfeeding friendly workplace last year in recognition of the support it has in place for mothers who choose to combine breastfeeding and work. Disappointingly, the detailed guidelines for breastfeeding and expressing on campus are only available on the staff intranet, which is not accessible to students.

Amanda Volpatti from the Australian Breastfeeding Association says the accreditation is awarded based on support available to staff, rather than students. “Accreditation is based around three criteria: having private spaces for mothers to feed or express; allowing them time to do so; and workplaces need to have a clear communication strategy in place to build a supportive culture,” she says.

“The University of Sydney’s breastfeeding policy is staff focused, not student focused, but anecdotally there is support for students who need to breastfeed in class. Some universities do have specific breastfeeding guidelines for students, but I would love to see students breastfeeding in class become more commonplace. Open communication is key to normalising the practice for mothers and other students as well.”

A search of the University of Sydney’s website reveals a two-paragraph document recognising that some students will need to breastfeed or express on campus and it directs them to the Equity and Diversity Strategy Centre. The statement is indeterminate and lacks detailed information, which presumably could be uncovered by contacting the specified support agency. But not all students with newborn babies are getting that far, most likely because they can’t find the document, or possibly because they don’t want to rock the boat.

SRC casework and policy manager James Campbell can understand why students would be apprehensive. “Perhaps I am being a bit harsh, but I think the University’s policy on chil-

dren is rather unwelcoming,” he says. The policy starts by reaffirming that the University is a family-friendly organisation, but then details the “limited and controlled circumstances” in which children are permitted. “I think the University should be progressive about children on campus and people should be able to cope without freaking out,” says Campbell.

A University spokesperson confirmed a parent or carer may be permitted to bring a child to lectures or tutorials for the purpose of breastfeeding, but only with permission from the person conducting the class.

Professor White says this policy needs to change. “Women shouldn’t have to ask permission, it should be more of a courtesy of informing the tutor,” she says. “There are some circumstances obviously where it’s not appropriate, for instance you wouldn’t have a baby in the clinical labs. But as long as there are no workplace health and safety issues it should absolutely be an expectation that you can breastfeed in class, but a courtesy to inform the tutor that you are going to. That’s all the policy needs to say.”

The University has 11 parents’ rooms located

across its four campuses and touts their high quality as being integral to its accreditation as a breastfeeding friendly workplace. Louise Corney says the Women’s Room in Manning House was a lifesaver. “I used the room when I was pregnant with my second child and it was pretty nice and comfortable,” she says. “There’s a couch there to use and accessible power points and internet.”

“Your body really gets run down in the first stages of pregnancy and having a private space when you’re feeling under the weather is a pretty big deal, especially with morning sickness. But

*“Women shouldn’t have to ask permission...it should be an expectation.”*

I did find that the parents’ facilities were often far away from where I was on campus and when you’re pregnant, you move slowly and getting places is pretty hard and quite tiring. Also the women’s room is not just a space for mothers, it’s used by all kinds of different women, so it’s not really appropriate for breastfeeding or nursing when it’s busy or loud.”

Professor White agrees there needs to be more parents’ rooms spread generously and strategically across the campus: “I have to admit it came as a shock to me when I discovered there wasn’t a parents’ room in every faculty.”

“During my tenure as Dean, we always had a parents’ room in the nursing faculty. Saying there’s one in a building that’s a 25-minute walk away is just not acceptable.”

Parents who are studying at the University of Sydney also have priority at five-day care centres near the Camperdown and Cumberland campuses, including two discounted union centres. But the Access Card discount is less than \$5 a day at most, and according to Louise, you have to be very lucky to get a spot.

“I was applying for on-campus childcare before I started studying and we were on the waiting list for a year, but that’s pretty standard,” says Louise. “I kept calling and asking, ‘Is there anything yet? Is there anything yet?’ and eventually I got a spot for my daughter, but lots of people don’t end up with spaces, especially if their children are under two.”

“Because of mandatory carer ratios, most centres don’t have the space for any more than eight children under two, so that makes the waiting list pretty much pointless. They give priority to students and that’s great, but if there aren’t the spaces, there aren’t the spaces.”

When Louise had her second child in 2014, she was unable to secure another spot. “Because we couldn’t get both of our kids into the same centre,

we had to go wherever we could find two places and it turned out to be pretty dodgy. There was a bad standard of care and they didn’t register any of our attendances with the Department of Education, which meant we had to fight to get our rebate. It was really crap and we had to get out of there as fast as possible.”

Louise discontinued her studies in 2013 and admits she’s unlikely to go back. “I was studying an accelerated post-graduate course, so I could apply to have a reduced load, but they had a policy of no part-time,” says Louise. “There was a sense that everyone should just keep up and if you can’t manage with kids then just don’t do it. But if you’re pregnant or breastfeeding, it’s not like you can stay up all night drinking coffee.”

“I’m in a professional job now that I’m happy with, but I did want to resume my studies at the time. It just wasn’t accessible. It’s not something I pushed for because you can see pretty clearly from the outset how difficult it was going to be.”

Louise isn’t alone. Kate is in her fifth year of a Bachelor of Arts, but is having to reconsider her studies after the birth of her daughter.

“While I was pregnant with Eleanor in the first semester of last year, I was enrolled in subjects, but my health took a toll during pregnancy,” Kate says. “Two of my tutors were really encouraging and supportive and I was able to get extensions on assignments without much ado. However, one of my tutors actually asked me whether I should even be at uni and I think my confidence took a massive hit after that, so I ended up discontinuing.”

Eleanor will be one year old in June this year, but Kate is struggling to get her degree back on track.

“I’m having to re-evaluate my options because I haven’t been able to secure a childcare place for my daughter, so I’m trying to juggle schedules with my partner, who is also a student,” Kate says. “I don’t have any other family in Sydney and there

are nowhere near enough places at campus childcare facilities.”

“It means Eleanor has to come to campus with me sometimes and I have been able to use changing rooms, but when I was expressing I never visited campus because I didn’t feel comfortable.”

A University of Sydney Union survey of students with children last year found 68 per cent rely on childcare to complete their studies, but 93 per cent don’t use campus childcare centres. Those who did were on the waiting list for between 14 and 20 months.

One parent reported having to breastfeed in a toilet cubicle because she was unable to find a parents’ room, while another was consistently late to class because their childcare centre didn’t open until 8am, the same time their tutorial started. Louise says she struggled to find information when trying to apply to have her study load reduced.

“There was nothing easily available and it would have been good just to have some information about the process so I don’t have to jump through so many hoops,” she says. “It was also somewhat dependent on the person who reviewed my application, who luckily had a pretty positive attitude towards women and pregnancy.”

“But if it had been someone who didn’t understand the experience or didn’t have a particularly feminist outlook, they could have easily said no. There’s no guide or standard for decisions.”

According to Professor White, no student should be disadvantaged in this way. “It comes down to a lack of communication. I don’t believe it’s a lack of willingness, I really don’t.”

“The University’s policies and support serv-

*“The University of Sydney’s breastfeeding policy is staff-focused, not student-focused.”*



es need to be much more widely publicised, I mean it’s not okay to be changing bub’s nappy on benches or toilets because of a lack of information. I don’t see reluctance on the part of the University, but what do you tackle first? There’s so much that’s been done and there’s so much still to do,” she says.

The Australian Breastfeeding Association talks a lot about the business case for creating a breastfeeding and parent friendly workplace. Helping mothers transition back to work means their skills are retained and time and money are saved by not having to retrain new staff. Workplaces also benefit from the savings associated with a healthier and happier workforce, as well as the reputational value of being a family-friendly employer.

But what is the business case for family-friendly universities? Louise believes it’s a long-term investment, rather than an instant return. “If we don’t support students with children, we are going to miss out on great thoughts, great brains and great progress,” she says.

“This is a broader societal issue. For my first year of returning to work, every cent of the money I made went into childcare. I actually didn’t make any money after paying for childcare. We need support and cheap, accessible and quality childcare. It needs to be quality, because women don’t need to feel any guiltier about putting their children into childcare.”

Olympia is incredibly grateful for the support she’s received and is likely to be able to complete her studies on-time and uninterrupted. “If it wasn’t for the support of my family and the Law faculty, I would be on a very different path.”

# To choose or not to choose

Lena Wang is probably indecisive about university

I sat at my table, stooped over a defaced notebook, buried in comfort food and baggy clothes, thinking and rethinking my degree. What was I doing? Where was I going? I pictured myself bald and middle-aged, dissatisfied with my desk job and my similarly balding partner (or my lack of one), redirecting my passions into sports cars and mini-golf.

In the kindergarten era of colourful finger paintings pinned proudly on corkboards, we began to wonder: “What will I be when I grow up?” We internalised the platitudes of inspirational, self-help movies and TEDTalks. Thousands of high school students spent hours at Open Days, ravenously inhaling both information sessions and free food, poring diligently over undergraduate guides. Now, in university, between voracious CV-building and clumsy socialising, we still find time to agonise over the direction of our lives, what courses to choose, what classes to take.

In such times of indecision, I turn to science. Its formulaic methodology fulfills roles as both my agony aunt and angry diary entry. I tried to find the necessary ratio of enjoyment to future employability in mathematical differential equations. Each deduction was written out in shining black ink, only to be smudged as I wrote out the next line. I wished tables and graphs could quantify and solve the all-consuming paralysis of choice and the greed of wanting it all.

I was overwhelmed by choice, confined by the paradox of too much freedom. I stood before two branching crossroads, trying to see down them as far as I could. I was Esther from *The Bell Jar*, staring at the figs on a tree, each fig a wonderful future. Unable to choose one fig and lose all the rest, she and I are frozen in indecision – and in our hesitation the figs blacken and fall at our feet. I was terrified that this indecision would consume me to the point my choices disappeared altogether.

I was afraid of choice, but also of not making a choice. Each fear perpetuated the other in a spiraling, chaotic waltz. Like a millennial teenager finding comfort in the rituals of MySpace, my confusion sent me scrabbling desperately for institution and order in science and mathematics.

Before we commit, everything is possible. Schrödinger’s Cat, when placed in a bunker with an equal chance of dying or staying alive, can be said to be both dead and alive, until someone opens the bunker and checks. Every possibility – living, dying – exists simultaneously in a quantum superposition. But in making our choice, in opening that bunker, we collapse our reality down to one single state, one lonely possibility, unable to ever experience the other possibilities of that choice. The cat will forevermore be either dead or alive. As Stephen Hawking noted, yes, Zayn may still be in One Direction in a parallel universe.

As I sat there vacillating, pen poised over the pros and cons columns in the notebook, I resented my capacity to choose while feeling guilty for my ingratitude. Surely, disavowing the Western privilege of freedom is treason? What about those without alternatives? And yet, I condemned the existence of my options, my ability to exercise free will. I hated my whirling thoughts, the chemical ions firing in my neurons, the very physiological processes that took place in my mind. How could my thoughts be nothing but a result of those chemical and physical processes, my (w)angst nothing more than electric impulses in my brain?

And it was here that science failed me. Those firing chemical ions were made up of quantum particles, of

quarks in neutrons and protons in a nucleus, of electrons, of particles governed by the laws of quantum physics. Quantum physics, a study so confusing that one of its defining qualities is uncertainty, ensures quantum particles behave randomly. Certainty about the position of a quantum particle would preclude any knowledge of its movement.

If the chemical processes in my brain, the interactions between these quantum particles, are inherently random under the laws of quantum mechanics, then the capacity for thought is inherently random, and free will inevitable.

“As Stephen Hawking noted, yes Zayn may still be in One Direction in a parallel universe”

My faith in the mathematical certainty of science was fruitless and fig-less. It was the inherent uncertainty of quantum physics that inflicted me with free will. Hunched over my desk, staring blankly at my wall and daydreaming about quarks, I had no choice but to have choice.



“Existence is illusory and it is eternal. Nothingness haunts Being.”  
– Alex (5 months)

Art: Amandine Le Bellec

## \*Horny soit qui mal y penis

Our hero, who will not be named, has just entered his eighth consecutive hour in the Herbert Smith Freehills Law Library. It’s a tough gig, but someone’s got to uphold the tort of hard work. And uphold some other things, too, chief among them the crotch of his pants, which for the past five minutes has been, like our hero, straining upward in search of Greater Things.

Our hero, however, has not yet noticed any of this. It often takes him a while to notice – he confuses the feeling of sexual arousal for the aching thrill of his Public Law readings, and vice versa. An easy mistake to make. His girlfriend, graciously, has yet to object to his moaning judges’ names during sex. She daren’t object, actually, lest she then have to address all of the other things. Sex can easily be, literally and figuratively, a slippery slope [1].

But back, if you will, to our hero, who has at last torn his lingering gaze from the textbook for a 30-second study break (timed for maximum efficiency). Gazing ponderously upward into the

Malcolm Turnbull cone of silence, he allows himself a moment’s daydream about the Member for Wentworth. He then becomes aware of his own member, risen out of respect.

He can no longer control himself. Closing his eyes, he sees Malcolm before him, a vision in Liberal party blue, come to rejuvenate him like he did the Coalition. Our hero shudders, overcome by paroxysms of pleasure. Malcolm is so close, he can almost touch him, almost hear him.

“Do you want the D?” Malcolm whispers lustily, slipping a hundred dollar bill into the waistline of our hero’s sensible beige boxer-briefs.

“I want – I want the HD.”

Malcolm nods approvingly. “Of course you do.”

It happens in a handful of exquisite moments. Some brief slick friction, a stifled, ragged moan. And all over his Public Law textbook, the first lib spill of the year.

1. A logical phallus-y, if you will.

\* If you remember this pun you should have graduated already.

# Twitter is weird

Naaman Zhou spent way too long trying to write 140 characters



Art: Sam Langford

The logic of a pressure cooker is that heat and closed space, left in each other’s company, let you do a lot in very little time. This basic fact is the key to incubation, the trick behind the greenhouse, the pathologist’s favourite equation. It is the lifeblood of those who accelerate things for a living, and thus the best way to understand how language works on Twitter.

The heat: everyone’s competitively jabbering messages. The enclosed space: a one-two punch of character limit and the platform’s in-built bubble where what you see is what you follow. The limited nature of Twitter makes it a place where linguistic change plays at double speed.

If you look closely enough at Twitter, it’s like interrogating a fractal. It’s a landscape of small linguistic bubbles and sub-regionalities. Young Aus-

tralian Twitter is distinctly its own beast, marked by unique on-purpose misspellings and faux-Australian. America is responsible for one of Twitter’s most culturally distortive movements: a comedy format known as ‘Weird Twitter’. Described by Time Magazine in mid-2013 as “people saying incorrect things”, it’s essentially a free approach to punctuation and spelling, a grammatical herd of cats, noticeable yet ungoverned.

Of course, every clique has its slang and every internet subculture, its meme. This is a universal fact. What makes Twitter incredible is how it spins these trends out of the most minor, even linguistically bookish, of tweaks – capitalisations and adverbial suffixes – that look to the naked eye indistinguishable from mistake.

The root maybe, is an account called @Horse\_ebooks. The brainchild of an incognito BuzzFeed staffer, @Horse\_ebooks ran for years under the premise that it was part bot, part randomiser – cutting out erratic snippets from published e-books and posting the non-sequitur results. Examples: “Are you tired of feeling unappreciated for all the hard work you” and “Who Else Wants To Become A Golf Ball”.

@Horse\_ebooks became wildly popular and something of a cult influence. The humour of it, essentially, was that it was normal syntactical speech, truncated into forms that we instinctively found funny; a sort of knee-jerk reaction of the lower cerebral speech centre. What was @Horse\_ebooks but proof that punctuational mistake or linguistic weirdness, on its own, is funny enough to make people want to adopt it?

It’s in this continued spirit that, @dril, one of the platform’s most popular accounts, has made an art of misspelling. With calibrated errors and

strokes of capitalisation, the tweet “turning my headlights off when driving at night... so that my Rivals cannot see me” amassed 3000 retweets.

In this strange hothouse, the habit of micro-errors and offbeat phrasing becomes an established ‘voice’ in the pretentious literary sense. A mode of talking that’s echoed and imitated because it demonstrates that everyone reading it is in on the joke.

If evolution is basically the replication of mistakes, then Twitter’s weird lingo is Darwinism in action. With smaller messages made more frequently, there are more typos in an average Twitter post than most other platforms. Meanwhile the retweet button is a built-in multi-generational photocopier. Mistake, both genuine or intentional, and change, both crafted or organic, are kicked on as mutation for a huge public audience.

“If evolution is basically the replication of mistakes, then Twitter’s weird lingo is Darwinism in action”

So while a parallel can be drawn to the now exhausted linguistic havoc that texting and instant messaging wrought, Twitter is still playing by a different rulebook. Texting’s relative two-way privacy meant that while broader trends did happen, they did so at the same speed as speech (i.e. gradually and only once on TV). Twitter’s twists still spin quickest and head down stranger corridors.

# Movers and shakers

Robed in ceremony but not in court, nepotism is rife in the law world, writes Natalie Buckett

The rituals of today’s elite are not quite as conspicuous or official as those of years gone by. Beneficiaries of privilege can no longer be pinpointed by crown or cape. These days, a tiny distinction in accent is more likely to betray a private school education.

Make no mistake though—the traditions of the elite are just as opulent as in centuries past. They are just no longer carried out in the public forum. Sometimes though, when you least expect it, you stumble upon these rituals. When I did, I was sitting in the Supreme Court of NSW, surrounded by Hugo Boss business suits and a battery of bespoke briefcases.

Every year, throughout university, graduates are admitted as lawyers at a ceremony held at the Supreme Court in NSW. They must bring along a person on the Roll of Lawyers in NSW to officially “move” their admission.

Caricature and banter between law students suggests they talk about their mummies and daddies more than any other aspiring careerist. The ritualistic nepotism at the legal admissions confirms this. “May it please the Court, I move that my son, Peter, be admitted as a Lawyer of this Honourable Court.”

Whilst there is no requirement that a law graduate elect a member of their family to move them, a huge number do. The guiding note provided to

those moving an admission says, “May it please the court, I move that [blank space] be admitted as a lawyer of this Honourable Court.”

The blank space allows a mover to use a student’s familial history to indicate their projected future. You can fairly safely assume there are families in there whose legal lineages stretch for decades, and that more than a few have close ties with the judges observing the admissions.

When I went to watch my mum be admitted as

“These days, a tiny distinction in accent is more likely to betray a private school education”

a lawyer, she simply took along a lawyer friend-of-a-friend. But when my sister was admitted as a lawyer, my mother admitted her. When I am admitted as a lawyer (touch wood), my sister will probably admit me.

The days are, thankfully, gone when everyone ended up doing what their parents did: butcher,

baker or doctor. And yet, antiquated notions of inherited vocation and lineages of privilege still permeate certain professions. Though there is nothing explicitly negative about simply following in the steps of one’s parents, much like the American political ancestries of the Kennedy, Clinton and Bush families, it can feel uncomfortable to watch those so historically empowered continue to assume positions of power with so much ease.

And it does feel easy: following a predetermined career path means that certain gateways are held open for you. Whilst my mum was completing her law degree later in life, my sister began hers straight out of high school. As my sister graduated from the Australian National University, I wandered into Sydney.

In law, securing a grad job is heavily contingent on the network you establish at career nights, cocktail mixers and faculty dinners. Having connections beforehand undeniably gives you a head start.

I have no doubt that many of the lawyers admitted in the legal admissions ceremony will go on to do great things, and I view the court system in Australia as one of the finest in the world. Yet, when you stumble into the casual rituals of the legal profession, you can’t help but be reminded it can be a person’s past that determines if they will be a mover and a shaker in the future.



## WHAT TO LISTEN TO WHEN...

Breaking up a royal wedding so you can steal the crown

### Trap Queen

Fetty Wap (2014)

### Killer Queen

Queen (1974)

### King Nothing

Metallica (1996)

### King for a Day

XTC (1989)

### Royals

Lorde (2013)



# Sugar Babies:

## “If I’m going to fake orgasms, I may as well get a Birkin out of it.”

Nina Dillon Britton chats to two friends, who also happen to be Sugar Babies

“With the first time, I just remember so clearly thinking about that scene in *House of Cards* where Kevin Spacey is going down on Zoe Barnes. Like I kept half imagining [the Daddy] would stop to do some insidious to-camera monologue,” Stella said, as we laughed over cheap wine and exchanged war stories. Stella’s a third year Science student at the University of Sydney. She’s a good friend and is obsessed with salted caramel popcorn. She’s also a Sugar Baby.

It’s a Tuesday night and we’re at Stella’s parents’ place in the Eastern Suburbs with Cassie, who I’d met a few months earlier as we studied at the State Library for our final exams. Cassie’s phone keeps going off – her current Daddy is incessantly texting her. Unlike the average night in with friends, I’m recording them both (with their consent of course), bearing their caveat in mind: “Just don’t make it sound more fucked up than it is.”

Sugar Babies aren’t exactly a new phenomenon, but the term is. It describes young women who, through websites or bars or occasionally through their dad’s investment banker friends, make “arrangements” with older, much wealthier men. “They don’t always have to involve sex!” Stella wants to remind me. Has she ever had a Sugar Daddy she hasn’t had sex with? “No,” she laughs.

Recently, there was an explosion of media coverage on these relationships. “Like, just about every fucking white middle-aged, middle-class male journo had to write a thinkpiece on Sugar Daddies. It was just this half-hearted veil of covering a ‘social phenomenon’ so people could imagine themselves fucking hot young girls,” Stella says.

Even the University of Sydney has had its moment in the coverage, with SeekingArrangement.com – one of the more popular sites facilitating these relationships – announcing that, with 300 registered Babies, the University ranks higher in usage than any other Australian university.

I already know the story of Cassie meeting her first Daddy. It was in the bar line at the Sheaf – a Double Bay pub. A 50-something-year-old she called the “perfect gentleman”. He ended up fingering her in the back of his BMW.

Stella’s already regaled many tales of awkward small talk with the pristine Eastern Suburbs wives of her Daddy’s colleagues. She knows what people think when they see her – a 20-something, loaded with jewellery, and on an older man’s arm. What I’m wondering though, is what does she think of the relationships themselves?

“I understand the parallels to sex work, and I’m not going to pretend they don’t exist,” Stella admits, “But Sugar Daddy relationships aren’t just prostitution.” Why is that? “Ok well first of all, and I mean, I’ve never been a prostitute so I guess I don’t know 100 per cent, but there’s a very different power dynamic. When it ended with Simon [her first Daddy] I started using Seeking



*“Is it actually that different that I’m giving this guy head, because I want, like, a fucking handbag out of him, or because I owe it to my ‘boyfriend’.”*

Arrangement, and, like, I had an account for about a day and I get like 15 or 20 offers straight away. I got to be pretty selective,” Cassie explains. “But it’s also the relationships themselves. It’s not just about sex, it’s about them wanting some emotional attachment, or at least a really good fake of it. I’ve never become attached to these men in the way most of them have gotten attached to me.”

“Look, we can sit here and pretend that Sugar Daddies are this fucked up perversion of ‘true romance,’ but to do that we’d have to forget the fact that sex and relationships already have these transactions anyway,” Cassie tells me. And she’s right. As uncomfortable as Sugar Daddy relationships make us, for many young women, sexual relationships already occur in structures of transaction and obligation. She owes boys blowjobs, but they don’t owe her an orgasm. He pays for her drinks, expecting her to entertain him.

“Is it actually that different that I’m giving this guy head because I want, like, a fucking handbag out of him, or because I owe it to my ‘boyfriend’? There’s always give and take in a relationship, but girls, especially girls my age have always got the shit end of the stick.” Either way I owe them something.” This is where she catches me though. If I accept that in my circle of privileged white friends that heterosexual relationships already come with gendered power dynamics, is formally agreeing to these obligations, in return for cash, handbags or cars, subversion of these structures or acquiescence to them? “Does it even matter anyway?” Cassie asks. “If I’m going to fake orgasms, I may as well get a Birkin out of it.”

Within the world of well-off Sugar Babies,

Art: Brigitte Samaha

subverting patriarchal constructs of female sexuality in this way is often argued as empowering. Cassie’s position is more ambiguous. “Honestly I don’t know. I’ve never thought about it. I generally don’t go through my life and constantly ask myself if this is empowering to me and all other women ever.” Stella adds, “Women have to justify and answer for their sexual actions more. That’s obvious. I mean I’m a feminist but I don’t make all my decisions, like, ‘as a woman’. I did the Sugar Daddy thing because I thought it’d make me happy,” she says.

Stella doesn’t actually have a Sugar Daddy right now though. “I guess I just recognised that what I started doing it for – to be able to go out and see friends – was completely sacrificed to get money I didn’t actually need out of a guy I didn’t actually like really. The point at which some boring old white guy became the centre of my life, that was when I knew I had to quit.”

It’s probably telling that neither Cassie nor Stella really needed the money. Sites like Seeking Arrangement are specifically targeted to young, attractive, upper-middle class women, who, despite the fact are facing the upcoming burden of HECs debt, are likely not to need the money.

“I don’t want to say that I’m not some privileged white girl, because I am, but it was a shitty situation [living pay check to pay check]. So I reckoned that like a couple of dates wouldn’t be a big deal, and I just wouldn’t have to stress,” Stella explains. Stella had initially looked for a Sugar Daddy when her rent was impinging on her social life. Now, sans-Daddy, she’s been able to temporarily move back into her parents’ sprawling Vaucluse mansion.

There should be no obligation on Sugar Babies to justify their decisions to society. After all, feminism has certainly moved away from the idea there’s any “right way” for women to be empowered. The question of why women are drawn to this – to pay for their rent, for their HECS debt – and why older men get off on this sort of arrangement, is a different question though.

# The Barber of Seville

Sippin’ wine, killin’ time - William Ryan watched the other half kick back



*The Barber of Seville* commences with the love-struck Count Almaviva attempting to serenade his true love, Rosina, on the steps of her home. For the next three hours, the audience will discover whether the Count wins her heart, pulling her out of the clutches of the despicable Dr Bartolo.

Art: Katie Thorburn

Fittingly, just half an hour earlier, I ascended the stairs of the Opera House. This was my first time in the building. And my first time at the opera.

This production of *The Barber of Seville* had been met with critical acclaim. Notably, the *Sydney Morning Herald* gave it four-and-a-half stars, describing it as “unforced, fluent and openly coloured”.

The same could be said about much of the audience. Suits were in abundance, expensive jewellery hung from necks, and absolutely all phones were switched to silent. These were people of passion. So how does a student of the 21<sup>st</sup> century fare as a student of the opera?

Indeed, like one staring into an emptied glass of expensive wine, I found myself wondering, “Is this really worth it?” Like most students, I am flu-

*“Moreover, as a child reared in an era of fast cuts and crime-thrillers, I found the narrative of The Barber of Seville slow, and in some places, tedious.”*

ent in neither Italian nor musical theory. This certainly prevented my appreciation of the medium,

and is something I am not sure can be overcome. Moreover, as a child reared in an era of fast cuts and crime-thrillers, I found the narrative of *The Barber of Seville* slow and, in some places, tedious.

That being said, revival director Hugh Haldiday did endow the performance with modern, subtle and frequently comedic touches. Smirnoff vodka bottles were dispersed amongst traditional alcohol. An actor playing a disgruntled doorman sported a punk-rock hairstyle. A soldier wore a Digger’s costume.

Indeed, it would be wrong to say that I was helplessly tangled in the technical complexities of the opera. Surtitles (translated subtitles) were provided to aid understanding of the narrative, and it was clear that the performers were talented. Namely, Anna Dowsley played the part of Rosina with great impetuosity. Juan José de León brought an endearing naivety to a role of Count Almaviva. The costuming and set were simply outstanding.

Concession prices start at \$44, though ritzier seats cost upwards of \$300. For three hours of entertainment in a world-class venue, the former is really quite reasonable.

Much like the Count Almaviva serenading Rosina in the opening scene, I came to *The Barber of Seville* hoping to be well received. Yet when I left, I questioned how genuinely the opera sought to woo me.

# Pardon the French

Peter Burrell-Sander didn’t need a translator to understand *Je Ne Sais Quoi*

Alana Cherry and Victoria Zerbst’s bilingual composition, *Je Ne Sais Quoi* is a pleasant experience. The first act was laced liberally with comedic intent, and the second replaced much of that comedy with a poignancy that left me pondering the intent of the play long after leaving the theatre. It boasted a small cast of talented performers playing roles that, refreshingly, were by no means clear in their villain/victim dichotomies. Yes, there’s a character you’ll dislike more than the others but you won’t leave hating him. Instead, you’ll leave with a new perspective.

It’s the tale of four people, not quite two couples, adrift in the sea of Paris and their own feelings. Set predominantly in cafes, they attempt to learn about each other, themselves and the nature of relationships, with limited success. It’s sad, and introspective, but so much more than a tale of woe. Let’s get it out of the way, a lot of this play is in French. There’s no denying it. Full on, rapid-fire, French. This is going to be what most potential audience members might be worried about; after all how can you enjoy a play you can’t understand?

Well, fear not, because the play is in no way unintelligible to a non-Francophone. I marvelled at the fact that, even with absolutely no knowledge as to the exact meaning of the words (and a few subtle hiccups), the performances of all involved actors nonetheless made the storyline clear and accessible.

After all, you don’t need to understand the language of a bickering couple to see that they are bickering. The passion of the performers conveys everything you really need to know; the subtitles are an extra.

Rather than the sometimes-masturbatory

writing of some “edgy” productions, this play’s introspection was simply another way for the audience to connect with the universality of the character’s experiences. The play was informative without being dogmatic, moralising without being heavy-handed pedagogy. Its themes were familiar, and yet the setting and presentation made it feel new and atypical especially for a student audience.

It makes no bones about its highbrow nature, admitting in the opening performance that it’s strewn with largely unnecessary but nonetheless pleasing literary references. No knowledge of

*“The play was informative without being dogmatic, moralising without being heavy-handed pedagogy.”*

arcane literary concepts is however required to enjoy the experience.

*Je Ne Sais Quoi* is at times subtler than you might expect, but this is part of its charm. It offers no sweeping answers, no great statements as to how the world operates. Yet it tells a story, and tells it in a way which is interesting and unexpected. Yet the most resounding part of the play was the performances of the actors and actresses, whose purpose and passion meant their story could reach you, no matter what language you speak.



Art: Zita Walker



# Catalost

Joel Hillman (BPharm) (MPS) reports on the ABC's science reporting

Normal drug-taking  
apprehensions



“Experts”



Life-threatening lies peddled  
by the national broadcaster

If you, like me, grew up keen on science, you've watched the ABC's popsci show *Catalyst*. If you, like me, have anything to do with good science, you'll hate *Catalyst*.

Billed as an accessible educational program explaining both new and established interest pieces on science and medicine, it's the only show of its kind on prime time Australian television. With an award-studded cast comprised of two physicists, a veterinarian, and a medical researcher, you'd be forgiven for expecting a higher calibre of not only journalism, but scientific accuracy.

Putting aside its other failings, three episodes stand out to me as reason enough for the show to be severely reprimanded. The first two episodes, *Heart of the Matter* (parts 1 and 2), aired in 2013, on the topic of cholesterol-lowering statin drugs. Statins are the most-prescribed drug class in Australia, and effectively reduce the risk of heart attacks, strokes and vascular disease. While there are risks involved with any medication, statins have been proven safe and effective.

The episodes quoted fraudulent statistics, disgraced or unqualified “experts”, and, as an independent USyd research group calculated, was responsible for about 60,000 of the 200,000 patients studied that ceased using statins in the eight months after the twin episodes. As many as 2,900 otherwise preventable heart attacks and

strokes were predicted to have occurred in the study group as a direct result of the false information peddled by *Catalyst*. The “experts” (including a naturopath) the show consulted postulated cholesterol was not responsible for heart diseases. The National Heart Foundation said in response that it was “shocked by the disregard for the extensive evidence”.

Years later, in my practice as a pharmacist, I still feel the aftershock. I must still fight the misconceptions and lies put forward by what the public perceived as a reliable and accurate source. I have had patients directly cite *Catalyst* as the reason they do not use their meds.

The third dubious episode, *Wi-Fried*, aired in the last month. In this, *Catalyst* fabricated another, arguably more insidious, error – that mobile phones cause cancer. They again used unsubstantiated claims from false experts (who had shiny titles like “Doctor”) to assert a thoroughly debunked idea.

The evidence, actual experts, and all governing bodies, strongly suggest there is no causal link between non-ionising radiation, such as that put out by mobile phones or Wi-Fi, and cancer.

We have not observed what would be a catastrophic spike in brain tumours over the last three decades, despite the ubiquity of mobile phones. Cancer is a “reportable illness” – it is law that all

cases must be recorded and investigated – so we're not missing any info. A good comparison is smoking. We saw a huge increase in lung (and other) cancers with the increase in smoking in the last century, and a downward trend with smoking reduction. This is not the case for mobile phones and cancer. The incidences of brain tumours have not increased anywhere near the amount that they would need to for there to be any sensible link.

Professor Rodney Croft, of the International Commission on Non-Ionizing Radiation Protection said in response to *Wi-Fried*: “radio-frequency emissions are one of the most heavily researched agents that science has ever assessed, and given that, contrary to *Catalyst*'s claims, no substantiated health effects have emerged”.

The fact is, patients don't have the health literacy to know things without medical guidance, but who is giving that guidance is very important. The show and ABC management hasn't done enough to stop it – simply removing episodes from the website is not enough. The damage has been done.

The public should be able to rely on scientists to provide a united truth, as is their job, and *Catalyst* has consistently failed to provide accurate and reliable information. It has demonstrated that it does not deserve its place as one of the Australian public's most popular ways of consuming science.

# From the Archives

Clippings from *Honi's* 87-year history

The complaint made by the SRC to the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission (HREOC) against the University's discrimination action regarding students who are HIV or Hepatitis B or C positive, has been set down for hearing for one week commencing 16 October 1994. The case has been taken as a class action and is an important precedent for HIV discrimination. All undergraduate students are members of the SRC and therefore all students are welcome to get involved with the case and attend the hearing.

In 1993, the University of Sydney sent two letters to all enrolling and re-enrolling students in Health Sciences, Dentistry, Medicine and Nursing, advising all students who were HIV or Hepatitis positive that their health status may prevent them from completing the clinical sections of their course, and thus from attaining their degree. Despite outrage from media, the AIDS lobby, sectors of the medical profession, and the SRC, the University refused to retract or apologise for these letters, and maintained that they represented University policy.

# Encrypt this

Jacob Henegan can probably hack you

A few weeks ago, USyd's Disability Services sent out an email informing students that a laptop containing sensitive data had been lost in transit. The email contained the ominous sentence, “While the computer is password protected, the University is concerned that this does not absolutely guarantee the security of the information.” As a programmer with some basic knowledge of security, I know that in security reporting, “computer was password protected” is usually code for “we didn't even encrypt the drive”.

While most people think of password protection as a padlock, to anyone with even the slightest idea what they're doing, it's really more of a “do not enter” sign. It tells you you shouldn't be there, but does bugged all to stop you.

While Disability Services have not confirmed that the laptop was unencrypted – when I asked them they dodged the question – it seems unlikely that it was, or else they would have mentioned it in their release. In fact, if an encrypted laptop was lost in transit, I doubt they would have reported it, because a correctly encrypted drive with a secure passphrase is damn near impossible to get into. But what is encryption?

On a normal computer, the password is just a lock screen on the operating system that won't disappear until you enter the password. If you can

circumvent the OS, by booting off a USB, mounting the hard drive as an external drive in another computer etc., you can access everything on it.

Encryption is different. When you encrypt a drive, you use a passphrase to scramble the drive on a bit-by-bit level. If you try and look at an encrypted drive, it just looks like unreadable nonsense until you decrypt it.

Last semester, USyd ran a course on practical security and penetration testing for the first time. The premise of the course was to learn the techniques hackers use, with a view to protecting systems against them – it's common knowledge within the security community that the best way to stop a hacker is to think like one.

A class full of total n00bs went from knowing nothing about Windows to having system32 access (highest level of access) in about 20 minutes. Now that I know the trick, I could do it to any unencrypted Windows computer in about five. It was the easiest attack we learnt – we won't publish it here, but anyone who wanted to could find it with a quick Google search.

If Disability Services did have unencrypted drives, as their email implied, they'd be far from the only ones to make this mistake. Overestimating the powers of password protection is an all-too-common mistake in cybersecurity.

# The Wizard of @Oz\_f

Elijah Wilcox-Armitage sat down with Osman Faruqi IRL



This is Osman Faruqi's headshot. He said we could use it. Handsome.

After 11:30am, Osman Faruqi walks up to me in The Shortlist cafe in Redfern, and he greets me with, if I remember correctly, a slightly broad “g'day.”

Meeting Osman is moderately surreal. Any young, Left-wing Australian that uses Twitter probably follows Osman. He tweets a lot. At time of writing, he's tweeted at least 58,600 times. He's used these tweets to analyse the national political scene and promote his articles. I've read his thoughts for years, tiny snippets of, generally, outrage, hot takes and analysis. It's easy to forget the people behind words on the Internet are real people, that they are complicated and contradictory, and not just the abstraction of their social media presence.

Osman's speaking style is that of someone naturally confident and loud. It helps explain his very prolific career in the combative world of politics and opinion journalism. He's one of the frontrunners of the new wave of young, internet-based, leftist, Australian “opinionistas”. He's been published widely – including in *The Australian*, *The Guardian*, and *The Drum* – as well as featuring on radio and television. Beyond journalism, he's worked as a Greens staffer, was NSW State President of NUS, and recently co-launched MetaPoll, a super-accurate poll.

From Osman's apparent seniority, I'd assumed he was 27 or 28, but he's only 25.

The fact Osman is so young is the keystone of why he's such an interesting force. There is a devastating lack of young voices in parliament, with only two under 40: Wyatt Roy and James Patterson. Osman describes them as “factional sycophants who have only worked as staffers and for think-tanks”. However, he won't be running for election any time soon. “I ran for parliament last state election, not in a seat that we had much of a chance of winning, mainly because I cared about the issues in my area and I wanted to articulate them, but one of the reasons why I took a step back and decided I didn't want to do that again is my whole life until that point had been, really, working as a staffer and a campaigner. I thought, fuck, I don't wanna replicate those problems.”

When I ask him about how he got into politics, and whether his mum had much to do with it, he tells me she didn't. This surprises me, considering Mehreen Faruqi is an elected Greens Member of Parliament. He tells me he became interested in politics at a young age, but it wasn't until he went to UNSW that he began to get involved seriously. “To me that was one of the coolest things about student politics at that time, that you can come

to university with very little idea about what you want to do, but you can meet people that feel similarly to yourself. I, in hindsight, stupidly, got sucked into student politics, which, the more I got into it, the less fulfilling it was.”

Osman, however, is still committed to creating positive political change. To me that appears to be one of the driving forces behind his involvement in Metapoll. “The way that most political polls work is that they're owned by media companies that have their own political interests, either in selling newspapers, or projecting a particular political narrative.”

Osman also laments the inaccuracy of the major polls – he points out that a margin of error of three points (which is the norm) on a 50-50 result, can describe the difference between a hung parliament and a landslide. To rectify these problems, Meta-

*“The way that most political polls work is that they're owned by media companies that have their own political interests, either in selling newspapers, or projecting a particular political narrative”*

Poll has been designed to reduce the margin of error in polling results to less than one per cent and offer more policy-oriented questions, with the hope of elevating the standard of debate from mere electoralism to being genuinely policy-centric.

For me this raises a question: Osman is a man that has described representative democracy as a device designed to reflect class interests and maintain the system of capitalism. If that is the case, it is interesting he has an interest in working within it. When I put this to him, he tells me, “My approach has been, even if what you're doing isn't fundamentally reshaping society, if you can help some people, that's better than not helping any others. And that's not about getting sucked into it, that's about saying, yeah, the system's broken, but there are still things we can do within it, that actually are about helping people.”

However, Osman is not exclusively focused on domestic parliamentary politics. He also writes about pop culture, music in particular. A recent article he wrote for *The Vocal* about Kanye West was quoted by *Lainey*, a significant American pop culture publication. However, he's concerned about the state of the music scene in Sydney at the moment, particularly the lack of politically dissenting perspectives. “I think there's two things going on. When people are like, music is kind of reflecting like a generation generally, and it's not so much that that generation doesn't care about things, it's that there's less activism that's going on that's articulating like a clear political analysis and project, but then also like, we're just working way more than older generations were, right? We're kind of forced by necessity to work harder.”

Osman can be found at @oz\_f and MetaPoll has just launched and can be found at @MetaPoll.



# The finer points of Powerpoint

By Alexandros Tsathas

As the sun retires on my university folly, I take time to quietly reflect on that facet of my being that simultaneously made me the darling of tutors and the bane of envious classmates. The same foghorn heralded my postgraduate suitability. On multiple occasions.

Powerpoint presentations have always been my forte. It's that simple. I feel the time is right to share my gift; it makes sense to, for what benefit lies there in taking academic secrets to the undergraduate grave?

I offer you my *pentaxioms of Powerpoint*.

## Signature style

Much ado is made of what constitutes inappropriate presentation attire. My attitude has always been 'discard the rulebook'. Instead, seek out a signature style piece that will win your tutor over. I, for instance, have a go-to pair of tassled moccasins. Paired with low-cut sporting socks, they are a sure-fire way to sway even the most principled tutor.

## Transition timing

Holding an unwieldy clicker interferes terribly with pre-rehearsed hand gestures. The solution is obvious: commit a pre-written script to memory, recite this verbatim, and automate slide progression using Powerpoint's nifty 'advance slide after \_ seconds' feature. With transitions seamlessly synchronised with your recital, there is no way anything can go wrong. Your tutor will be understandably impressed.

## Sounds

The most frequently overlooked of Powerpoint's features. The key here is unrelenting consistency. Use six-shooter style ricochets for every single bullet point. To this, the typewriter sound effect serves as the perfect contextual complement. Be bold. Every character deserves a typewriter stab. Even spaces? *Especially* spaces. Otherwise, presentations could seem unbalanced.

## Slide design

Powerpoint offers a range of sophisticated design presets, and the option to personalise their colour scheme. My preferred theme is the Rococo-inspired "Couture" (used here), in an eye-catching mission brown with lime green highlights. Those in my working groups inevitably remark on the unorthodoxy of this aesthetic. My response: why zig when you can zag?

## Custom paths

Too often is object animation an afterthought. Excuse my brusqueness, but limiting one's self to the 'appear' default is akin to having access to Debussy's complete works and listening to his frumpy *La Saulaie for baritone* on repeat. Custom motion paths, where objects trace a trail of your choosing before settling on their eventual resting place, are a must. I love paths that touch every corner of my slides, erratically, in the shortest amount of time possible.

AN(TI)NOTATIONS

# Your future career

Fairfax Media Careers

## Account Executive

We're looking for an Account Executive who's ready to be a part of an innovative and successful sales team with fantastic product and revenue growth to contribute and look forward to. You will be responsible for client services and account management across a variety of media and client verticals, with exposure to brand strategy, product development, timeline management and project management, as well as working with software vendors.

You would be welcomed into a team experiencing strong growth and development, and contribute to a key part by developing and maintaining close working relationships with clients, to ensure quality long term strategic customer relationships. You will also be a part of key product strategy and development for the Media Team.

### Candidate requirements:

- 1+ years working within a media environment
- Knowledge of standard computing systems and programs
- Friendly, self motivated, collaborative WITH MANAGEMENT
- You'll have strong interpersonal and relationship building skills and also be happy to learn and work with technology (such as

Facebook, Google and Adobe). If you want to be part of team with a fantastic reputation during a time of exciting growth we'd love to hear from you.

Domain.com.au does not accept unsolicited agency resumes. Domain is not responsible for any fees related to unsolicited resumes.

### Job Details

Reference #	19294
Posted on	Mar 18, 2016
Closes on	Apr 4, 2016

Annotated by Naaman Zhou

REVELRY IN REVIEW

# Wet and wild

## Isabella Barrett and her poncho went to Surreal Sounds

For those of you who have been living under a rock for the past week, let me tell you about Surreal Sounds. Held at St Paul's College, this annual festival-type party is a night filled with booze and bangers. With tickets selling out at the fastest rate in the event's history, Surreal Sounds 2016 started off the college informal season with a bang sweeter than popping the cork of a \$7 Passion Pop.

The weather may have been gloomy, but no true university student would let this stop them from making the most out of their \$40 ticket. In fact, the heavy rain was the perfect way to showcase the real partiers, who donned hooded ponchos that were about as attractive as their enthusiastic dance moves. As the night went on, it became more and more difficult to tell whether those white Ralph Lauren shirts were drenched in rain, sweat or beer.

With performances from the likes of Sons of the East, Dom Dolla and Rogers Room, Surreal brought to Sydney University what some term the "festival experience".

The experience would not have been complete without the mosh-turned-mud-bath (RIP white converse), crazy-eyed teenagers and more lost

iPhones than dignities.

What Surreal does have over other festivals is cheap drink prices and sandstone walls. In true St Paul's College fashion, the stage was not only lit up with an excessive amount of lighting, but also a few flames.

*"Worst surprise: the portaloos. Enough said."*

Let's be real though, people don't really care who plays at Surreal. The night is more about the atmosphere as a whole rather than each individual DJ or song. When asking friends about their favourite act of the night, responses were along the lines of, "I can't really remember, but I had a good time."

Best surprise: the free sausage sizzle. This probably saved a lot of lives.

Worst surprise: the portaloos. Enough said.

## Honiscopes

These are your inspiring DJ Khaled horoscopes straight from his motivational snapchat



**Sagittarius**

It's all about vibes ya know



**Leo**

The key to more success is coco butter



**Aries**

There will be road blocks but we will overcome it



**Libra**

You smart! You loyal! You're a genius!



**Taurus**

Key to more success is clean heart and clean face



**Scorpio**

Keep the path of success clean



**Gemini**

You want my advice? Don't play yourself



**Capricorn**

Baby, you smart. I want you to film me taking a shower



**Virgo**

They will try to close the door on u, just open it



**Aquarius**

Smh they get mad when u have joy



**Cancer**

They don't want you to win. They don't want you to have the No. 1 record in the country



**Pisces**

Always have faith. Always have hope

Art: Zita Walker



"The truth is a trap: you cannot get it without it getting you; you cannot get the truth by capturing it, only by it's capturing you."  
- May (5 months)

Art: Amandine Le Bellec



# The Census Date is Coming

Thursday 31<sup>st</sup> March is the Census date for semester one. This is the date that the government considers your enrolment at University, and charges you for whatever Units you are enrolled from this day. Check your University records to make sure that you are correctly enrolled in the subjects you want to attempt. If you drop a subject ('Withdraw – WD') by the Census date there will be no academic or financial\* penalties.

*\*International students may have to pay an administration fee.*

If dropping Units makes you part time (that is with less than 18 credit points) please consider the following:

CENTRELINK

Part-time students are usually unable to receive Youth Allowance, Austudy, or Abstudy. Some exceptions apply if you are currently unwell or have a disability. Talk to an SRC caseworker before dropping subjects to get advice about this.

INTERNATIONAL STUDENT VISAS

Most student visas require international students to study a full load of 24 credit points. A few exceptions apply. Talk to your SRC caseworker before dropping subjects to get advice about this. The SRC also has a Migration lawyer who can help with visa questions.

# Ask Abe

SRC caseworker HELP Q&A

Dear Abe,

I applied for Youth Allowance at the end of December and I still haven't received any word from Centrelink about granting the payment. I am finding it really difficult to pay my rent and buy food. What should I do?

*Running Out Of Patience*

Dear Running Out Of Patience,

Many people have reported this problem. We have heard that it is a combination of low staff numbers and a new Computer system that is slowing Centrelink's processing rates. This situation is completely unacceptable. Check with Centrelink to see if they need more information from you or if there is another reason they have not made a decision. If the problem is just the slow processing time that many people are facing we suggest you contact your Federal Member of Parliament or the Commonwealth Ombudsman to make a complaint and see if they can help speed things up for you or everyone too.

As a stopgap measure you can talk to the University's Financial Assistance Service to see if they will give you an interest free loan.

You might also want to read our SRC Guide to Living on Little Money at <http://srcusyd.net.au/src-help/other/guide-to-living-on-little-money/>

Abe

SRC Caseworkers offer advice and support on a range of issues including: Academic Issues, Tenancy issues, Centrelink and more. 9660 5222 or [help@src.usyd.edu.au](mailto:help@src.usyd.edu.au)

*If you drop a subject - Withdraw (WD) by the Census date there will be no academic or financial\* penalties.*



*I applied for Youth Allowance at the end of December and I still haven't received any word from Centrelink about granting the payment.*

## DID YOU KNOW?

### Withdrawing from a subject before 31st March SEM 1 August SEM 2 avoids a FAIL on your transcript & HECS\*

*\*International students should seek advice about their fees from the International Office or the SRC.*

Need help or advice? Your SRC is here to assist you.

The service is FREE, independent and confidential. Phone for an appointment: (02) 9660 5222

We are located at: Level 1, Wentworth Building (G01)

[help@src.usyd.edu.au](mailto:help@src.usyd.edu.au) | [src.usyd.edu.au](http://src.usyd.edu.au) | [facebook.com/src.help](https://www.facebook.com/src.help)

## IN A PICKLE?

### If You Have a Legal Problem, We Can Help for FREE!

Level 1, Wentworth Bldg, University of Sydney  
p: 02 9660 5222 | w: [src.usyd.edu.au](http://src.usyd.edu.au)  
e: [solicitor@src.usyd.edu.au](mailto:solicitor@src.usyd.edu.au)  
ACN 146 653 143 | MARN 1276171

法律諮詢  
法律アドバイス

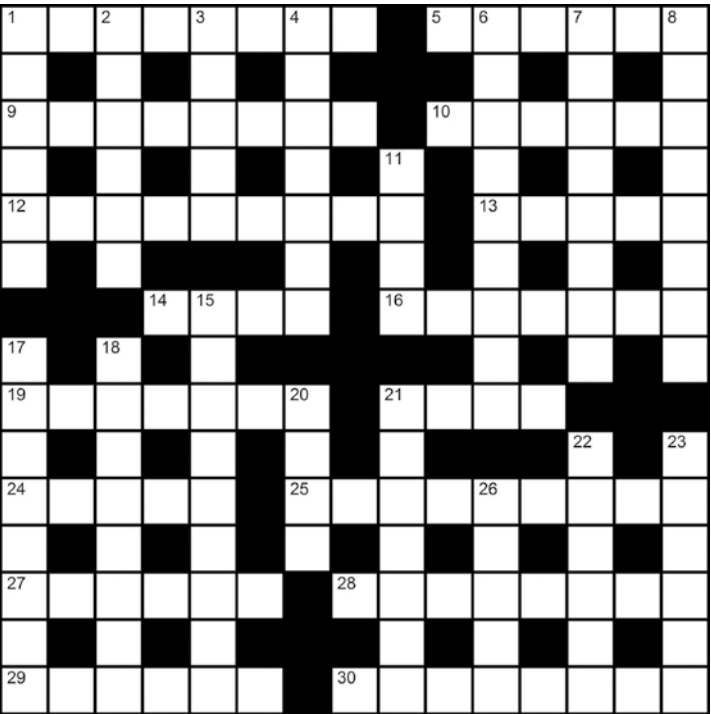
We have a solicitor who speaks Cantonese, Mandarin & Japanese

Liability limited by a scheme approved under Professional Standards Legislation.

This service is provided to you by the Students' Representative Council, University of Sydney.

# Cryptic

Crosswords by **Zplig**



ACROSS

- 1 Liver can't maintain standard drink after cap of ouzo? (8)
- 5 Has a meal at home and it leads to trouble with gluttony perhaps? (4,2)
- 9 One-lined fallacy deconstructed for mugs (8)
- 10 Live with a prisoner? That's a warning (6)
- 12 Loans tending to spiral about interestingly (9)
- 13 Mindful of a product on sale (5)
- 14 Understood to lose one's awareness (4)
- 16 Set of laws protecting key rights for strange old men (7)
- 19 Conducted live show before daybreak (7)
- 21 Brew's benefit? (4)
- 24 Perhaps Churchill's retro-charm didn't quite fit with the King? (5)
- 25 "Skill is captured by books regularly? A lie!" - 3-down's student (9)
- 27 Referring to the set books' epilogue leads to complete embarrassment - fairly nasty ironically (6)
- 28 Senator and whip row about initial investigation (8)
- 29 I Claudius' ending always felt dry? (6)
- 30 During school break; odd bit of kelp produced rash (8)

DOWN

- 1 Government department satisfy nothing for the Pres. and VP (6)
- 2 He denounced 28-across for detailed brag about reserve (6)
- 3 Sound conduct's brought back into awareness by 7-down's student (5)
- 4 Øst en Land! [foreign] (4,3)
- 6/18 25-Across' student was a renegade that was mad about Roman law and the King (9,3,5)
- 7 Teacher values stoic abstinence of regularities before all else? (8)
- 8 Something that can't be described with our faculties is meaningless (8)
- 11 Singers make their descend into harmony? (4)
- 15 Draw attention to new sedative containing tiny bit of Ritalin (9)
- 17 Counters cruel treatment with a cold shoulder initially (8)
- 18 See 6
- 20 Pull out a tie to attract (4)
- 21 Senior clergy man, e.g. (7)
- 22 Two paths lead to a single big step? (6)
- 23 Justice brought an end to the last of the Rolling Stones? (6)
- 26 Expect fine to be over £1000 (5)

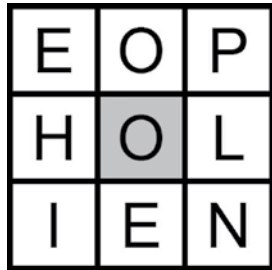
ACROSS

- 1 Long running BBC medical drama (8)
- 5 Each (6)
- 9 6 Down, for example (8)
- 10 Two, or a few (6)
- 12 Dividing students by their abilities (9)
- 13 Crème de la crème (5)
- 14 Extent (4)
- 16 Raw fish (7)
- 19 Almost all 6-Downs were this at one point (7)
- 21 Class (4)
- 24 Set of principles (5)
- 25 Dining hall (9)
- 27 What you do at a library (6)
- 28 What most good 6-Downs do (8)
- 29 Like some exams (6)
- 30 Famous Dane writer (8)

DOWN

- 1 Elegant (6)
- 2 You'd have to take many steps to champion them? (6)
- 3 Footballer: Pitch: Gladiator: \_\_\_\_ (5)
- 4 Fee to be a 19-Across (7)
- 6 Moriarty, for one (9)
- 7 Clearly shown (8)
- 8 Critical explanation of a text (8)
- 11 21-Down and others (4)
- 15 Essentially day-care, rudely (9)
- 17 Meeting that every 19-across attends (8)
- 18 Feeling of great elation (8)
- 20 One fourth of the school year (4)
- 21 XV (7)
- 22 College \_\_\_\_ (6)
- 23 Monty \_\_\_\_ (6)
- 26 Very thin breakfast (5)

# Target



Lol: 12, You're not fired: 16, Mensa level: 21

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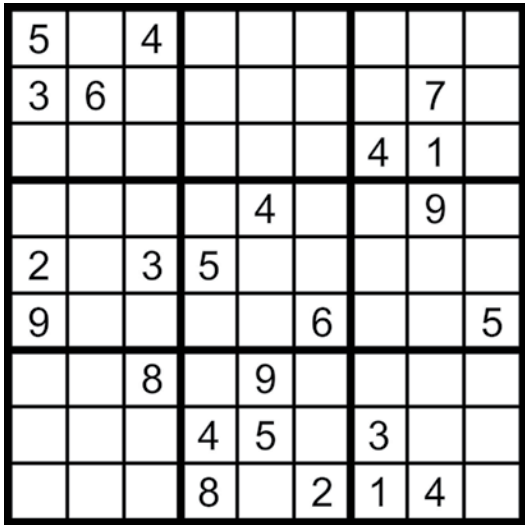
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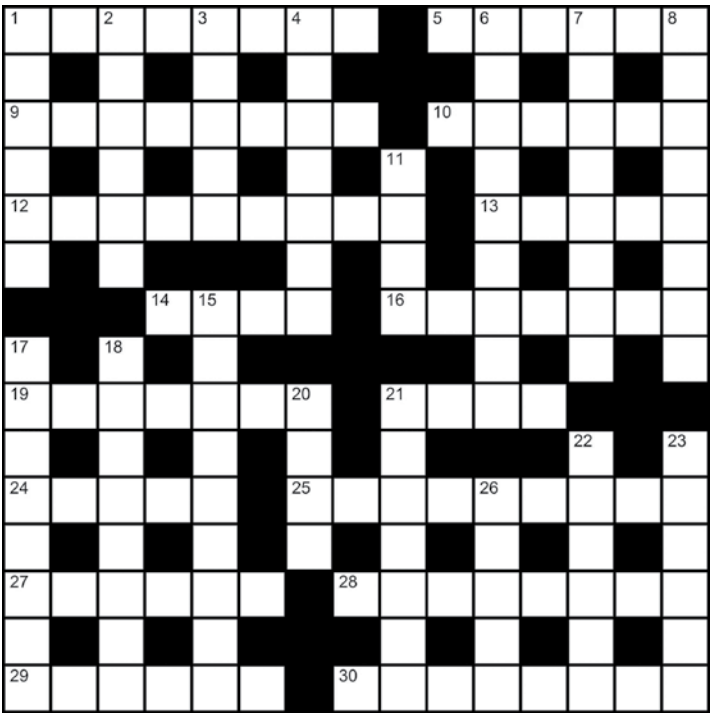
# Sudoku

Sudoku and Target by **Zplig**



**Week 3 quiz solutions:** 1. Lewisham 2. Uranus 3. 2013 4. Apes 5. 2008 6. Alexander Hamilton 7. Angelique Kerber 8. Random Access Memory 9. True 10. Mexico

# Quick



# Quiz

- 1. Which of the following is not a registered society with the USU C&S program? a) Hepatitis B Free Society b) Flair Society c) Yo-yo Society d) Pen Society
- 2. Epistaxis is the medical term for what ailment?
- 3. Which world city has the largest population?
- 4. Which actor is Mickey Mouse named after?
- 5. How many carats is pure gold?
- 6. Which opened first: Laneway or Courtyard?
- 7. Name the six Tiny Teddies.
- 8. What was the name of the youngest Twist sibling in *Round the Twist*?
- 9. True or false: Sydney University Dramatic Society is the oldest continuing theatre company in Australia?
- 10. Is Good Friday a public holiday in France?

To learn how to do the cryptic and meet other cruciverbalists, find the **Crossword Society** Thursday 10am-12pm outside Hermann's.



# The Postgrad Pages

PRESENTED BY 

## Why did SUPRA join the Student Protest against the University Restructure?

Ahmed Bin Suhaib & Fatima Rauf encourage postgraduate involvement



On 16th March, students and staff gathered at Carlsaw to protest against the proposed changes to the university. Together they marched from Carlsaw to Vice Chancellor Michael Spence's office chanting "No cuts! No fees! No Corporate university!"

The Student Protest: Fight the Usyd Restructure, organized by the SRC, has been endorsed by student organizations, NTEU, and SUPRA. Yet the presence of postgraduate community at the rally was miniscule compared to undergraduates.

The postgraduate community may have not realized that they will also be affected by proposed undergraduate course cuts, staff cuts, and faculties mergers and thus, it is important for us to take a stand now before it is too late.

Changes to degree structures mainly affects undergraduates but the postgraduate community will also be affected by them. In most faculties, postgraduate coursework students take the same core units as undergraduate students. At the protest, an NTEU member said "changes in the degree structure will increase the class size of core units." As it is, postgraduate students are already treated like undergraduate ones and their experience from their previous degree is ignored. With bigger classes, postgraduate students will further be ignored and the quality of the education they receive will be negatively affected even though they pay insanely high fees compared to undergraduate students for undertaking the same unit.

The NTEU member further added that with the proposed changes, the University should be hiring more staff not firing them.

Staff cuts affect the quality of education postgraduate students will receive. Teacher student interaction is already not at optimal level with the current class sizes and further cuts will only worsen the situation. Further, staff cuts will cause the remaining staff to be overworked which will affect their working conditions as well as the students' learning experience. Siobhan Keller, a Master of Pharmacy Student, complained that after the recent staff club in the Pharmacy faculty, "there has been a significant reduction in contact between staff and students in the faculty, which has led to a considerable step backward throughout the university, forcing students to feel more like a number, and less like a person."

Moreover the admin team in each faculty is being reduced and postgraduates won't be able

to get specialized advice from their faculties anymore. Siobhan further added: "following the university wide staff cuts, many pivotal staff members in the administration area were let go. One of the most disruptive results of the restructuring, was the removal of special consideration from in-house, making applications for special consideration both tedious and less personal."

Further, the reduction of admin staff could be expected across each faculties after they are merged. These mergers will merge postgraduate students while reduce the number of staff which will reduce staff per student ratio.

The biggest problem, however, with faculty mergers will arise from the merging of Sydney College of Arts (SCA) with the faculty of Education and faculty of Social Works. This merger comes with the proposal of closing down SCA's Callum Park Campus.

For years SCA has been an inspiration to postgraduate art students and has plenty of space for different art classes. With the closure of SCA campus, the arts students will be moved to the

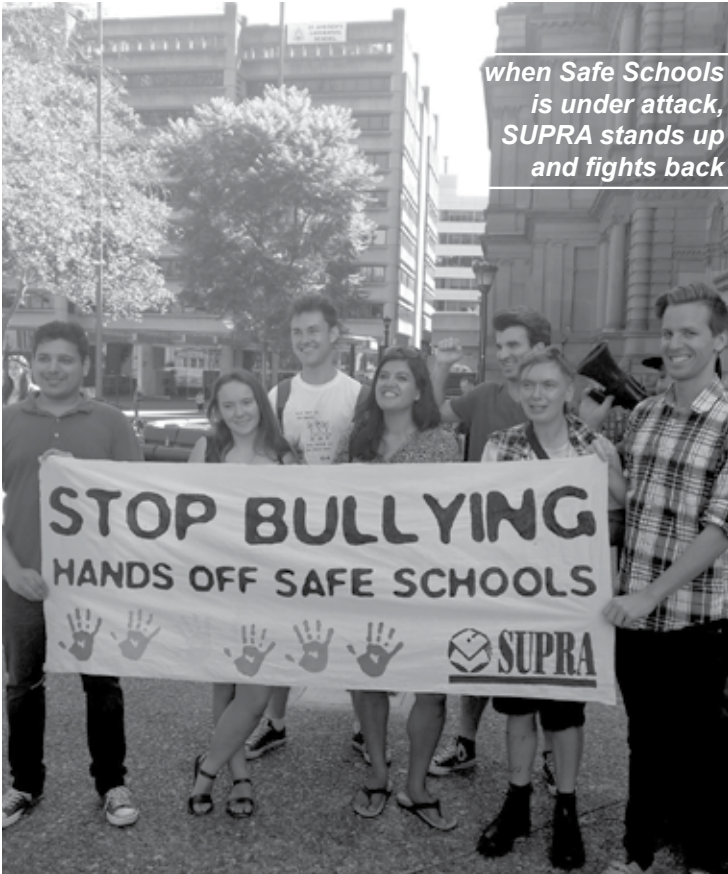
already over-crowded main campus where there is no studio space for arts students.

The SCA community was present at the protest raising concerns about the effect the closure of SCA will have on both the SCA students and students on the main campus. The SCA representatives were disappointed that students have not actively protested against closing of Callum Park even though they are unhappy about the decision.

SUPRA wants to protect the interests of the community it represents hence we were present with a yellow and black banner clearing stating that we are against course cuts, staff cuts, and faculty mergers. The postgraduate community should join their representatives and make their voices heard.

The battle against the restructure has begun and we need your support to continue fighting for the quality of our education. It is important that we as a community speak loud and clear now. Join SUPRA and the SRC in future protests and forums on restructure. Together we will build a better university. Together we will build our university.

## SUPRA SUPPORTS: SAFE SCHOOLS



I write to you today to discuss how you can use SUPRA to change things for the better. SUPRA had plenty of wins in 2015. We have implemented stronger and more student oriented HDR and progress review policy, which benefits all research students. We have ensured simple extensions will remain in University policy, meaning all coursework students still have those rights when facing sickness or misadventure. We have taken on the Business School over their shortcomings in teaching support, and secured significant improvements in assessment design, support and consultation.

Your postgrad union is filled with dedicated representatives who will fight for your rights and your study conditions. But we are just that: representatives.

To make sure our purpose is served, that being to serve you, we need your help. And so I write to you to let you know of some new things SUPRA is doing. Because your voice is so important to us, we want to make sure our time is made as available as possible so that we can hear it.

There are some new ways students can make their voices heard. The first is our 'log of claims.' Basically, if there are some shite conditions in your faculty, or if you are not getting the feedback, teaching quality, and classroom conditions that you need, we want to know. If your research

centre needs resources, be they better computers or a microwave, we want to know. SUPRA is effectively offering an open channel for you to complain about stuff, and then together, you and I, we will launch into campaign mode and try and fix it. And fix it we will, because SUPRA knows how to win.

*Basically, if there are some shite conditions in your faculty, or if you are not getting the feedback, teaching quality, and classroom conditions that you need, we want to know.*

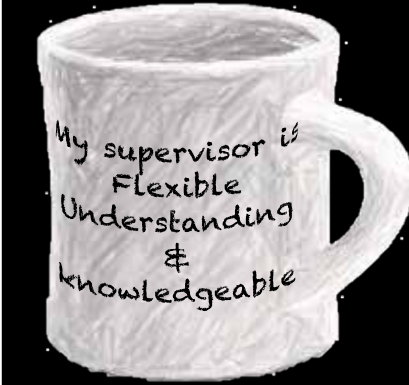
Another way is our recent '[Your Faculty] Forum' series. Now this sounds very boring; 'forum' is a very tedious word. But I assure you it is definitely way more fun and cathartic than it sounds! What we want to do with these forums is to hear, in person, about the various crap conditions at this university that effect your learning experience. I will bet damn near anything that you think sucks, but you also think is too small for anyone to care about; well, I will bet everyone else thinks it sucks too. And if it sucks, then it definitely matters to us. What these forums are a chance to come together with postgrads, complain about things that suck, and then plan how to fix it. Oh, and we will provide free afternoon tea. I bet it sounds way more fun now, right?

Something I will also be doing is opening up my time to hear anything postgraduates have to say. On a Friday afternoon, starting Friday the 8<sup>th</sup>

of April, and for every regular teaching week of this semester, I will be in SUPRA's offices (Level 2, Holme Building) waiting to hear from you. If you have any problems at all, or questions about anything, I want to hear from you. Drop by the SUPRA office, ask for 'Tom, or if you prefer more formal asking (I don't), 'the Vice President.' Anything at all you have to say, anything you want to voice; well, I want to hear it. If it sucks and you want it fixed, then fix it we will.

And so now I sign off, my dear postgraduates, and hope that if you want to have your voice heard that it will be heard, because we certainly want to hear from you. I hope that you come to us, speak to us and use us for the purpose we serve. We are a mouthpiece; a megaphone. We need you to give us something to shout about.

Yours in Solidarity,  
Thomas Greenwell  
vicepresident@supra.usyd.edu.au



The SUPRA Supervisor of the Year awards seek to promote, recognise and reward excellence in research higher degree supervision at the University of Sydney as nominated and judged by research postgrads. In 2016 one award will be up for grabs in each faculty.

Nominations close October 31. Details and nomination forms available from SUPRA, online at [bit.ly/supervisor16](http://bit.ly/supervisor16) Or Email: [francine.seeto@supra.usyd.edu.au](mailto:francine.seeto@supra.usyd.edu.au)

SUPRA  
Supervisor of the  
Year Awards  
2016





SRC REPORTS

The SRC is responsible for the content of this page.

President

Chloe Smith

Welcome to week four and almost Easter break! Whilst assignments are probably starting to pile up, the break should also be a time for relaxation and reflection on the semester so far. Last Wednesday saw the first student-led rally for the year to protest the university restructure. Whilst well-attended and enthusiastic, student activists are concerned about the level of involvement of the broader university community – especially the students most affected by the changes, including those from the faculties of Arts, Education and Social Work, and SCA.

On April 13th, the second week back, the National Union of Students (the peak representative body for tertiary students) has called a National Day of Action for universities around Australia, calling on the Federal Government to fully fund higher education and scrap fee deregulation as policy. This second rally for the year will be an opportunity for more students to get involved in the movement for a fair, funded, quality higher education system. SRC activists will be leafleting, poster, and speaking at lectures to get all students involved in the campaign so keep an eye out for us and feel free to ask any questions.

I'll also use this time of reflection to step outside the university parameters for a moment and talk more broadly about the future of our country. It's a federal election year and whilst many of us may not exactly be enamoured with the state of politics at the moment, it's incredibly important that we are aware of the issues, the policies, and what's at stake when we go to the ballot box. Particularly as students and young people, we need to think about issues that affect us like the funding of our education, the cost of living and rent, access to quality and affordable healthcare, Centrelink and welfare support, penalty rates for working on weekends, and social justice issues that affect many of our peers. I urge everyone to find out where political parties and representatives stand on these issues and, more importantly, what they can actually do to implement change and support people. We are incredibly lucky to have the privilege of a free vote in this country – so make it count. Enjoy the break!

Vice-President

Anna Hush

It was incredibly inspiring this week to see hundreds of staff and students attend the 'No Faculty Mergers, No Cuts' rally, and march from Eastern Avenue to the Vice Chancellor's office in the Quadrangle. The program of reforms proposed by university management behind closed doors includes vicious cuts to the range of degrees, loss of administrative jobs through the merging of faculties, and hikes to student fees, making education even less accessible to low SES students and other minorities. I would like to commend the Education Action Group for their hard work in organising this rally, and I hope that the student body will put similar support behind the upcoming National Day of Action on April 16 to fight the neo-conservative federal agenda to deregulate the university sector.

In the spirit of free and equitable education, representatives at the SRC are continuing to organise the inaugural Radical Education Week, which will be held in mid Semester 2. We're very excited to create a program of skillshares, workshops, talks and film screenings to promote peer education around progressive issues, and to foster greater solidarity between different SRC collec-

**Note:**  
These pages belong to the Office Bearers of the SRC. They are not altered, edited or changed in any way by the editors of *Honi Soit*

tives and the broader student population. If you have a keen interest in decolonisation, Marxism, ecofeminism, environmental justice, or any other radical theme under the sun, get in touch at rade-educationweek2016@gmail.com! We'd love to hear your ideas for workshops and incorporate them into our program. Keep an eye out for our Facebook page, which will be up soon.

General Secretaries

Georgia Mantle and Lachlan Ward

We can happily confirm that at the time of writing this report (4pm Friday the 18th- one hour before it's due) the SRC has submitted its application to the University for SSAF. The ball is now officially in your court University management! Basically now we just have to wait for the university to get back to use to confirm what figure we get from SSAF, from there we will be able to start the process of formulating our internal budget.

We would like to congratulate all the students who came out to the Education Action Groups Rally Against the Restructure last Wednesday and took a stand against the university's proposed restructure, which will see course cuts, faculty mergers, and huge job losses across the university community. We encourage students to get involved in the campaign by joining the SRC's Education Action Group - the next meeting is March 22nd, 2pm, in the SRC offices.

Recently a new working group has been created to address issues of Equity, diversity and culture- these are issues that affect all students (some more than others). As the student representative on this group I would love to hear from students as to what their concerns where in relation to equity, diversity and culture on campus. Please send through any ideas to general.secretary@usyd.src.edu.au.

We hope everyone is settling into their classes and being to feel comfortable on campus, remember that there are a lot of groups and people around to support you on and off campus, which is something to keep in mind as workloads begin to increase. You can always contact help@src.usyd.edu.au to get in touch with the SRC Caseworks who provide free and confidential advice.

Wom\*n's Officer

Anna Hush

Last week, the Wom\*n's Collective and the Wom\*n of Colour Collective co-hosted a picnic for our collective members, and a contingent took to the streets to rally on the occasion of the International Women's Day (IWD) march. The day prompted me to reflect the history of IWD, and the potential that still lies in celebrating the event.

The first Women's Day was held 107 years ago in Manhattan. The inaugural event was organised by the Socialist Party of America, in solidarity with the strike of the Garment Worker's Union. Two thousand women took to the streets to demand better pay and working conditions in the factories. On 8 March 1917, IWD protesters joined Putilov factory workers in Petrograd to protest the introduction of food rations, in large-scale events that eventually triggered the February Revolution. The Soviet Union declared IWD a national holiday the next year, in recognition of the contributions of women textile workers to the mass strike and the changes it brought about.

Since then, the revolutionary roots of the day have been somewhat watered down, with IWD traditions bearing little resemblance to the first radical protests. In Italy, the day is celebrated by men giving women yellow flowers; the Taiwanese

government, bizarrely, marks IWD by releasing a national survey on women's waist sizes, warning of the consequences of obesity for women. In countries like Australia, IWD events are too often focused on white, bourgeois issues like corporate gender equity, celebrated at expensive champagne brunches that have little relevance to the lives of most working-class women.

Nevertheless, the day still acts as a reminder of the same issues feminists have been fighting for throughout the past century, like fair working conditions, equality in decision-making, and bodily autonomy. It is a good time to take stock of the gains we've made (primarily through direct actions, like those of the first Women's Days) and the roadblocks that still impede the movement (like the corporatisation of gender equality); to remember that without justice for all women, there is no justice.

Autonomous Collective Against Racism Officer

Adam Ursino, Aparna Balakumar, Elizabeth Mora and Lamya Rahman

We'd like to welcome all the new members of ACAR who signed up during O-Week! We hope you've settled into semester 1 with ease and the workload isn't too exhausting.

This Wednesday at 2pm, we'll be having our first collective meeting. We've got lots on the agenda, so if you're free, come along! Shoot a message to the "Sydney Uni Autonomous Collective Against Racism" Facebook page to find out where the meeting will be held.

In other news, ACAR Revue auditions have been happening over the week and it's been thrilling to see so many new people keen to get involved. Stay tuned for updates and new information pertaining to the revue.

Another exciting development is the recent announcement of an Ethnocultural Space! In the same vein as the Wom\*n's Space and the Queer Space, the Ethnocultural Space will be a space "for education and safety". We'd like to thank the University of Sydney Union, especially Ethnocultural portfolio holder Atia Rahim, for working so hard to secure a safe and autonomous space for ethnocultural-identifying students on campus. Keep your eyes peeled for updates about the space.

Speaking of the USU, we're working with a board director to ensure that USU employees receive sensitivity training to govern their interactions with wom\*n, queer-identifying, ethnocultural and differently abled students. A survey for collective members will be released soon to help guide the USU and help prevent problematic and racist behaviour.

There are a few ways you can keep in touch with us or get involved. Firstly, you can like our Facebook page. Secondly, within the University of Sydney group on Facebook, there is a group called "Autonomous Collective Against Racism (ACAR)". This is an autonomous group, so is open to only people of colour, Indigenous people, those who identify as coming from a minority ethnocultural background and those who identify as being marginalised by white supremacy. Finally, if you'd like to get in contact with the ACAR Office Bearers, you can email acar.officers@src.usyd.edu.au or ethno.cultural@src.usyd.edu.au.

Refugee Rights Officer

Steven Kwon

The refugee campaign is growing. It's getting hot. Everyone from students to doctors to teachers to Christians are taking action. The letthemstay campaign is building up to a potential of a mass direct action campaign to block the refugees from getting deported. Already we have seen a sign of mass industrial action by the doctors and nurses at the Lady Cilentio hospital, to stop baby Asha from getting deported. The churches indicated they will be providing sanctuary to refugees and its congregation is taking physical NVDA (non violent direct action) training anticipating forced deportations. People in their masses are putting their bodies and their potential livelihood on the line, for the refugees. This is where the action is at. This is the movement to be involved in.

But first we have to remember that the #letthemstay movement did not arise out of thin air, but was built on the work of tireless refugee activists who continued to hold forums, stalls and rallies to try and reach out to people who care about refugees like you, and continued to intervene in organizations and its members to take a stand on refugees. And for the movement to go forward, to politicize people, to change public opinion and to force the hand of Turnbull or Shorten (or whoever it doesn't matter): we need people who care about refugees like you, to join the rest of the members of the Campus Refugee Action Collective (CRAC), to help bring refugee activism to life on our campus.

During O Week we signed up 200 people to our collective and by speaking out about the horrors in Manus and Nauru in Med lecture theatres, facilitated the establishment of a sister USYD Medical Students for Refugees Collective. And together with the Campus Refugee Action Collective (CRAC), they have painted banners together, and marched side by side in the USYD student Palm Sunday rally march contingent that was fifty students big. We will come back onto campus, inspired by the diversity and passion of the masses, to build the refugee movement here at USYD and build our capacity to escalate the fight, for if the government starts deporting the refugees.

If you have been thinking about getting involved in refugee activism, please like the Campus Refugee Action Collective facebook page to stay in touch, and come to CRAC events to join us, because now is the time when you can make a significant difference! Alternatively message us on our facebook page, or contact Steven on 0416 406 900 to find out ways to get involved.

Notice of Council Meeting

88th Students' Representative Council, University of Sydney

DATE: 6th April  
TIME: 6pm - 8pm  
LOCATION: Professorial Board Room (Quadrangle)



Students' Representative Council, University of Sydney  
p: 02 9660 5222 | w: src.usyd.edu.au



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## New Justin Bieber Album ‘Proof Of The Multiverse’: Experts

Jess Zlotnick thinks it is too late for science to say sorry.

Scientists have explained what at first appeared to be a new musical direction for popstar Justin Bieber.

Credit wrongly attributed to a maturation of style for Bieber is in fact the work of a replacement Justin Bieber from a parallel universe whose musical taste and style is more universally appealing.

Scientists are calling it “proof of the multiverse” as well as “kind of cool I guess. I didn’t like his old stuff but the new album is music I can dance to”.

Bizarro Justin has stated that his musical taste is more along the lines of tropical house and EDM, rather than This Earth’s Justin’s poppy trash filth.

The whereabouts of This Earth’s Justin are

## World Reaches ‘Peak Meme’

Oliver Moore is not a geoscientist

Fears were raised at a conference for the Society for Meme Conservation today that what experts have dubbed “peak meme” may have been reached earlier than expected.

The fears come following a week in which meme prices have been described as “absolutely ridiculous” and “completely unreasonable”. Reports released this week showed the average family of four is spending more than a quarter of their income on filling up their mememobile.

Some commentators have blamed this price spike on major meme outlets draining humor supply to waste on low quality or short-lived

unknown, with police claiming they are “doing their best” to find him. Police did not say whether they actually want to find This Earth’s Justin.

Further proof of Bizarro Earth has come in the arrival of Bizarro Zayn of One Direction, who on Bizarro Earth never left Bizarro One Direction.

Bizarro Zayn’s arrival on This Earth restores One Direction to their original five and has experts asking: if he’s here does that make this Bizarro Earth and Bizarro Earth This Earth?

And if this is now Bizarro Earth does that make me Bizarro Jess or This Jess? Who is This Jess? Am I This Jess? If not where is she? What is she doing? Is she writing a story about the disappearance of Bizarro Justin and Bizarro Zayn?

More as the story develops.

memes. However the faceless figure behind one such outlet, Bernie Sander’s Dank Meme Stash, dismissed these claims as “preposterous”.

Others have called for stricter regulation on meme sourcing and production, citing concerns that corporations are not following ethical procedures in these areas.

Special attention here has been drawn to child labor laws, with some reports claiming that children as young as 12 have been forced into meme production.

A spokesperson for the Society for Meme Conservation stated that “peak meme” will occur by 2020, and added that some experts fear it may have already taken place.

Four People Who Died Too Soon (Because I Assassinated Them)

Will Edwards either shot Franz Ferdinand or wrote *Take Me Out*. Same difference.

The unyielding spectre of death looms over us all, eternal and immutable. We are, all of us, constantly hurtling towards the Void. But some of us arrive sooner than anticipated, their descents accelerated by the macabre hands of experts in the art of mortality. I am one such expert, and this listicle is the tale of four souls I banished to the Void.

### 1: Ryan Taylor

You will revile me upon learning that Ryan was but a child, but heed my words: I do not decide these things. I must answer the summons of the ritual. And when performed properly, I am bound to obey the ritualist. Ryan’s name was spoke, Ryan’s blood was spilled. I will spare you the method of execution.

### 2: David Taylor

Skulking from Ryan’s cursed room, I approached the master bedroom to find David fast asleep. A soft light emanated from his iPad, displaying his wife Susan’s Ashley Madison profile. He was surrounded by empty beer bottles. In truth I pitied David, and so performed the sacrament of murder quickly. Killing him was merciful.

### 3: JFK

I also killed JFK. But that was decades before the Taylor family, I just thought you should know.

### 4: Susan Taylor

I drove David’s car to the house of Susan’s lover, where I barred the doors and windows from without. The flames spread quickly. Fire pleases the Dreadlord of the Void; when bodies burn away, souls can reach him quicker. Thus ended my ignoble quest. Sometimes I wonder who brought death to the Taylors (the ritualist masked their face) and why. But then it is not my place to know. I am but a humble instrument of the dark cause. I merely serve and obey.

Want *The Cursor* sent to your mailbox every week?

Send us a stamped envelope with your postal address or fax us your home number and our carrier pigeon will be with you shortly.

## New SUSF Grounds “Definitely Not For Hunting Humans”

Adam Chalmers is definitely not a jock.

SSAF negotiations stalled today as Sydney Uni Sports and Fitness (SUSF) announced their plans for a 28-acre extreme sports center located at a remote site in the Blue Mountains.

SUSF CEO Greg Mannis says the site will be used for “large team sporting events and not for hunting humans”.

The new sports ground will feature a range of terrain, such as rivers and forests, complete with occasional log cabins for “camping, team bonding exercises, and hiding”, said Mr Mannis, while casually surveying the press conference, occasionally pointing to audience members and mouthing “you’re next”.

Mr Mannis pointed out that the center could provide means to teach a variety of new sports, such as white-water rafting, cross-country and marksmanship.

“We’ve obtained special licenses to keep a variety of guns on-site so our shooting team, the Manhunters, can continue SUSF’s proud legacy of elite sportsmanship and respecting the sanctity of human life.”

*The Cursor* can confirm that no charges have ever been brought against any of the Manhunters.

“With this new facility, we can finally hunt the most dangerous game,” said Mr Mannis.

“University funding, that is. Not people,” he said, sighting this *Cursor* reporter down a laser scope attached to a lovingly-cradled rifle.

## Uncle Makes Gradual Shift From Eccentric To Paranoid

Emma Balfour has made a gradual shift from niece who will receive an Easter Egg to niece who will not.

Melanie Watkins, a local student, has re-examined the relationship she has with her Uncle Rick after a recent family group chat.

Uncle Rick was always the eccentric goofball at family gatherings, jumping into the pool with kids and pretending to be a Russian bear attacking them.

His house was always the best to have parties in because he was really into Feng Shui ever since he married a Malay woman.

Recent events have given Melanie cause for thought.

Melanie’s mother was sharing a vegetarian recipe to the family WeChat group when Rick made a comment about halal certification.

When pressed further about his comments, Uncle Rick said “I just think we should be careful.”

“It’s weird,” said Melanie. “When I was young I used to think he was hilarious when he made fun of Jesus and religion at family Christmas lunches, but now I’m starting to think he might just be a bit rude and crazy.”

“I just want my silly uncle back, not this weird dude who fetishizes Asian culture and loves 4chan.”

Uncle Rick could not be reached for comment as he was too busy frequenting /r/conspiracy.

## Trending

Negative Gearing: Ghost can no longer afford to haunt house

“Help, I clicked too many Wikipedia articles and now I can’t find my way out!”

+ More Times I Screened Your Calls

## I Ate Paul The Psychic Octopus And Now I Can See Time!!

Jestika Chand ate some calamari in 2010.

Tonight, I ate Paul the Psychic Octopus and during the resulting coma saw feverish visions of a time-space continuum.

Whether or not time and space exist independently of the mind, whether they exist independently of one another, what accounts for time’s apparently unidirectional flow, the nature of identity and whether times other than the present moment exist.

I’ve delved into a fabric of time-space inception, there is no escape. Paul has encapsulated and trapped my mind into infinity.

I have become Paul the Psychic Octopus.

His legacy breathes within me.

He is back.

I am Paul.



“If we believe in nothing, if nothing has any meaning and if we can affirm no values whatsoever, then everything is possible and nothing has any importance.”  
- Elle (8 months)

Art: Amandine Le Bellec

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# Students' Representative Council, University of Sydney



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SRC Representatives are directly elected by students each year to stand up for students' rights on campus and in the wider community.

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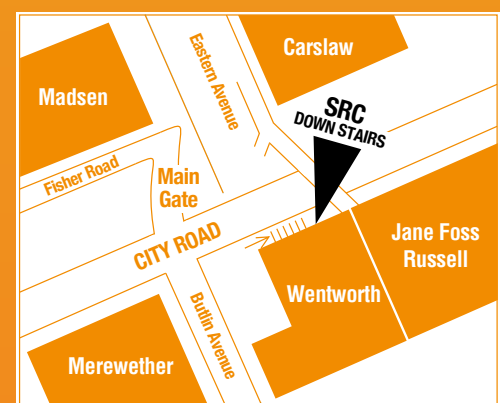


### STUDENT MEDIA

#### **Media for students, by students**

- *Honi Soit* weekly student newspaper & website:  
[www.honisoit.com](http://www.honisoit.com)
- Student handbooks

### FIND THE SRC



#### **Location:**

Level 1, Wentworth Building,  
Darlington/Camperdown Campus,  
University of Sydney

#### **Office Hours:**

Monday-Friday, 9am-5pm

#### **Contact:**

**p:** 9660 5222 | **f:** 9660 4260

**e:** [help@src.usyd.edu.au](mailto:help@src.usyd.edu.au)

**w:** [src.usyd.edu.au](http://src.usyd.edu.au)

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**Appointments:** Please call to  
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#### **Drop-in sessions:**

*No appointment required*

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