

Consent Isn't Sexy.
It's Compulsory / p.10

The Politics of
Mental Health / p.12

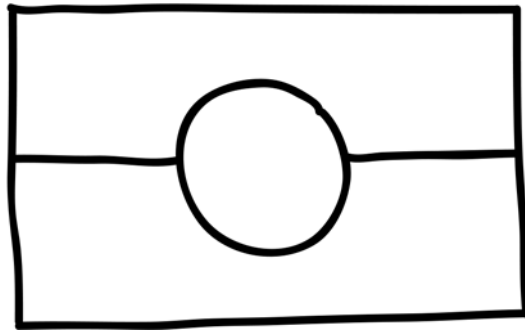
Interview with
Clementine Ford / p. 8



WOM*N'S HONI / S2W10 / FIRST PUBLISHED 1929

HONI SOIT

Acknowledgement of Country



The Wom*n's Collective meets and undertakes work on the sovereign land of the Gadigal people of the Eora nation. The creation of Wom*n's Honi, the meetings of the Wom*n's Collective and our learning as students all take place on stolen land. We acknowledge Aboriginal sovereignty over this nation and stand in solidarity with dispossessed First Nations of this country. We commit to fighting for justice on the terms set by Aboriginal people and nothing else. This is not just an acknowledgement, but a life-long commitment.

The arrival of colonists, the invasion of Aboriginal lands, and the subsequent colonisation of Australia had a disastrous effect on Aboriginal women. The system of colonisation deprived Aboriginal women of land and personal autonomy and restricted their economic, political, social, spiritual, and ceremonial domains that had existed prior to colonisation. It also involved the implementation of overriding patriarchal systems. Larissa Behrendt, a Eualeyai/Kamillaroi writer and academic, wrote that “Aboriginal women had a position of power within their traditional society that white women have never enjoyed. Sexist oppression by men started when the white invaders arrived. The misogyny of some Black men is an unwelcome addition to post-invasion Aboriginal communities.”

As feminists today, we are complicit in the ongoing process of colonisation. Many Aboriginal feminists have been rightly critical of mainstream feminism due to its failure to acknowledge the oppression of Aboriginal women. For example, while white women were concerned with the right to choose whether or not to be a mother by agitating for safe abortion access, Aboriginal women were losing their right to be mothers through the forced removal of their children by the State. Behrendt also points out that “White women were missionaries and attempted to destroy Aboriginal culture. They used

the slave labour of Aboriginal women in their homes. White women were the wives, mothers, and sisters of those who violently raped Aboriginal women and children and brutally murdered Aboriginal people.” This in part explains why, despite the growing momentum of the women's movement in Australia, the societal and economic positioning of Aboriginal women has remained stagnant.

This history tells us that we need to work actively, not only to include by to prioritise and center Aboriginal women's experiences, from our place of privilege at the University. Look at the rising rates of Aboriginal women being imprisoned - Aboriginal women are the fastest growing incarcerated group in the country and currently make up around one third of the women prison population. One of these women, Julieka Dhu, died in custody in 2014 in excruciating pain after being repeatedly refused medical treatment. Today, nearly 15 000 Aboriginal children are in out-of-home care and the rates of Aboriginal child removal has gone up by 65 per cent since Kevin Rudd said “sorry.” Moreover, Aboriginal women are 80 times more likely to be physically or sexually assaulted than non-Indigenous Australians. These experiences are the ones we must urgently prioritise in our activism.

We hope that the stories within can help to work against the sexist structures that affect all of us, but especially Indigenous women. We hope that this acknowledgement can serve as a reminder that colonialism is not just an abstract political notion, but something that is borne out daily in our bodies, gestures, words and minds. We pay respect to elders past, present, and emerging, and extend this respect to the remarkable Indigenous members of the Wom*n's Collective and the broader University who strive to resist the interlocked systems of patriarchy and colonialism. This always was, and always will be Aboriginal land.

Disclaimer: *Honi Soit* is published by the Students' Representative Council, University of Sydney, Level 1 Wentworth Building, City Road, University of Sydney NSW 2006. The SRC's operation costs, space and administrative support are financed by the University of Sydney. *Honi Soit* is printed under the auspices of the SRC's directors of student publications: Nina Dillon-Britton, Pranay Jha, Isabella Pytko, William Ryan, Katie Thorburn, and Adam Ursino. All expressions are published on the basis that they are not to be regarded as the opinions of the SRC unless specifically stated. The Council accepts no responsibility for the accuracy of any of the opinions or information contained within this newspaper, nor does it endorse any of the advertisements and insertions. Please direct all advertising inquiries to publications.manager@src.usyd.edu.au.

What's on this week

According to your girlfriend who really wants to do something she is interested in for once.



USYD Say YES Rally

When: Wednesday October 11, 1pm
Where: Eastern Avenue
Price: FREE

Hey babe, I know you're not really into politics or anything like that, but there's this really cool rally on campus this Wednesday. I know, you're “not political”, and we usually get lunch together at 1 on Wednesday, but it would mean heaps to me if you came with me to this thing. You don't have to like chant or hold a sign or anything — just being there would be great.

The Big Fancy Laugh Ball

When: Wednesday October 11, 5:30pm
Where: Hermann's
Price: FREE

This looks so cool — a free comedy night at Hermann's! It's being hosted by Aaron Chen and Johnathan Lo. Yeah, I know you hate Aaron Chen because of that time he was on ABC2 for the soccer. I promise he's actually funny though. Plus you love Hermann's, right? I mean, I know you haven't seen the renovation job yet, but I'm sure you'll still love it.

Editorial

Honi Soit has a long and radical past. It has been around since 1929, and it started as an alternative to mainstream media, to provide a voice for the students the daily papers were so happily tearing to shreds. In Wom*n's Honi, we proudly live up to that tradition.

This year, investigative journalists have brought the University's institutional failure to address its culture of male entitlement and sexual violence into the spotlight. A flurry of articles in the mainstream media have explored an endemic culture of rape that targets women and seeks to give excuse to perpetrators.

However, sexual harassment and assault do not only happen in colleges, nor in dark alleyways and backstreets. These are phenomena that happen in classrooms and in homes. Perpetrators are most often friends, family members or other trusted acquaintances.

The pages herein may not be filled with 'objective' or 'balanced' journalism; these are deeply personal stories, arising from distinct lived experiences. Some are funny, some are sad, and all of them are moving. I am proud to share these stories with you and to promote the voices of women, which are too often silenced or mocked, and I thank all the contributors below for bravely sharing their stories and experiences.

I hope you enjoy this special edition of Honi Soit, edited by a team from the Wom*n's Collective, as much as we enjoyed putting it together. **ig**

Who made this edition happen?

Editors-In-Chief

Imogen Grant

Editorial Collective

Jazzlyn Breen, Nina Dillon Britton, Georgia Mantle, Connor Parissis, Alev Saracoglu, Ranuka Tandan

Contributors

Steph Barahona, Marley Benz, Jazzlyn Breen, Nina Dillon Britton, Holly Brooke, Jessica Budge, Annabel Cameron, Patricia Chaar, Harriet, Sydney Dawn, Eden Faithful, Francesca Ferrer, Tina Huang, Anna Hush, Georgia Mantle, Lily Matchett, Bridget Neave, Marley O'Niell, Connor Parissis, Danika Rose, Elena Sheard, Jessica Syed, Katie Thorburn, Demi Walker, Maddy Ward, Mary Ward

Artists

Joceline Chan, Harriet Cronley, Eloise Myatt, Jay Pankau, Brigitte Samaha, Katie Thorburn, Jemima Wilson

Centrefold

Harriet Cronley

Cover

Fu Fighter Arts

Honi Soit, Week 10 Edition, Semester 2, 2017.

What is the Wom*n's Collective?

The University of Sydney Wom*n's Collective is a group of women and non-binary students engaged in intersectional feminist activism - that is, activism that responds to race, class, sexuality and other structures of oppression, in addition to gender. We organise campaigns, educational and social events that relate to feminism. We are funded by the Students Representative Council and operate under a non-hierarchical, collective organising model. This year, our major areas of work are around reproductive justice and sexual harassment and assault on campus.

Anyone who is a woman or non-binary person is welcome to join the collective! Come along to one of our meetings - 12pm every Thursday, in the Manning Wom*n's Room - and keep up to date with our campaigns by following us on social media.



facebook:

facebook.com/usydwoco

twitter: @usydwoco

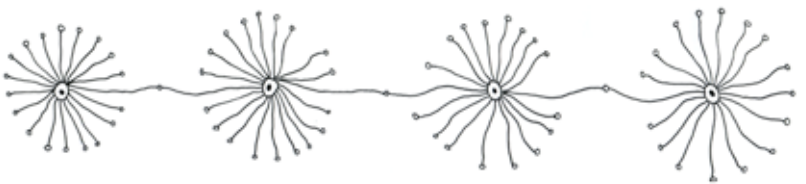
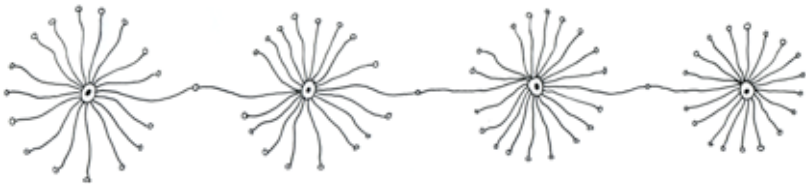
srcusyd.net.au/representation/src-departments/women

Got mail?

Send your irreverent responses and reverent rants to editors@honisoit.com by 12pm each Friday for publication. Keep it under 300 words and include your name, degree, year, and the number, CVC, and expiry date of your favourite credit card.

Or a gatho?

We're always after new events for our 'What's On This Week' section (see approx. 10 cm below). If you're hosting a USyd-related shindig that might go underappreciated, send the details to editors@honisoit.com and we'll see what we can do.



Verge Festival: Theatresports Grand Final

When: Thursday October 12, 7pm
Where: Manning Bar
Price: FREE

Babe, you said you like comedy, right? I know you're usually more into like, Louis CK and stuff, but improv theatre can be so fun! It's so unpredictable and wild. And my friend is in one of the final teams! Remember I went with you to that jelly-wrestling night the other day, even though I sort of wanted to go to ARTBAR? I still enjoyed myself! And I think you'll love this!

Reputation: 2017 Engineering Revue

When: Thursday October 12, 7pm
Where: Peter Nicol Russell Lecture Theatre
Price: TBC

Remember that piece in Honi that I showed you about Engo Revue in 2015? Oh, you didn't read it? Oh, that's okay. Basically, Engo Revue's always a crazy blast and you can drink and get rowdy and heckle and everything. I know you're usually not into "PC Police", so Engo Revue is perfect for you! I promise I'll come with you to see the new Blade Runner movie if you come to this too.

Verge Festival: C&S Annual Ball

When: Thursday October 12, 6:30pm
Where: The Refectory
Price: FREE

Oh my god, babe, another free thing! Isn't that so cool? Come on, yes it is. You know I love getting dressed up and dancing. The C&S Ball is such a big deal and I've never been before. And my society is nominated for an award, so I really wanna be there and see if we win. And you scrub up so handsomely and I just got your suit dry-cleaned and everything. Please?

Feminist Media is Failing Us

NINA DILLON BRITTON / Some online feminist outlets are eschewing true empowerment

In February of last year, when *Sports Illustrated's* "Swimsuit Edition" for the first time ever sported a plus-sized model as a cover girl, most mainstream feminist media rejoiced. "I find it exciting that a magazine that's arguably steeped in the sexualisation of women is finally taking steps forward towards diversity and representation," wrote *Bustle*. "Sports Illustrated makes history," was the title of *Refinery29's* coverage. *Mamamia* called it "revolutionary." Perhaps it was revolutionary. It was odd however, that the only coverage of media publications touting feminist credentials as an essential element of their brand read like *Sports Illustrated* press releases.

With a relatively superficial change to its image, *Sports Illustrated* had effectively been awarded free coverage of its best selling issue in other, feminist, media. Similar coverage emerged in response to *Maxim's* cynical "feminist" re-brand in 2014, which saw Kate Lamphear spearhead the magazine's artsier editorials (of the same nude models) before being unceremoniously dumped after a few weeks. It echoes in media lauding *Playboy* as championing women of colour by awarding them the title of "Playmate." The sorts of empowerment

these pieces celebrated were both comically small and more importantly, not a true empowerment. Celebrating the fact that a plus-sized model was now a "Swimsuit Edition" cover girl is celebrating slightly expanding the diversity of the sorts of women that men wanted to masturbate to. They are championing a breed of "empowerment" that is wholly reliant on men's views of what constitutes being "fuckable" – it's an empowerment that negates itself.

Feminist publications are likely hesitant to publish pieces that could be subject to critique that they slut-shame women who choose to participate in sexualised representations. That hesitancy is justified, many are right to point out the damage done by moralising breeds of feminism that frame women's engagement in sexual work as 'anti-feminist.' Using that hesitation as an excuse not to write anything other than breathless celebration is questionable though. We can recognise that women who front *Sports Illustrated* can be personally empowered – through status or money – and at the same time regret the unrealistic and reductive views of women's bodies and their sexualities

these magazines create.

It's also worth noting that often, these online feminist outlets suffer the same problems that many young online media outlets suffer from; much of the staff is young, relatively inexperienced, underpaid, or unpaid interns with huge demands on them to create content. It makes sense then that some pieces read like press releases because writers aren't resourced to write more in depth. It's easier to write up press releases under a time crunch. The fact that these stories are about recognisable brands – *Playboy*, *Maxim*, *Sports Illustrated* – is also an easy way of assuring clicks. For the companies that own feminist media, this sort of content is highly desirable, cheap to produce and likely to draw views.

These sort of pieces would be laughable sometimes, if they weren't so cynical. It's perhaps unsurprising that in an era where accessible online porn has decimated sales for soft-core porn magazines, that many have half-heartedly attempted to revive their brands through disingenuously capitalising on feminism. The fact however, that it has been so easy for them to use feminist media to promote this brand revamp is disappointing.

The Austen Industry

EDEN FAITHFULL / Jane Austen romances are turning into a hideous display of Capitalist cringe

W.H. Auden once said of Sigmund Freud that he was no longer just a person, but had become a 'climate of opinion'. These days, it is challenging to think of many others in the public eye that merit this description, even with the effusive presence of reality television stars and the ever-growing relevance of U.S. politics. It has, however, recently come to my attention that there is indeed a novelist who – particularly in a contemporary context – has been posthumously bequeathed this great honour. Jane Austen has become not only a climate of opinion, but a movement, an aesthetic, an attitude and perhaps most tellingly of all, a fridge magnet.

The late Ms. Austen has been thrust upon the modern day consumerette with the kind of vigor that other authors within the Western canon have never begun to approach. Though

we may still read Tolstoy, Steinbeck and Proust and cogitate their merits and scholarly gravitas, there has not yet been fans in their thousands waiting eagerly for the newest television adaption of *In Search of Lost Time*, or discussing their recent attendance of the War and Peace convention in full Napoleonic garb. The 'Austen Industry' has no doubt had a profound effect on the literary landscape of the past few years, and, quite like the obstinate fervor of Elizabeth Bennett, shows no signs of abating.

At the heart of the Austen craze is no doubt a desperate pursuit for the diplomacy and stability that her novels represent, especially during a time where at every turn there is a new act of political violence or Taylor Swift album. This, however, is not a new idea. It is even a known fact that British soldiers returning from the front during the Second World War, who were showing signs of Post-Traumatic

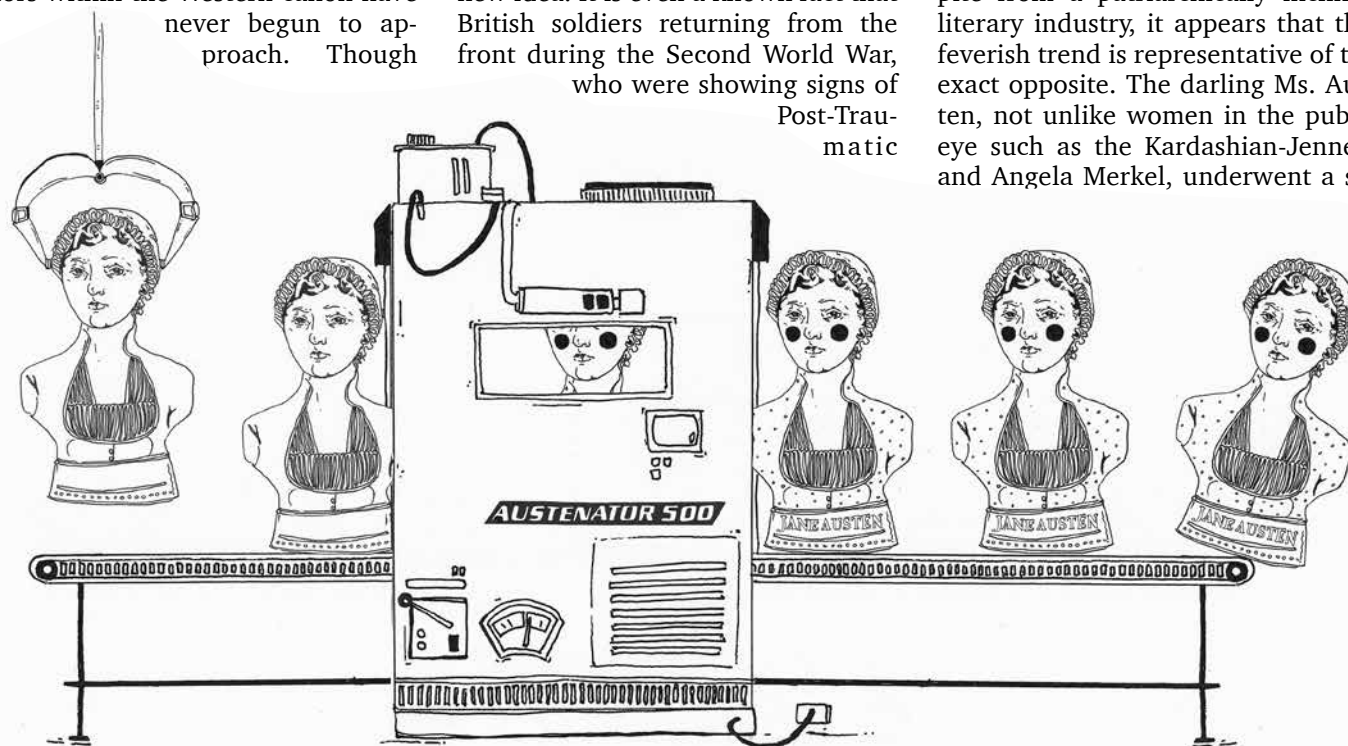
Stress Disorder, were presented with Jane Austen novels as a form of "spiritual remedy". On a side note, let us never again romanticise the forties and their treatment of mental health. It was apparently believed that the sentimentality of the characters and the pastoral Regency backdrop would be comforting, and aid in the soldiers' recovery and reintegration into 'polite society'.

Perhaps the women of today are being seen as returning soldiers; being told to put our feet up and take our minds off the weighty battlefield issues of gender-based wage gaps and the GST covering essential feminine hygiene products? As much as I would like to believe that the mollifying effect of Austen is being handed over as a gift-wrapped sign of a respite from a patriarchally inclined literary industry, it appears that this feverish trend is representative of the exact opposite. The darling Ms. Austen, not unlike women in the public eye such as the Kardashian-Jenners and Angela Merkel, underwent a se-

ries of 'embellishments' in the media for the sake of the public eye.

In 2013, Austen became featured on the Bank of England £10 note. The image portrays her as doe-eyed and round-cheeked, with a faint smile on her full lips, curls of her hair elegantly trickling from her bonnet down her slender neck. It is said that Austen's sister Cassandra drew this image when the author was around twenty years old, however it doesn't take long to find a reproduction of the original drawing. In it, Austen appears angular; her arms are folded, her lips are stern and down-turned and her eyes are discerning, almost suspicious. It appears that as she has been propelled into the limelight of the twenty-first century, even the Georgian damsel Jane Austen could not avoid a touch of Photoshop. From stern to saccharine, poor Jane, an author who should rather be known for her scathing satire of the upper classes of her society, has been remembered as nothing more than a pretty face.

In my opinion, it is exactly this bizarre dichotomy that fuels the Austen industry. Her novels are being stripped bare of any possible depth or Georgian nuance that may have once been of interest, and being mass-produced as derivative and overly sentimental 'chick-lit'. This Capitalist cringe that has enveloped a once-respectable author is the progeny of a mass-produced silhouette of the former Jane Austen by a self-appointed celestial hierarchy of consumers: The Western Canon. It is evident that Austen finds her ball gown bustle in the awkward position of straddling the fence between canonical novelist and abiding consumerist fantasy.



Art: Eloise Myatt

Notes on Transfeminism

DANIKA ROSE / On how feminism has found it hard to build solidarity with trans women

As a trans woman it has taken me a couple of years to really find feminism. I came out around the start of 2015, though I had been questioning gender for a long time before that. I hated masculinity and really struggled to find my place in it. I found it hard to get along with other men, especially groups of men. The sexism, competitiveness and homophobia killed me. Most of my close friends were queer women. But every day I had it reinforced to me that I was living as a man, that I looked like a man, and that I had to be a man. I barely knew trans people existed and didn't know transitioning was an option. I thought I was trapped. It wasn't till a close friend started transitioning that the idea was put in my head, and I decided this was something I wanted to do a few months later. I've never looked back.

When I first came out all my politics was Marxism, and then queer politics. I didn't consider feminism, largely because feminism didn't want to consider me. The relationship between feminism and transgender women has not always been good. We have been characterised as repressed gay men and as sexual predators. We are told we are responsible for reinforcing oppressive gender stereotypes. We are told that because we have been raised as men that we can never unlearn male privilege. In fact, we have been told that the whole transgender experience is one of male privilege and entitlement, of us pretending to be women to have

access to women's spaces that we would otherwise be excluded from. It's totally fucked up.

‘We are a threat to the superiority society allocates to masculinity, and so we get punished for it’

Being a trans woman is really hard. A lot of people talk about violence and murder, but it's also the crushing loneliness, poverty and isolation that really bites and slowly tears apart your self-esteem and sense of self-worth. It's the endless nights of drinking, painkillers and benzos. It's giving yourself little rewards if you can go 2 or 3 days without breaking down and crying. It's living in a society that constantly tells you that you're either an object of ridicule, the butt of every joke, or a highly fetishised sex object. There is no representation or template for how to love a trans woman that doesn't come from porn. You have people who want to be close and intimate with you but can't admit to being attracted to you. And you face the very specific contempt and hatred society reserves for people who have rejected masculinity and embraced femininity. There is a reason why the main plank of the 'no' campaign

has been boys in dresses but not girls in pants. We are a threat to the superiority society allocates to masculinity, and so we get punished for it.

It's a real shame that feminism has found it so hard to build solidarity with trans women. After all, what aspects of women's oppression do I not also face? I have been sexually assaulted walking home, and had that sexual assault not taken seriously. I have been catcalled and sexually harassed, online and in person. I have experienced intimate partner violence. If I manage to find work, I will get paid less than male counterparts. If I get married to a man, I will be expected to do the majority of housework and unpaid domestic labour.

The Women's Collective has done some good work over the last year trying to build solidarity with trans women. This is my last year at uni but I hope this continues, giving us platforms, supporting campaigns, respecting our identities and tackling transphobia in the collective.

Capitalism as a system relies on the continual reproduction and policing of binary gender roles, to keep women continuing to contribute massive amounts of unpaid labour within the family unit, and to keep us all divided rather than a uniting working class. We all need to work together to dismantle patriarchy, and that can start right here and now by supporting the trans women in your life both personally and politically.

A Feminist History of Capitalism

LILY MATCHETT / The real history of the war on women

It has come to my attention that anti-capitalists, who very well might be interested in how life historically changed for cis-women during the birth of capitalism, don't know this history. And it's through no fault of their own. In fact, white male historians and the state have done a marvellous job of almost entirely erasing the true history of women during the advent of capitalism, in Europe during the 16th -17th century.

During this time, hundreds of thousands of women all over Europe were publically hunted, tortured, raped, burned at the stake and drowned under state execution – for doing just about anything that wasn't profitable. Over these two centuries, not only was society transitioned into a capitalist socio-economic system, but lesser well-known is that the state and capitalist class launched a project of purposeful degradation, dehumanisation, domestication and genocide of women known as 'the witch hunts'. The witch hunts are superbly covered by Silvia Federici in her book "Caliban and the Witch". They marked the first time in European history that crimes became gendered, where women were the specific targets of murderous legislation. This violent project would change women's lives forever, first in Europe and then globally.

The war on women, erased from our history books, allowed for the accumulation of labour-power (waged, working humans) through state control of women's bodies. Women's wombs were needed by the capitalist class in England, Ireland, Scotland, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland and Germany to produce large numbers of offspring that would grow into workers (for the labour market) that could then work for capitalists and also buy goods and services from them. At this time, many people had died from the plague or starved after the enclosures, a period in which peasants were thrown off their agricultural lands and private property was instituted.

Capitalists did not just want to control women in order to control their wombs. The

dehumanisation of women by the capitalist state cemented working class women as inferior to working class men, thereby enabling all men to possess a semblance of control, albeit over certain women. This gendered hierarchy fractured the united power of the whole working class and diminished their overall revolutionary power to overthrow capitalism.

So who were the witches and what were their crimes? Interestingly, our understanding of witches today as mystical, fictitious old hags, holders of dangerous esoteric powers, makers of sickly potions, flyers of broomsticks, killers and consumers of children etc are a product of

‘This gendered hierarchy fractured the united power of the whole working class and diminished their overall revolutionary power to overthrow capitalism’

the very real portrait the State painted of anti-capitalist women in 16th Century Europe.

In reality, many of the accused were women who used or taught other women contraceptive practices, poor women who were abstained from reproduction (often out of fear for not being able to feed their offspring), old women in menopause, widowed women, midwives, sex workers and women with children out of wedlock.

Women who maintained their reproductive and sexual autonomy threatened the success of early capitalist accumulation, which was heavily dependent on women giving birth to an abundance of readily exploitable workers. Thus, inhumane state legislation was introduced to terrorise women into surrendering control over their own bodies.

Other women accused of witchcraft were those who attended the Sabbath, a midnight meeting in which anti-capitalist revolts were planned, such as the tearing down of fences around previously communal agricultural land or organising peasant battles against the military.

However, increasingly, any woman's activity that wasn't profitable was progressively criminalised, and so evermore women were hunted.

Once hunted down, these women were then put through long and intense torture regimes tactically conducted as public displays, in which every member of the community was forced to watch and 'contemplate what these women had done'. Daughters of these women were especially targeted. forced to sit at the front and watch the various forms of torture be played out on their mother's bodies prior to them being burnt alive before their eyes.

These two centuries of terrorising women led to their domestication for capitalist purposes which included them carrying out unpaid reproduction of the labour force unpaid servicing of men, children and the home and paid work for a fraction of the price of male workers.

Some believe the witch hunts are a relic of the past, however, this method has been mirrored all over the globe, over many centuries. Witch hunts have been reported as recently as the 1990s in Nigeria, Kenya and Cameroon during their recent advents of capitalism. In almost every part of the world, as capitalism emerges its monstrous head, inhumanities against women intensify; women are subjugated in their communities as well as alienated from their own bodies.

Why don't we know this story? Because women's stories are routinely and deliberately erased from mainstream history. But if we want to ask big questions like "why is there an ever increasing culture of violence against women today?" I think there's value in sifting through the past with a fine-toothed comb, and following the money.

‘Sexual Assault is a Crime’ 2.0

ANNA HUSH / Insisting that sexual assault is ‘police matter’ obfuscates our shared responsibility to eradicate sexual violence

This year, the federal Labor party released their first campaign on sexual assault on campus. As students returned to classes for the year, Tanya Plibersek, Shadow Minister for Education and Women, stood outside the University of Sydney and spoke about sexual assault in educational communities.

“It doesn’t matter where sexual assault happens, it is always a crime,” Tanya Plibersek said in her speech. “At the base of it what the students are asking for, is that institutions take sexual assault seriously as a crime, that it’s treated as a crime.”

The suggestion that sexual assault is purely a criminal matter is not a new or revolutionary one. Having worked first-hand with survivors of sexual assault in universities, first as the Women’s Officer at the University of Sydney, and now as an Ambassador for End Rape on Campus, I have heard survivors interrogated about why they didn’t “just go to the police” far too many times. When trying to report their experiences to the university, survivors are turned away, shamed and interrogated for not going straight to the cops.

Underpinning these questions is an assumption that sexual violence is always and only a matter for the police. That belief is widely held by the community at large. However, this belief creates a moralistic burden for survivors of sexual assault to report their experiences to the police, even when many survivors feel uncomfortable doing so. It also ignores the fact that universities have obligations to provide a safe campus, including by investigating and responding to sexual assault. Despite this, universities constantly reroute survivors to the police, which helps to maintain artificially low university complaint statistics.

End Rape on Campus Australia (EROC) is a

‘Telling students to simply go to the police also fails to recognise that police themselves are not always supportive in their responses. Survivors I’ve spoken to report feeling blamed, shamed and intimidated by police’

national group advocating for the rights of sexual assault survivors in educational communities. At the end of February, EROC Australia published a report that has been submitted to the Australian Human Rights Commission’s project on campus sexual assault. The report argues:

“The key problem underlying Australian universities’ collective failure to embrace their responsibilities to respond to sexual assault is the common conceptualisation of sexual assault as always, and only, a police matter. This has caused university administrations to overlook and abnegate their own responsibilities surrounding sexual violence, in terms of both prevention and intervention.”

The report also argues that universities have both the power and the responsibility to investigate instances of sexual assault when they are reported by students. University investigations do not have to be proven beyond reasonable doubt because they are not courts and do not hold the powers that courts do. Unlike police or the courts, universities do not hold the power to deprive students of their liberties. However, they do have procedures in place to investigate reports

of sexual assault, make findings and discipline students.

Such procedures are common and accepted in non-academic institutions.

If an accusation of harassment or theft was filed against an employee in any other public sector organisation, it is likely that the employee would be suspended until an investigation was carried out and a finding was made. The reticence to utilise these procedures in universities, and the constant cries of “show us the proof”, are symptoms of a culture in which victims of sexual violence are systematically disbelieved.

‘So stop telling us that it’s “a police matter”, because it’s also a university matter. It matters when survivors have unequal access to education because universities fail to provide a safe learning environment’

Indeed, for many students who have experienced sexual assault within an educational community, these procedures provide a means to achieving very practical outcomes, such as removing the perpetrator from their classes or accessing extensions for academic work.

Telling students to simply go to the police also fails to recognise that police themselves are not always supportive in their responses. Survivors I’ve spoken to report feeling blamed, shamed and intimidated by police. One described her experience of being “laughed out of the police station”. Many survivors choose not to engage in the criminal justice system in the first place, knowing the protracted and re-traumatising nature of the process, and the very low likelihood of successfully securing a conviction.

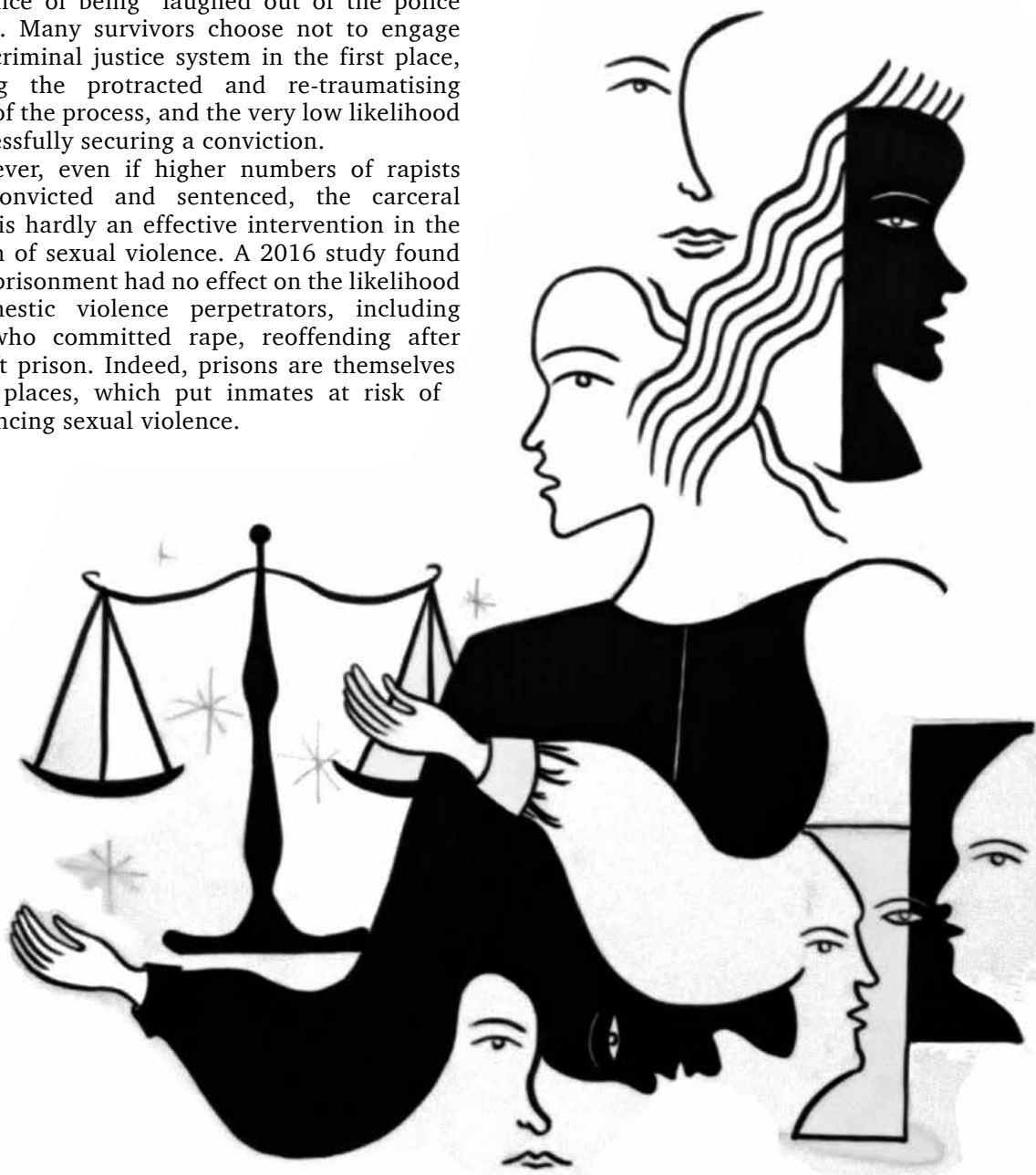
However, even if higher numbers of rapists were convicted and sentenced, the carceral system is hardly an effective intervention in the problem of sexual violence. A 2016 study found that imprisonment had no effect on the likelihood of domestic violence perpetrators, including those who committed rape, reoffending after they left prison. Indeed, prisons are themselves violent places, which put inmates at risk of experiencing sexual violence.

The fact is that the criminal justice system reproduces these cycles of violence, rather than addressing their root cause. Victoria Law calls this ‘carceral feminism’, an approach that systematically “fails to address factors that exacerbate abuse, such as male entitlement, economic inequality, the lack of safe and affordable housing, and the absence of other resources.”

The suggestion by universities that survivors should just be palmed off to the police is particularly problematic for students of colour, as it overlooks the historical links between policing systems and violence towards people of colour. In Australia, this violence is particularly salient for Indigenous communities, who are often arrested for minor infractions, and treated by police with undue physical force. These patterns have led to the disproportionate number of Aboriginal people among those who have died in police custody. Telling these communities to “just go to the police” in response to gendered violence is a dangerous erasure of this fact.

So stop telling us that it’s “a police matter”, because it’s also a university matter. It matters when survivors have unequal access to education because universities fail to provide a safe learning environment. It’s a matter for the whole community, not just for the cops.

If you have experienced sexual harassment or assault, or want to talk about these issues, you can call NSW Rape Crisis Centre on 1800 424 017. This service provides 24/7 professional counselling over the phone and is completely confidential.



Art: Brigitte Samaha

HOW TO RESPOND TO A DISCLOSURE OF SEXUAL ASSAULT*

When someone says they have been sexually assaulted, the first response can define their healing process and greatly impact them following their assault. Your role as a supporter is critical.

A response which is supportive, non-blaming and compassionate will help the person feel like they have chosen the right person to speak with. A response which is non-believing, seeks to give excuses to the perpetrator, or in some way indicates that the person who experienced the violence is in some way to blame, will often result in the person not speaking of the violence again and can lead to the trauma severely impacting that person's life.

To be the person someone chooses to tell the most awful story of their life is a very honourable place to be. It is also a place of great responsibility. Below are some examples of important things to do and say to someone who tells you they have been sexually assaulted.

THREE KEY THINGS TO SAY...

SAY...

- I'm sorry for what happened.
- What happened was a crime.
- I will do what I can to help.

THIS IS HEARD AS...

- I believe you.
- This is not your fault.
- You are not alone.

INITIAL RESPONSE

DO:

- Listen to the story.
- Let them express how they feel.
- Let them cry.
- Encourage them.
- Not worry if parts of the story don't add up.
- Tell them you are sorry for what happened.
- Explain what you can do.

DO NOT:

- Tell them what to do or try to take over.
- Ask them the 'why' questions; why they were there, why they trusted them.
 >> *Why questions are blame questions.*
- Get angry on their behalf.
 >> *They have enough to deal with without worrying about you.*
- Assume you know how they feel.
 >> *Everyone experiences sexual assault differently.*

IF THE SEXUAL ASSAULT WAS RECENT

- Consider options for preserving forensic evidence.
- Help the person to access counselling and medical services.
- Assist them to consider reporting to Police.

REMEMBER!

The decision about what to do is always with the person who has experienced sexual assault.

* All information provided is from Rape & Domestic Violence Services Australia (R&DVSA). Call NSW Rape Crisis Centre at 1800 424 017 to have direct access to trauma specialist counsellors from the R&DVSA.

Childhood Lessons in Homophobia

JAZZLYN BREEN / On growing up surrounded by expressions of hate

As someone who doesn't physically appear as stereotypically gay, my experiences of homophobia have always been subtle, but that in no way takes away from the damage it has caused throughout my life.

In the weeks after the postal survey on marriage equality was announced I've been witness to more homophobic attacks than I can count. The platform that has been given to homophobes under the veil of 'productive and healthy debate' has only resulted in horrific hate speech and bullying. In the last few weeks I've felt more under threat for just being queer than I ever have before.

I don't remember the first time I heard someone say something homophobic. But I do remember the first time I said something homophobic, because it left a bad taste in my mouth that lingered.

I was 11. The sitcom *Modern Family* had just come out in Australia. It was the first time I'd ever seen gay men portrayed in the media. I remember turning to my Dad and saying that "I think gay men are fine, but gay girls are just weird". "You'll get over that," he replied.

He was right. Probably more right than he expected. It took a long time, a lot of tears and more self-doubt and self-hate than any kid should ever feel for me to figure out I was queer.

Kids aren't born homophobic. They are born

gay. But not homophobic. That's something that's taught. Not always directly, but in little things, like slightly negative tones of voice, or in slightly negative comments.

"That shirt makes you look like a lesbian!"

"Gay people kissing makes me feel weird."

"Gay people will never get married."

"It's unnatural! God made men and women for a reason!"

Because why would you want to look like a lesbian? Why would you care about how gay people feel when it's making you uncomfortable? Why do gay people have to exist, if they're such a nuisance?

These comments don't just come from strangers. They come from family, from friends, from teachers, from priests, online and offline. They come from people that matter.

I had many of these experiences as a kid. But that shaped how I came to view my identity as a queer woman as I grew up. I remember being a homophobic kid. I remember hearing homophobic things growing up. And then I remember realising that I wasn't straight, and denying it to myself. Because gay people are weird. "But I'm not weird," I'd think to myself. I could just convince myself to be straight. I thought that if I tried hard enough, and if I just convinced everyone else, I would be fine.

Spoiler alert: I didn't.

This is why representation matters, and why marriage matters. Straight kids see themselves everywhere – they can see adults, just like them, living happy lives, just like theirs, and think that "I want to be like that when I grow up!" Right now, gay kids don't get that.

I cried the first time I saw a gay couple over the age of 60. In my mind old gay people just didn't exist. I realised that I could be old and gay. That, one day, I was going to be old and gay. I realised that I had a future waiting for me that I could make real.

Marriage and representation are just the basics. Kids still kill themselves because they are queer. People are still killed by their governments for just being queer.

But we have a chance in Australia right now to make life a little less shit for queer people. So in twenty years a girl like me will see a married lesbian couple (maybe me?) at the shops and feel like she's valid. She'll realise that's an option; that it's not weird, and that she's going to be okay. I would have done absolutely fucking anything to get that feeling growing up.

This isn't some 'identity politics bullshit' – this is real life. This is people's lives. And if you're going to vote no in the plebiscite I just want to leave you with one more thing: same sex attracted Australians are 14 times more likely to take their own lives than heterosexual Australians. And that's your fault.

Interview with Clementine Ford

EDEN FAITHFUL / Discusses feminism, capitalism and the internet

When I walk into the Pier One bar, I immediately notice Clementine Ford sitting with her ten-month old boy in her lap. The bar is playing smooth jazz, I'm fairly sure Yassmin Abdel-Magied and Elaine Welteroth just brushed past me, and instantly I feel very much out of my depth. I tuck *Fight Like a Girl*, Clementine's most recent book, further under my arm and start to regret bringing it along. What a brownnoser I must look like – really I just want her autograph and don't want to admit it. As I go over to introduce myself, Clementine's pomegranate lipstick beams up at me as she seats her son, Frank, on the floor between us. "I will be listening to you even though I'm not looking at you," she says, staring at Frank as he begins to toddle towards the glass windows, "I just have to keep an eye on him." I sit down across from her and make myself comfortable, which is startlingly easy in her presence.

Clementine Ford is reflective and resilient, proud and unpretentious, a mother and an agitator; she is the epitome of womanhood. Throughout my interview with her she simultaneously mixes a bottle of formula, whisks her adventurous little boy away from the numerous dangers of a hotel bar, and continues to

discuss the pitfalls of capitalistic feminism without missing a beat.

I open my Spirax notebook and read aloud from underneath the heading, 'Questions for Clem': "You speak extensively about how you refused to label yourself as a feminist when you were younger.

What would you suggest to the thirteen-year-old Clementines of today?" She takes a deep breath, and then a smile scurries across her face.

"What I tried to say in my book is that you shouldn't feel ashamed of speaking your truth, it is not normal to feel like you're not worth anything, it's not normal to think that you'll only become something when other people find you attractive. I would just try to tell them that even though it hurts the first time, the more you speak up and stand against it, the more powerful you are likely to become."

Frank reaches out his tiny, chubby fingers and wraps them around my notebook. Both it and Clementine's book fall to the floor and he continues to paw through them. I let him because honestly, he's adorable, and if I can't get Clementine to sign my book after our interview, I'll at least have the dried remains of her son's saliva to remind me of our interaction. I remember the next question anyway.

"It seems like 'feminism' as a concept is becoming an increasingly monetised: we're seeing t-shirts, tote bags and coffee mugs all emblazoned with feminist sentiments. Do you think that this 'Capitalist Feminism' is an issue, and do you think you, as a commercial author, have contributed to it?"

Clementine had clearly already reflected on this, as she launched into her impassioned response without hesitation.

"Oh yeah, we're all complicit in the capitalist system that we live in, and unfortunately for many of us, wholly opting out of it is not an option. Not everyone has the privilege to opt out of society, and that's what needs to be acknowledged."

We continue to speak about Western capitalist tenets, and about how capitalism is inherently at odds with equality, as it always involves the oppression of people with disadvantages. We come to the conclusion that pursuing a Western liberal idea of feminism is essentially meaningless if you still have women in Bangladesh making your Nike socks.

Completely forgetting that parts of my notebook, containing my carefully crafted questions, is now in equal parts distributed between baby Frank's toes and teething gums, I get swept up in the moment

and launch into my next question. "It seems that with the advent of social media, the frontier for the feminist battle has shifted. You've had quite a bit of success with calling out prominent publications from the Internet, but you've also had to put up with some horrible online 'trolls'. Should women take to social media to have their voices heard, and if so, how do we protect ourselves?"

"That's a great question," she muses. My heart skips a beat and my face flushes. How embarrassing. "I think the internet is a really powerful tool for women to use, in fact for any oppressed or marginalised group, to take back control of a conversation that has been historically denied to them."

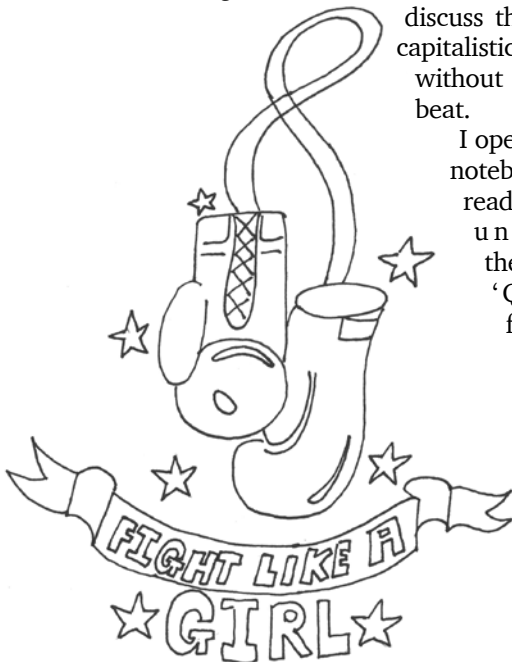
As she considers her answers, Clementine wrings her hands in front of her knees, less a nervous tick than a meditative compulsion as she divides her attention between her nomadic son and her thoughtful responses. At this point, Frank has lost interest in my possessions and has waddled off to study a steaming teapot that's been left on one of the other tables. Clementine rushes off to scoop him up, out of harm's way. Watching her clutch her son to her, I think of my final question.

"How, as a mother, do you believe you'll be able to help your son grow up and make a positive contribution to the feminist discourse? Are you worried about a culture of toxic masculinity?"

"I'm really scared that the lessons I teach him won't be enough to stave off the huge tidal wave of that conditioning, because there's things that some boys are conditioned into thinking and doing that aren't just harmful to other people, but also causing destruction for themselves," she says, and wrings her hands tighter.

When I look at Frank in his purple and orange jumpsuit, I wonder what he'll be like when he does come of an age when gendered expectations start to put their inevitable pressures on him. He looks straight back at me and I realise he has his mother's warm blue-green eyes as he starts drooling on *Fight Like a Girl* again. I never did get Clementine to sign it.

Art: Katie Thorburn



Toxic Relationships and Female Agency

HARRIET / On the denial of abusive behaviour

I first learnt properly about feminism when I was in Year 12. My parents had kept strict internet blocks till my final year of high school, when after years of begging, I finally had access to social media, including the hippest booming site at the time- tumblr, where I suddenly found myself overwhelmed with posts and articles about activism and women’s rights.

Despite already being mildly political (because it wasn’t cool to be overtly, noisily political in high school) I found that with the more knowledge I obtained, injustice and the patriarchy became impossible to ignore. Feminism and politics had leaked into my everyday life, from conversations, to HSC assessments, to analysing the segregation of gender in my own friendship groups. Many friends were displeased with my new angry girl persona, but it hit a chord with many others, and despite being fresh in the political scene I found myself being admired by others as an influencing teenage feminist.

Feminism gave me a sense of power and strength I did not know I had, and from learning about it five years ago till now, I am still overwhelmed with how much it has helped me and shaped my life positively.

However it wasn’t till this year did I realise that being a feminist had had a negative impact on my own life in a way that I had previously been blind to.

Shortly after I finished high school I fell hard and fast for a boy. He was my first boyfriend, my first sexual partner and my first love. Both the romantic, high expectation build up of a first relationship and the fear of my first heartbreak meant I was consumed with intense emotions, seeing him only through a rose coloured lense, unbeknownst that I was blinding myself to the flags standing all around.

The red flags started early in the relationship, from describing his ex girlfriend as “crazy”, to him telling his friends about me for the first time not as the girl he was dating, but the “girl whose cherry he’d popped”.

I brushed these things off. I did not want to acknowledge the sly sexism or confront him, with the fear of altercation letting our great romance end far too soon. I was desperate for him to think of me as down to earth, and someone who didn’t “fret the small stuff”, especially due to my fluctuating mental health which led to regular anxiety attacks.

Whilst I genuinely started the relationship as

someone who was neither threatened by other girls nor jealous, I found myself slipping into these mindsets within the first year of our relationship, as I was confronted with his obsession over his ex, his illegal photo collection of high school girls, his consistent gaslighting, multiple attempts to cheat on me, and spreading lies about me to our mutual friends, telling them I was a crazy, to make himself look like the “good person” in the relationship.

If I confronted him about his behaviour, which I rarely did, he was always too proud to apologise or acknowledge that what he did was wrong, and I was not strong enough to leave him. After every fight I’d crumple out of fear that he would leave me, and would somehow always apologise profusely for my “crazy” reactions to his behaviour, to which he’d forgive me.

Within that first year I was overwhelmed with social anxiety and body dysmorphic disorder, obsessed with his friends opinions of me, what he was saying about me, and the fact that my size twelve body looked nothing like the barely pubescent bodies he kept in his “wank bank”.

I knew our relationship had it’s ups and downs but I was never brave enough to label it for what it actually was- toxic and abusive. Toxic relationships did not look like mine and victims of gaslighting and emotional abuse did not look like me.

They looked like Lily and her boyfriend, who always talked about getting engaged, despite the fact he would stand her up on a weekly basis, before giving a piss weak apology. They looked like that couple in high school, where one was “really protective of the other because they’re just so in love” when in reality they were just controlling and manipulative. They looked like the black and white tumblr posts where different signs and techniques of emotional abuse were highlighted so accurately you’d think such warning signs would be impossible to miss if they were in front of your own eyes.

My perception of who could be subject to abuse was greatly skewed due to ingrained sexism- thinking that only feminist-rejecting, straight, hyper femme girls would let themselves be treated so poorly. I’d subconsciously place blame upon the victims for not being strong enough to leave their abuser, and would scoff at them being so reliant upon their boyfriends

that they’d rather stay unhappy in an abusive relationship than be single.

But that’s the reality of being in an abusive relationship. You are in constant denial. I would convince myself that I could influence a positive change in him, if only I just forgave him for his behaviour and moved on. That his sexist behaviour and cruel actions were due to the oppressive society we lived in, and these were merely behaviours he was in the process of unlearning. That it was my fault he was behaving that way, and that my poor mental health meant I was always overreacting to these “normal” couple things. That because I was a strong, empowered feminist, I was incapable of letting any man gaslight or control me.

Because I was a feminist and could identify emotional abuse and toxic relationships, I would use that as a means to convince myself that I was not a victim of abuse, as opposed to use it to recognise the abuse in my own relationship.

I stayed with him for three years, and even after we broke up, it wasn’t until the friendship disintegrated that I actually allowed myself to reflect upon the repressed memories and recognise his behaviour for what it actually was. It has been difficult to remember three years worth of abuse, especially since he’d gaslight me so regularly, and in a lot of ways, I’d gaslight myself. The abuse comes back in bits and pieces, and whenever it does I write it down. I currently have five pages of abusive behaviour typed up, that I keep out of fear that I’ll forget, or downplay his behaviour like I used to.

As an activist, you are constantly learning and relearning. Five years ago I never would have thought that I’d fall into an emotionally abusive relationship the way I did and stay with someone who treated me so poorly, and even today I am constantly catching myself trying to brush off those small red flags out of eagerness for romance. However, unlike before, I have learnt to listen to that niggling voice in my head, I have learnt to open up to friends about abuse I have faced, and I have found a safe feminist community who will reassure and validate me if ever I am uncertain. Although I used feminism as a means to deny the abuse I faced, I have found solace and healing through my friends in the feminist community.

Questions of Racial Identity

PATRICIA CHAAR / How culture and privileged are perceived

How do I define myself racially? This is a question I have been asking myself for much longer than the time I have been enrolled here.

I want to make it clear that I am completely aware that race and religion are not the same thing. But being a person with white skin, blue eyes and blonde hair, my only racial experience has been that of the eleven years of my life wearing a Hijab. A Hijab is a garment expressing one’s religious faith, but in my experience, wearing a Hijab has racialized me in a much stronger way than my appearance or my parental heritage ever have.

My mother is from Finland, and my father is from Lebanon. I was raised in Sydney. Living between three very different cultures, I felt quite divided.

This feeling grew when I first went to school wearing a Hijab. Almost immediately, even at the age of 7, I began to feel ‘racially othered’ with the almost daily question ringing in my ears: “Where are you from?” Not only was this tedious, but it forced me to become an educator about what I considered to be a pretty irrelevant part of my identity.

At 17, I started to ask myself: why do I have to teach them? And why do they care? Is it to just express the generalisations they’ve heard about my race/religion, and box me in with them? At 18, these sorts of questions

began to consume me. I became completely aware of the constant staring, judging and avoiding glares and glances that were sent my way either directly or indirectly. I had to be aware of every movement of my body. I watched my words and I never stepped out of the boundaries of ‘acceptable’. This awareness of my body is a sort of third person consciousness’: a niggling self-consciousness driven by how other people see me. This ‘third person consciousness’ was a daily reality of life for me in my late adolescence. It is something that I simply do not experience anymore, most likely because I no longer wear a Hijab.

In many ways, I have been a victim of ‘cultural imperialism’. As Iris Young wrote, victims of cultural imperialism are made “invisible” and experience oppression through “aversion in mundane contexts such as gestures, movements, tones and reactions.” Once a person is labelled as ‘the other’ they “become imprisoned in their bodies” and are seen as “dirty, dangerous”. I can definitely say that I’ve felt these feelings of invisibility, aversion and bodily imprisonment.

So how do I define myself racially? Now, I identify myself as an Australian with a biracial family. My other identity markers include female, lesbian, agnostic, working class and healthy. But one year ago, I would

have included Muslim Hijabi. Experiencing half my life as an racialized and marginalised person, I feel slightly guilty for now having white privilege.

How do I appropriately identify myself now and how do I make others understand that I didn’t always have white privilege?

Do I now have full white privilege and dismiss my history as a person of colour? Am I a white-passing person of colour? Am I still a person of colour? Was I ever?



Art: Katie Thorburn

Consent isn't sexy, it's compulsory

JESS BULDGE / On the clear-cut line of consent

'If you regret any of the sexual experiences you've had I'm here for you. If you didn't say no but you didn't say yes I'm here for you. If you wanted to stop but you didn't know how to say it I'm here for you'

"If you regret any of the sexual experiences you've had I'm here for you. If you didn't say no but you didn't say yes I'm here for you. If you wanted to stop but you didn't know how to say it I'm here for you. If it was consensual and then it wasn't I'm here for you. If it was uncomfortable or if it hurt or if it wasn't what you wanted I'm here for you. If you spent the whole time waiting for it to be over I'm here for you. If you are scared or afraid of being intimate with someone I am here for you. There is nothing wrong with you and everything you are feeling is valid. I'm here for you."

I wrote the above post on my blog in late 2015. Since then, the post has received over 67,000 likes and over three thousand women have messaged me about it. I say this not to boast, but to illustrate that there are thousands of people who have felt like this, who have dealt with non-consensual sex, who didn't enthusiastically say "yes" and who were perhaps in pain the whole time – which is beyond concerning and in many ways, heartbreaking.

RAINN, America's largest anti-sexual violence organisation, defines sexual assault as "sexual contact or behaviour that occurs without explicit consent of the victim", yet in the court room, sexual assault is largely based on illogical factors such as how much alcohol the victim drank, what they were wearing and, more disturbingly, whether they screamed or forcibly resisted. Even the way the victim said "no" seems to be under scrutiny, evident in cricketer Scott Kuggeleijn's case whereby he went home with a woman, held her hands above her head and raped her. Kuggeleijn's lawyer inquired if the victim's 'no' was a "light-hearted no" or a "not-now no", even having the nerve to ask, "Were you saying no but not meaning no?" It is beyond belief why "no" isn't enough, and why remaining quiet, not 'fighting back' and the changing of one's mind somehow means consent is suddenly ambiguous.

In the infamous Brock Turner case, questions such as "Did you party a lot in college?" "How much do you weigh?" and "Did you chug a red cup of vodka?" were asked of the victim, as if this somehow correlates with the perpetrator's inhumane and horrifying actions. Why these questions have any legitimacy is incomprehensible. Drinking

should not encourage or invite sexual assault and it does not matter whether a victim had one drink, two drinks or is black out drunk. It is completely irrelevant if someone decides to wear a short skirt to a party, chooses to walk alone at night or has multiple sexual partners. Plain and simple: do not ever rape, no matter what someone has drunk or what they are wearing.

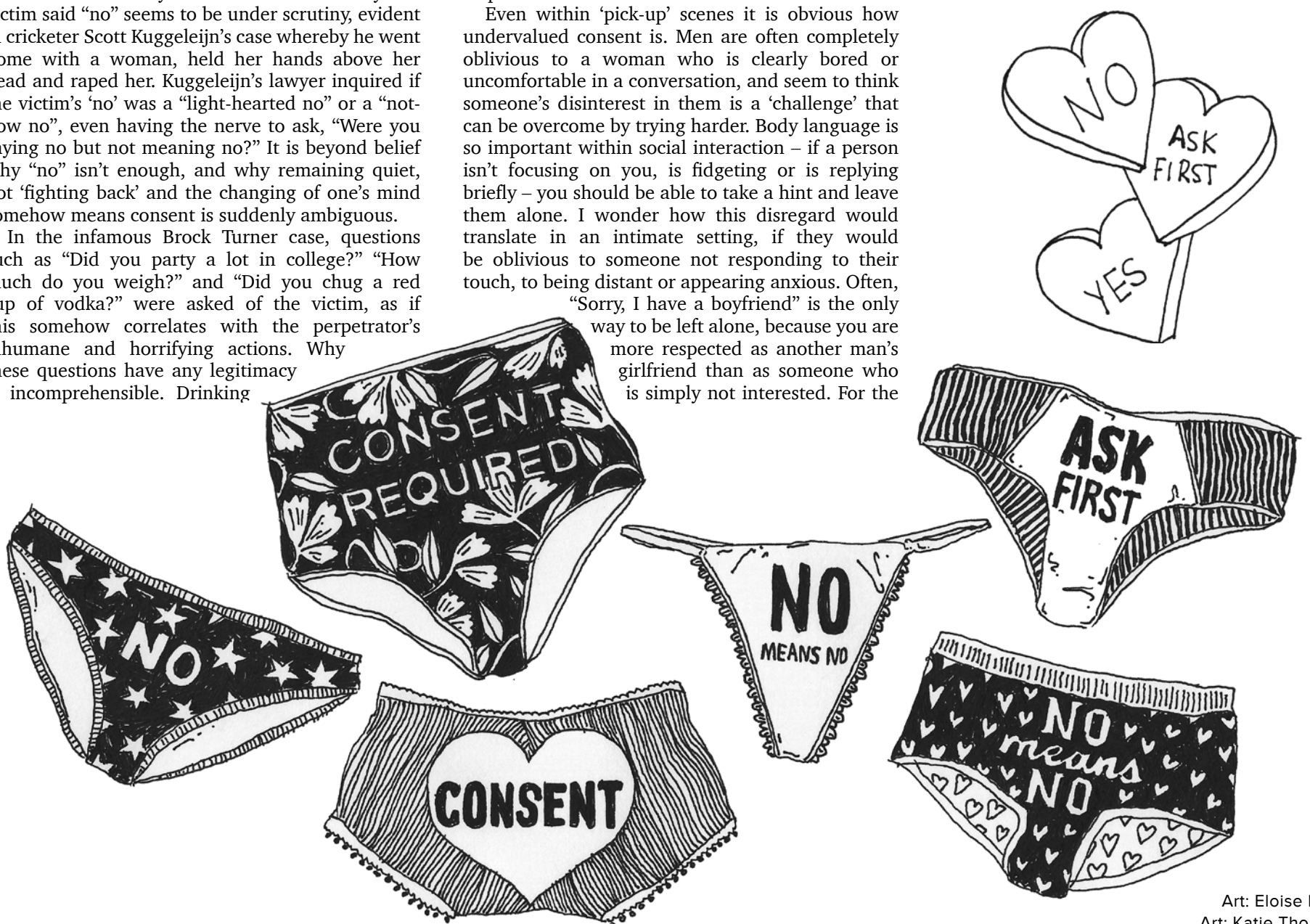
Consent should always be given very freely, with no coercion or convincing involved. The absence of a "no" does not mean "yes" and if someone is impassive or indifferent towards any kind of advance you are making, it is not consensual. Some individuals feel unable to say no because they become unresponsive in frightening scenarios. For example, in Canada, 2014, a 19-year-old woman was sexually assaulted over a sink at a party, with judge Robin Camp having the audacity to ask her "why she allowed the sex to happen if she didn't want it" amongst other extremely insensitive comments. The sheer ignorance of Camp to disregard factors such as being physically overpowered, being held down, disassociating, or the 'freeze response' - where neural pathways connected to the cerebellum cause the body to freeze when confronted with a life-threatening situation - is appalling. In holding such a position of power it is imperative there is at the very least some basic understanding of the physiological survival mechanisms put in place in response to trauma.

Even within 'pick-up' scenes it is obvious how undervalued consent is. Men are often completely oblivious to a woman who is clearly bored or uncomfortable in a conversation, and seem to think someone's disinterest in them is a 'challenge' that can be overcome by trying harder. Body language is so important within social interaction – if a person isn't focusing on you, is fidgeting or is replying briefly – you should be able to take a hint and leave them alone. I wonder how this disregard would translate in an intimate setting, if they would be oblivious to someone not responding to their touch, to being distant or appearing anxious. Often, "Sorry, I have a boyfriend" is the only way to be left alone, because you are more respected as another man's girlfriend than as someone who is simply not interested. For the

record, even if someone is bought a drink, even if they danced together, even if they flirted, even if they kissed and accepted an invitation home – doesn't mean that there is any debt owing.

But it is not all doom and gloom – there have been some legal advances in defining what constitutes consent, with a man in Switzerland rightly convicted of rape for removing a condom during intercourse without the victim's knowledge. However, there is still an unbelievable disparity between what companies such as Planned Parenthood and Reach Out define as consent and what male judges in power consider consensual. Even though individuals who sexually assault, rape and bend the boundaries of consent may never learn, judges need to. To all you mostly white, old, able-bodied men with no relevant life experiences: stop justifying and sympathising with rapists and give them the sentence they deserve. Support for victims, including married individuals, sex workers and those in the LGBTQIA+ community is nothing less than critical. Perhaps Ruby Rose said it best when rapper Rev. Run told her to "dress how you want to be addressed", to which she responded "If I'm laying down with a man butt naked and his condom is on and I say, 'You know what, no, I don't want to do this, I changed my mind,' that means no. It doesn't matter how far I take it or what I have on. When I say 'no,' it means no."

Right on.



Art: Eloise Myatt
Art: Katie Thorburn

Let's get it on (with equal responsibility for contraception, please)

GEORGIA MANTLE AND MADDY WARD / Want men to start footing the bill for the pill

Contraception is considered cis-women's business. We go through the labor to get contraception, cop the bill and go through the often-troubling effects the medication has on our bodies. The benefits of contraception are not just for us: our partners also benefit by greatly reducing their chances of becoming a parent. In modern feminist relationships we strive for equality, for mutual contribution to build a healthy relationship through things like shared emotional labor, domestic duties and the costs associated with the relationship. This should extend to shared responsibility of birth control.

Every form of contraception has a cost. Some are one off costs, others require monthly prescription. Contraception is often expensive and painful, and generally women are the ones that deal with all the physical and emotional side effects that come with it. In any case, the burden of the full cost should not bear down solely upon the person taking it. In modern dating, it's rare for the man to foot the bill for every date. Why should women have to foot the bill to avoid every potential baby? Birth control is not just about avoiding being mums, contraception is for avoiding being dads too. Importantly, it takes two to tango, and therefore it also takes two to make

a baby. Men should be paying up.

Beyond money, the other burdens of birth control should be jointly shared too. Men should have to be informed in the way birth control is obtained and the labor associated with obtaining it. Often before obtaining birth control, women need to go through multiple consultations with doctors to find the birth control best suited to them. These are elements that men are able to avoid, and being in a supportive relationship should extend to men supporting their partners in the intricacies of birth control. This shouldn't just begin and end with attending the doctor's consultation- there are many different stages in the contraception process that can be a point of anxiety for women.

An element of birth control that can't be shared is the side effects that often come with them. The effects of birth control can range from mild to severe, from acne to clinical depression. Empathy, consideration and understanding should be extended to make up for this unequal burden. Men should be informed and willing to lend an ear to the side effects that their partner may be experiencing- it's the least they can do when their partner has literally put their body on the line.

This responsibility doesn't end with preventative measures. When birth control fails, or life gets in the way and results in an unwanted pregnancy, men too should be footing some of the bill and responsibilities for an abortion. Abortions in this country can cost anywhere between \$200 and \$1000, and can be incredibly physically and emotionally painful. Though it is a hard time for both that are involved, the woman is the one that has to have the procedure. She is also the one that has to take time off work to recover, as well as the one that faces the most amount of societal stigma. Just as men should keep as informed and aware of the intricacies of birth control as their female partners, they too should be informed and actively involved in the abortion process (provided, of course, that the woman wants them involved)

Total equality in sharing the cost and labor of contraception may not suit every relationship. The point isn't to tell people how they should use contraception within their relationship, but rather to encourage equal responsibility amongst men and women, and to encourage and create an environment where women are not the only ones responsible for contraception.

What the pill? Contraception, the market, and me

JESSICA SYED / Why we don't know enough about contraceptive side effects, and what keeps them hidden

I first went to my general practitioner at the somewhat tender age of sixteen to get a prescription for the contraceptive pill. The doctor was friendly and considerate, she didn't at all treat me like the teenager that I was. She glanced briefly at my medical history, noted that I was asthmatic, then gave me a script for a pill called *Yasmin*.

If I took it at the same time every day, I had only a 2% chance of becoming pregnant. The consultation lasted no longer than ten minutes. Two or so weeks into taking Yasmin, I noticed some changes. I was fatigued. I had a headache. Most notably my mood was low – very low. I was irritable, aggressive, curt.

A quick read of the bottom of the pamphlet which came with the pills told me (in small print) that these changes were all but common symptoms of Yasmin.

Although apparently, this pamphlet didn't adequately bring to my attention these physical side effects, and more devastatingly, the mental side effects that could arise.

Why not? It might be difficult to view contraception, or indeed any other medicine as a profitable product, because we are normally predisposed to categorise such products as essential to our wellbeing. After all, who would want to make money off of someone's poor health? But as former pharma big-shot and current convicted felon Martin Shkreli so kindly reminded us: when it comes down to it, contraception, like any pharmaceutical, is a product to be traded within a free-market.

By 2025, twenty-five hundred million women

will make up the contraception customer base. Over the past two decades, pharmaceutical companies have scrambled to modify existing forms of contraception, bettering them to suit this demand. This has led to a general rise in the visibility of 'Long Acting Reversible Contraceptives (LARCs)', such the implant

and intrauterine device (IUD), equally praised for their relative in-

expensiveness and extreme effectiveness. The

combined pill (with perfect use), is also rather cheap and works just as well. These two factors –

cheapness and effectiveness – are probably the most considered

in terms of both the marketability of the contraceptive from the perspective of the pharmaceutical company, and from the point of view

of the person seeking contraception.

Side effects are then a bit of an afterthought. If you look for information concerning the side effects of your contraceptive method either on or inside its packaging, it normally has a few pointers, vaguely listing some things like 'mood swings', 'nausea' and 'headaches', among others. That appears to be straightforward, and common practice. But such a list in itself is presented in quite a lucrative manner. No distinction is made between the three primary groups of side effects, these being: common (1%-10% likelihood), rare (0.1%-1% likelihood), and very rare (0.01%-0.1%).

Nor yet is a distinction made between the comparative strength and differing debilitating impact of the various side effects. In essence, having a headache for an hour is perhaps not as bad as entering a severe depressive episode as a result of the hormonal changes stemming from your contraception. But with only a basic, arguably homogenised list, how would you know the numbers? I guess it isn't really in the financial interests of pharmaceutical companies to provide me with a complete, detailed run-down of how shitty I will feel after ingesting one of their no-baby pills. In what is a purely profit-motivated industry, why on earth would corporations actively constrain their sales based on potential consumer dangers?

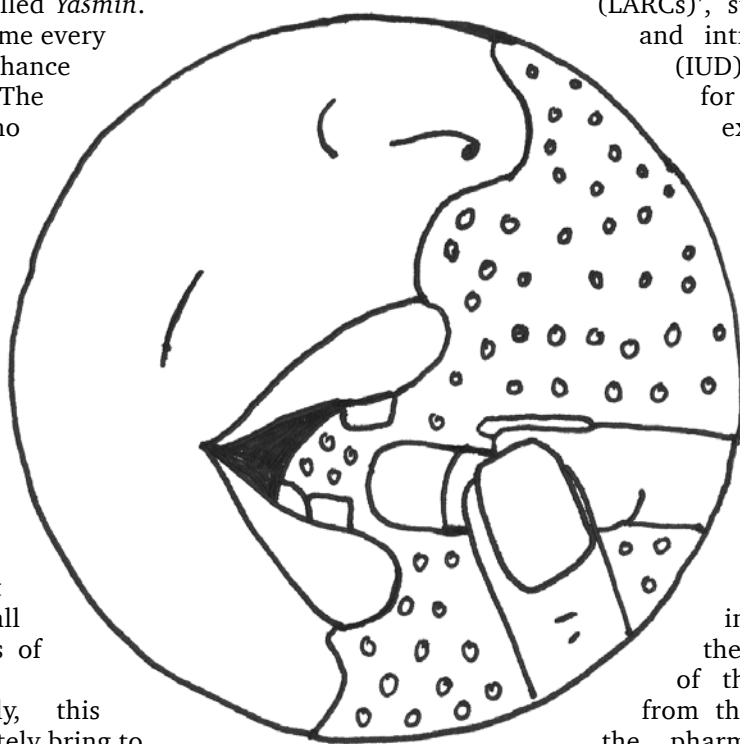
But even working within our current capitalist and inherently patriarchal socio-economic system, there are probably ways to bypass the monetary losses of the pharma-gods.

It isn't unfeasible to suggest, for example, that the Therapeutic Goods Administration (the regulatory body for therapeutic goods in Australia) could compensate pharmaceutical companies who produce contraceptives, given that they do make losses when they properly advise users of side effects associated with their product.

Unfortunately, it is unlikely that any of this will be a priority for the Government or for any pharmaceutical company, despite there being proven links between hormonal birth control use and clinical depression, as found by a 2016 Danish study. But it's fanciful to think that women's health will be taken seriously, and their reproductive autonomy properly maintained within this aforementioned socio-economic system.

Nevertheless, it's necessary that when we encourage the use of birth control to prevent conception (as we should), that we simultaneously encourage an informed choice pertaining to the particular method and its side effects.

Art: Katie Thorburn



The Politics of Mental Health

LILY MATCHETT / Explores the medical industry's role in the oppression of women

The biomedical model upon which western psychiatric “mental illnesses” have been socially constructed is so pervasive that it barely gets critiqued even in activist or feminist spaces. But this level of faith allows it to get away with oppression, abuse, and fierce enforcement of the status quo through social control and the blemishing of deviance. This often comes down hardest on women and other oppressed peoples, which is why mental health is a feminist issue.

Biological psychiatry is an enterprise that is complicit in colonialism, patriarchy, transphobia, capitalism, heterosexism, adultism, and ageism. I will explain how and why. It's important to note that I believe peoples distress is absolutely real, diverse, and should in no way be minimised. I also acknowledge that psychopharmaceuticals and psychotherapies can be useful to some and what works for people should not be wholly abandoned. However, understanding the context in which mental illnesses and treatments are constructed is important, and can explain some peoples experiences of oppression within the mental health system.

Firstly, let's talk about who decides who is 'mentally ill' and who is 'normal'. There are a number of small task-forces and working groups who decide by vote what is and is not an illness and treatment. It's important to note that this is not the same as other medical illnesses, which are derived through empirical data. For instance, of the 20 working group members who authored the treatment guidelines for schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, and major depressive disorder, 18/20 (90%) had at least one financial tie to a pharmaceutical company manufacturing the proposed treatment drugs. And 9/20 (45%) were members of that pharmaceutical company's board. Overall, for the latest version of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM), 70% of all task-force members have ties to pharmaceutical industry. The DSM is riddled with conflicts of interest. This should get you questioning the system. Why should we trust people who have an inherent interest in making profits off drugs for particular 'mental illnesses' in making the decisions regarding the existence and treatments of these illnesses?

Next, let's talk about who ends up labeled as having a mental illness. Women are vastly overrepresented as are poor people, homosexuals, trans people, people of colour and Aboriginal people. What do these people have in common? They all suffer at the hands of oppression. They face very real and often traumatic instances of domination, violence, inequality and discrimination.

Are these people abnormal, sick and suffering from a brain disease? Or are they having a perfectly reasonable distress response to living in a world that condones colonialism, capitalism, patriarchy, heterosexism, transphobia and the like? Isn't a better explanation that our society is sick and needs to change? Not all diagnosed peoples are from a marginalized group, however, we can say that capitalism and toxic masculinity can affect persons in alienating and distressing ways too. Labeling people as 'mentally ill' depoliticizes their experience of distress, obscures the causes and disguises them as individually or biologically determined.

Let's not forget some of the mental disorders that have existed or still exist in the DSM, the diagnostic bible. Homosexuality was formally classified as a mental illness until 1973, however persisted in various incarnations up until 1987. Gender Dysphoria Disorder is an 'illness' that trans people need to identify as having in order to access hormones and sex reassignment surgery today. Women who don't climax are said to be disordered too, suffering from Female Orgasmic

Disorder. If we can say today that homosexuality is not a mental illness, why not call into question other diagnoses? The DSM still acts as a tool for social control, that labels and blemishes diversity and further represses people who deviate from or challenge the status quo.

Thirdly, let's talk about what benefits labeling an individual with a mental illness have for overarching systems of oppression. By labeling oppressed individuals as mentally ill, we invisibilise the social and economic systems that cause people distress. Disguising the affect of oppression as a brain disease allows systems of oppression to continue unchallenged. When we say “she has depression” what are we not talking about or addressing? Domestic violence, sexual assault, child abuse, the nuclear family, gender inequality, racism, heterosexism, economic deprivation, emotional labour, unpaid carework etc. Instead of talking about these things we say “she is mentally ill”. But really she did not create the systems and

‘Women are vastly overrepresented, as are poor people, homosexuals, trans people, people of colour and Aboriginal people. What do these people have in common? They all suffer at the hands of oppression’

structures that oppress her, and those systems remain hidden and unchallenged when we label her as simply having a disorder.

Psychology and psychiatry imply that the problem and remedy lie within the individual (biologically and psychologically). This is the scientific product of a neoliberal society. Treatments proffered by psychology and psychiatry target the individual and do little to expose, question, or challenge sexism, racism and homophobia and the like. Additionally, the individualised treatments, particularly psychopharmaceuticals, make our capitalist economy billions of dollars. Big Pharma makes its profits off the medicalisation of people's misery and off the five star marketing of 'diagnoses' in the DSM. This industry has financial interests in creating more mental illnesses (markets) and treatments (profit-making goods). And while drugs can ease or numb the symptoms of distress, even in neuroscientific terms, they do not address the causes.

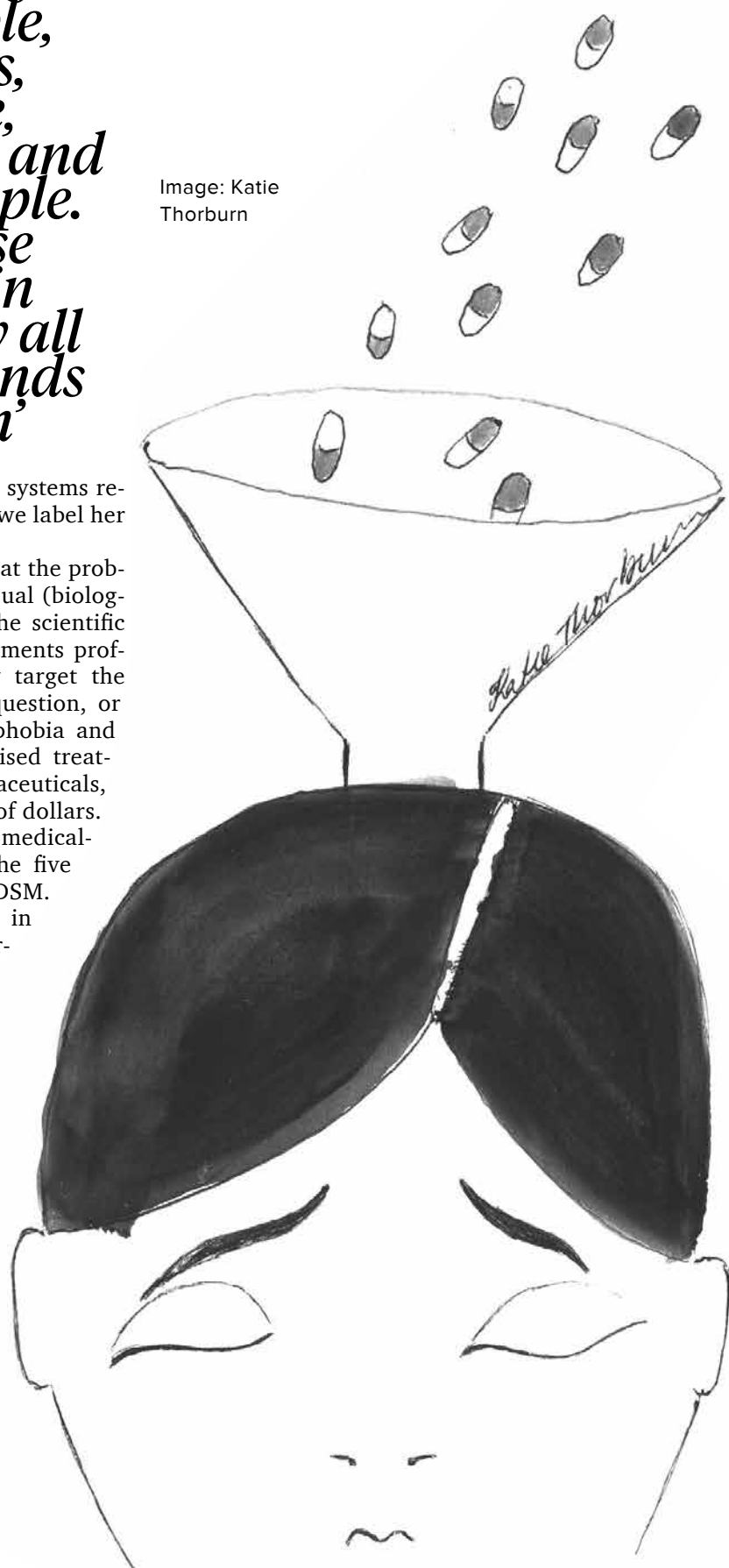
This is because the biochemical and neurological markers associated with anxiety, depression, schizophrenia, bipolar and the like have never been proven as causal. It is more likely that low serotonin in the brain is a product of 'depressive symptoms' rather than a cause. But Big Pharma, psychology and psychiatry can still make a shit tonne of money off treating symptoms, in fact not finding cures means people stay dependent on

their money making band-aid solutions.

Lastly, particular voices are prioritised over others in mental health discourse. For example the voices of pathologised & oppressed peoples are almost entirely omitted. The voices of those who have had negative experiences of the mental health system including forced or coercive admission to psychiatric hospitals, forced medication, patients traumatised from psychotherapy and psychological treatments, those whose life expectancy has dramatically reduced due to treatment drugs, and those who've suffered intolerable pharmaceutical side effects are strategically silenced from discourse. While psychiatrists, psychologists, Big Pharma and researchers with pharmaceutical ties who stand to gain profit or a career off the treatments, are the determinant voices.

While controversial I'm sure, I hope I have got you thinking critically on mental health discourse enough to do some research of your own. Discover what alternative approaches and remedies to mental health exist. Start with this fabulous book “Psychiatry Disrupted: Theorizing Resistance and Crafting the (R)evolution” by Burstow, LeFrancios & Diamond.

Image: Katie Thorburn









‘Femsumerism’, T-Shirts and the Fourth Wave

FRANCESCA FERRER / On the commerical exploitation of feminism

I started to think about the idea of ‘femsumerism’ as I walked through Topshop. (Not a traditional place for epiphanies.) That was the first time I saw a t-shirt branded, labeled and sold as ‘feminist’.

Part of me felt like buying one – if only because I like the idea of wearing it proud, and making an overt claim against misogyny. The other part of me felt uneasy about it. In this piece, I hope to explain why.

Feminism is a political movement. The idea that it is now ‘cool’ to buy a t-shirt that is feminist seemed somewhat empty – a low-commitment, low-cost way into feminist culture and aesthetics, but not necessarily its politics. Nonetheless, high street shops are heaving with products that encourage shoppers to ‘buy’ feminism.

‘This is What A Feminist Looks Like’, ‘Girl Power’, ‘The Future is Female’, ‘We Should All Be Feminists’ and ‘Femme Forever’ are but a few of the examples of slogan shirts I have seen in shops and on Instagram that attempt to jump on the feminist bandwagon. But it isn’t just chain stores; online boutiques are selling the Venus symbol as earrings, and ‘Fuck the Patriarchy’ hoops. (Tempting products, I know.)

While feminism is a diverse movement – and there are many different feminisms for many different people, whom I don’t intend to bash or demean – there are issues that are at stake here that must be addressed.

There is no question that it is a positive thing that ‘feminist’ is no longer considered a dirty word or a potential insult – the fact that it is now a marketable term shows just how far we’ve come. But are we now in danger of allowing feminism to be subsumed to the marketplace? Is feminism as a movement losing some of its impetus because it’s becoming as trendy as it is political?

There is no shortage of comment on the hypocrisy of multinational fashion retailers that rely on sweatshops (and the women exploited within them) to have their slogan t-shirts produced.

But what I find most frightening about the trend is how our digital presence and lived experience on social media contributes to the supply and demand of the marketplace. This is how fourth wave feminism becomes relevant.

Fourth wave feminism is quite a departure from its predecessor in that it finds its value in more female empowerment with individualism. We see this in young women taking sexy selfies, posting them on platforms such as Instagram and proclaiming that they are in control of what goes out there and that it makes them feel good, sassy and fierce. While I certainly see the value of this opinion, I am torn by the fact that this kind of ‘female empowerment’ is so closely tied to external validation online.

These digital habits are captured to ‘inform’ the marketplace. For instance, data collected from Facebook algorithms is used by retailers to ensure the popularity of their products. As a mid-twenty-something who scrolls through Instagram countless times a day, I am utterly vulnerable to this. I find myself more and more attracted to the ads that pop up on my social media as it becomes more educated about the sort of person I am and what I am likely to buy.

So, in the case of the ‘feminist’ slogan shirt and its peers, ‘femsumerism’ is certainly a reality. This trend is an alert to the very possible future in which feminism is churned through the capitalist machine and spat out the other end, as most trends are.

Take Punk, initially an anti-establishment subcultural rebellion

turned edgy fashion statement. The essence of the movement was diluted by its ‘selling-out’. As it became a consumable it lost its power. The value of feminism is that it seeks to restore the balance of power and upset the prevailing systems that keep the same demographic in power. The commodification of feminism normalises it rather than letting it be effective in its capacity to make change. Feminism should be uncomfortable and difficult and confronting: that is where its power lies.

The ‘been there, done that, got the t-shirt’ attitude is not the future of feminism. What the trend reveals, however, is that we still have a lot of work to do.



Art: Jocelin Chan

Unwriting Myself

TINA HUANG / Reflections on the ephemera of love, life, and art

Once, I was a contender. Now, I’m not so sure.

L played the Talking Heads to me for the first time last night and I cried it moved me so much; this is not your beautiful house, this is not your beautiful wife. I don’t even have a house or wife, but it already feels like I’m gonna get both wrong.

I went to see L again this weekend. She was so beautiful, so enough. But I couldn’t get out of my head. Everything felt like it was ending. She goes to Helsinki in a month to study art history and I am going to stay here, in my lonely apartment and interview for an environmental campaigner position I don’t even know if I want.

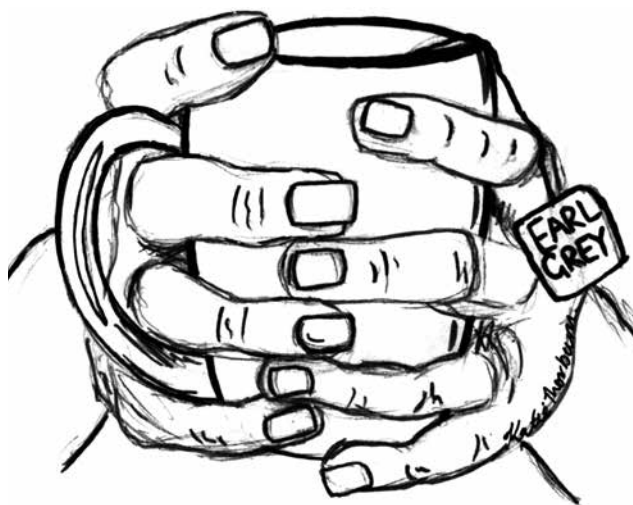
I want to make art, not advocacy. Are people even convinced by activism anymore? It makes me feel nothing. Activism tries to make you feel the rapture of art; the galvanic, hot surge to do something. But you know whatever pleasure you get is not quite free.

I wanna make art that is funny and moving and surreal. Like Hannah Gadsby’s Happiness is a Bedside Table, where she spends the entire show talking about body issues and then strips down to a swimsuit and saunters out of the room. I want to make art like Taika Waititi’s Hunt for the Wilderpeople, which always lights a fire inside me – a damp, woody campfire of humour & melancholy. I wanna make art like Chris Kraus, whose book, I Love Dick, I read on the bus ride home after the last time I saw L. I read it as if to save my life, to breathe through the pain that had just been inflicted, as if it were a structure for my suffering. A reason to keep living, to keep reading. Last night, I woke up in bed with cold feet, forgetting where I was, curled up and afraid.

In my first year of university, I wrote a piece for a student magazine that lots of people liked. It was even commended in a literary competition. I never quite recovered from the praise of that period. I spent the next three years writing garbage. First, a vaguely racist piece about Indigenous Australians, then a piece about suburbia in which I misquoted Sidney Nolan, and finally something twisted and extremely inappropriate about my assault.

I have arrived at the endgame of my self-destruction: a piece of writing about how I can no longer write. I’ve lost the ability to cause rapture in people, to hold them (or even myself) to a light and clarity that might otherwise never be found.

When I had my panic attack last night, I kept saying that I needed to figure out what to do with my life, and L just kept insisting that now was not the time to think about this. But if not now, then when? Everything feels too much.



L could always just write. When we first met, we were both only in our teens, but even then you could just tell she was going to be great. I read this blog post of hers about the relationship between maths and comedy and instantly fell in love with her. I spent the whole piece waiting for it to become awkward or clunky, but it never did. When you read L, you are safe, in the hands of someone who knows exactly what they’re doing.

Sometimes, when I miss L, I go back into my inbox and read the old emails she wrote to me. My favourite one is about the Finnish writer, Tove Jansson, and Jansson’s book of seasons. The email is beautiful and even in the years after it was sent, when we were no longer talking or in love with other people, or things were just all too painful, I would still go back to her words: it is still summer, but the summer is no longer alive. It has come to a standstill; nothing withers, and fall is not ready to begin. There are no stars yet, just darkness.

It feels like I am reaching for something, and I’m worried that if I don’t get there I will simply fall away.

I guess what I’m trying to say is this: I think writing isn’t about anything. It’s not an answer to a question, or an argument to be perfected. Life is like this also. The aim is not to get it right; it is to make it beautiful. This is why I loved L, and this is why I wanted to be a writer. I am scared to have lost both.

A version of this piece originally appeared in Overland Literary Journal. Check it out here: <https://overland.org.au/>

Art: Katie Thorburn

Service Gaps in Women's Support Services

MARLEY BENZ / On how funding impacts the provision of life-saving services

I am a social worker and I work in a women and children's centre in Sydney's inner city. The needs we address are varied and some cannot be met. These unmet needs are not because of our inability to address them, but because of a lack of funding for particular programs.

Sometimes we can't work with women because they don't live in within the catchment area for specific programs, while there is a need to have geographic boundaries in place for service provision distribute demand to other organisations, this can be difficult when women feel a specific connection to our service. Funding cuts to women's services in recent years have had a huge impact on the way that services can help women experiencing disadvantage.

The centre provides a safe place for women to visit, have a cup of tea, use the phones or computers, and maybe grab some food or energy bill vouchers. While these services are made possible by government funding or donations, none of the time taken to provide assistance is funded.

This can become stressful when we are busy with casework. However, it is critical that the women who visit the centre are made to feel welcome and we make every effort to do so. For all we know, these women may be experiencing more hardship such as extreme financial difficulties or domestic violence, and this may be an important opportunity to establish a rapport with them before they feel comfortable disclosing their situation. Asking for help can be very

difficult for people, especially those with children, as doing so can carry a risk of child removal. Furthermore, around 80 percent of our clients are Aboriginal and Australia's short colonial history has done a good job at depicting social workers as anything but allies.

'Unmet needs are not because of our inability to address them, but because of a lack of funding for programs'

There are two primary programs that we provide casework for at the centre. The first is the Early Intervention and Placement Prevention program, which supports mothers who have children under the age of 13 who need help finding stable housing, employment, counselling or child care for their children. The ultimate aim of EIPP caseworkers is to help mothers find their feet and lessen the impact that oppressive systems can have on their ability to parent. Unfortunately, these caseworkers are not able to work with mothers who have children above the age of 12, or those who have already had their children removed and need support coping with the trauma of that experience. Too often women have been denied casework at our centre because they no longer have their children in their care after they've

made the brave decision to request support.

The second major program is Staying Home Leaving Violence. SHLV caseworkers can only work with women who are leaving domestic violence. While our caseworkers provide a fantastic and supportive service to those women who fit the narrow criteria, what about the women who are living with domestic violence and are in fear of leaving their partner because of the very real possibility that they will lose their life? Imagine having to tell a woman experiencing domestic violence that you can't offer her support because she hasn't yet decided to leave the perpetrator, even though it is widely understood that women are most likely to be murdered by their perpetrators after they leave them. This seems like an elaborate form of victim blaming and it is far too common, likely contributing to the spike in gendered violence in recent years.

There are frontline workers dedicating their lives to helping people who are in need, but they sometimes find themselves stunted by the limited, and often punitive, policies put in place by wealthy white men in suits. It doesn't matter how many years you studied economics or political science at a prestigious university, if you are a rich white man you are never going to be the right person to decide what will alleviate the disadvantage experienced by the women we work with. Time to step aside and let women who know what they're doing get the job done.

Like, Whom Can Language Oppress?

ELENA SHEARD / Explores why it is we believe what we believe about language

It's hard to deny that certain varieties of English are viewed as superior to others. I'd guess that many Australians my age have at some point had an adult object with almost vehement rage to our frequent use of 'like' in everyday speech. Linguistically speaking 'like' can function as a means of quotation (and she was like, I hate this) or as a hedging device (it's like, too much), both of which are legitimate communicative functions. While some people reliably pepper their speech with the word, in such cases 'like' is more of an equivalent to 'um', and chances are that person's speech habits would annoy you regardless of their use of 'like' specifically.

If you ask a linguist how they feel about the word 'youse', they'll most likely tell you it makes complete sense. Modern English doesn't have a plural 'you' form, something that most Romance languages do in fact have, and 'youse' simply completes the list of English pronouns.

Although 'youse' is supposedly improper, according to Standard English grammar speakers should always use 'whom' in the object position (who gave what to whom). I don't know anybody who does that consistently, probably because many Australians have an innate aversion to sounding like British royalty. If words such as like and their contemporary usage were objectively wrong or improper then they couldn't be used in communication because speakers

wouldn't be understood. The fact that it violates someone's (read: older white speaker of what they perceive to be a superior form of English) sense of aesthetics doesn't actually make it improper.

In reality, defining what constitutes proper English is an ideological debate rather than a

linguistic one and, despite what purists will tell you, most varieties of English are linguistically

'If you find yourself criticising how someone speaks, consider the implications of what you are saying and ask yourself what gives you the right to assume your way of speaking is superior to someone else'

valid. While there is no doubt a place in society for a standard language (it allows us to communicate on local, national and international levels) its prominence within education and the media often gives rise to (often subconscious) assumptions of linguistic superiority and propriety. This can and does lead to highly prescriptive approaches to language, through which people are told how they should speak rather than having how they do speak acknowledged.

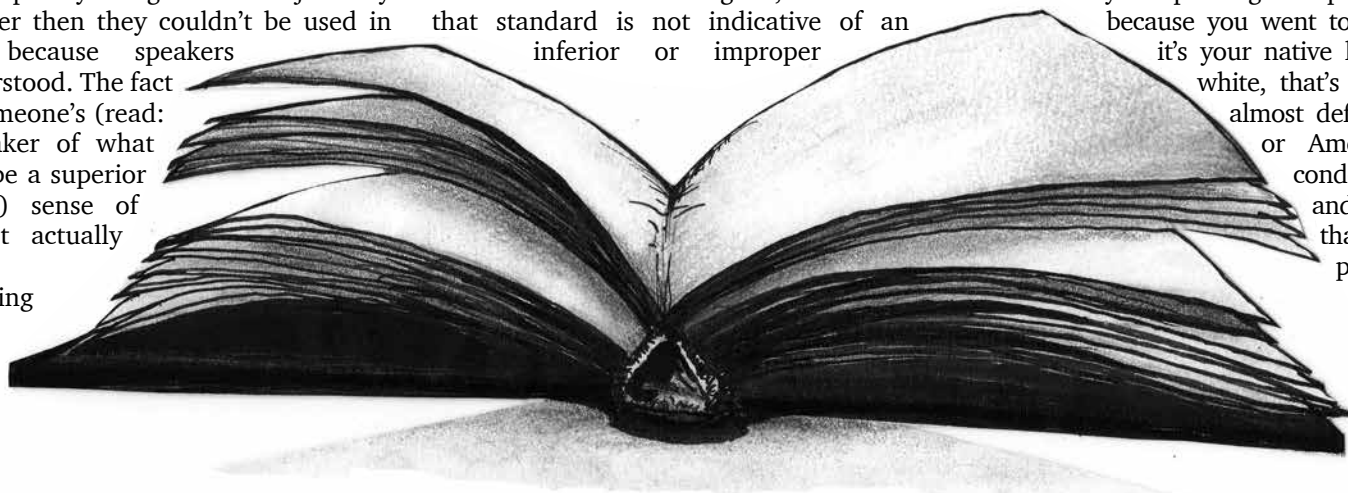
Standard English is not linguistically superior to other varieties of English, and deviation from that standard is not indicative of an inferior or improper

form of English. Difference is not synonymous with inferiority. Historically speaking, a language variety comes to be viewed as 'standard' or more proper because it is the language of the powerful and privileged.

Our internalised notions of what constitutes proper and improper English deserve to be scrutinised on an individual and collective level as they play a crucial role in maintaining oppressive structures such as the patriarchy (women and teenage girls are often at the forefront of linguistic innovations viewed as inherently inferior), white supremacy (via the dismissal of legitimate varieties of English such as Aboriginal English in Australia and African American Vernacular English in America) and the gender binary (via the wide refusal to acknowledge they as a legitimate gender-neutral first person pronoun despite it making perfect sense). This is especially true for white native speakers of English, even more so if it is your only native language. Dismantling oppressive structures will inevitably involve dismantling our preconceived notions of English and language.

If you find yourself criticising how someone speaks, consider the implications of what you are saying and ask yourself what gives you the right to assume your way of speaking is superior to someone else. If it's because you went to a good school, or because it's your native language, or because you're white, that's not good enough. There is almost definitely someone in England or America who would happily condemn your Aussie accent and lingo for no other reason than it doesn't align with their perception of how English is spoken. Ultimately the best thing about any language, is that it isn't static; diversity and variation should be embraced rather than condemned.

Art: Jemima Wilson



For Political Organisers: Gendered Labour within Far-Left Spaces

HOLLY BROOKE / A reflection on how the left is (still) sexist

For the purposes of this article, “patriarchy” will refer to the social system that, among many other things:

- Defines the types of labour coded as ‘masculine’ and as ‘feminine’;
- Privileges masculinity over femininity;
- Grants those who are male [and cisgender] greater political power, social privilege, assumed intelligence, assumed moral authority, and more; and
- Presents inequality between genders as natural or individualistically chosen rather than socially constituted.

The patriarchy will not, and cannot, be defeated under capitalism. Yet, despite what many cis men who engage in far-left political organising would have you believe, dismantling capitalism will not automatically lead to an egalitarian utopia in which gender equality has been realised. Dismantling patriarchy takes work; consistent, hard work, as well as a realisation that this work must be done alongside - not after - the work of dismantling capitalism. Far too many patriarchal societal patterns are played out within far-left organising spaces - “progressive” spaces supposedly committed to the cause of dismantling patriarchy.

Inequality in Administrative Labour

In broader society, people who are not cis-men are more likely to be given and to take on administrative work. Far-left political organising spaces are not immune to this trend, often to the detriment of the capacity for non cis-men in those spaces to be fully able to contribute politically. By ‘administrative work’, I mean creating agendas, taking minutes, consulting around meeting times and places, contacting individuals to remind them of outstanding tasks and of meeting times, days and places, maintaining files and databases, and the plethora of other “non-political busywork” that political organising generates. Those who have never been expected to carry out this type of work - generally cisgender men - may not understand the immense labour that is sunk into purely administrative work, often by non cis-men, and therefore rarely take the initiative to begin this work. This means that the work either does not happen, or those who recognise the work - disproportionately non cis-men - take it on themselves. If these people try to delegate, due to gendered stereotypes, they may open themselves up to being labeled as controlling, authoritarian, bossy or needlessly perfectionist.

There is a common trend that within most political groupings with formalised roles,

secretary roles - with ‘apolitical’ administrative work - are generally filled by people who are not cis-men, while positions like convenor - with greater political significance and influence - are more likely to be held by cis men. This trend is mirrored in the informal labour patterns that arise in political spaces in which there are not formalised roles, although this trend may be dangerously obscured by the lack of formalised division of labour.

Cisgender men in far-left organising spaces need to be far more aware of the administrative labour that goes into maintenance of these spaces, and as such should be more willing to take initiative on this work. This does not mean asking those who more often take on this work to “give me a discrete task”, or waiting until it is clear that there is already an administrative gap that needs filling. This means thinking ahead and taking on ‘boring’ organisational tasks without being asked, even if this is to the detriment of one’s time and capacity to carry out exciting political work. This organisational work will need to be done eventually, by someone, and chances are, that someone will be a non cis-male.

Inequality in Domestic and Emotional Labour

Much has been written about the gendered split of domestic and emotional labour. Again, this inequality manifests time and time again in far-left political organising spaces. Non cis-men are predominantly those who take on the ‘softer’ and often invisible work of making far-left political spaces accessible, safe and comfortable.

Examples of this work include, but are by no means limited to:

- Crafting messages to new or shy members that are longer, more inviting and more open-ended than is strictly politically and functionally necessary, to allow for greater depth of communication, longer conversations and more questions.
- Checking in regularly on the emotional well-being of comrades, especially during times of stress.
- Bringing food to meetings, events and actions.

These tasks are generally not viewed as labour that is integral or even important to political organising, but all of these and more undoubtedly function to the long-term benefit of far-left political projects. Meetings, events and actions at which there are snacks and which happen in cleaner, tidier and more comfortable environments are more productive and go for longer; more political

work is done as a result. The emotional labour of spending longer engaging with new, inactive or shy members can create more comfortable, confident future political organisers; more political work is done as a result. The emotional labour of checking in on the emotional and/or physical health of comrades can help to stave off burnout; more political work gets done as a result.

The type of labour

outlined here overwhelmingly is not carried out by cis-men, and is all too often not viewed as labour, and instead as superfluous to political organising. This work is often viewed as work that individuals - overwhelmingly non cis-men - carry out because they simply want to, rather than out of any necessity. This is a simplistic analysis: we want to do this work because we are overwhelmingly socialised to care more about the emotional well-being of comrades and recognize investing labour into this as an integral and necessary part of political organising.

What cis men must realise is that emotional and domestic labour can be hugely energy intensive labour, and can take away from the capacity of those doing this intensive labour to do other more explicitly “political” work.

Inequality in Political Confidence and Power

The patriarchy socialises people of all genders to believe that those we code as masculine have greater intelligence, knowledge, and moral authority. This leads to trends in which cis men are more likely to present their own opinions as fact, speak with condescension, and use needlessly over-academic and inaccessible language for the purpose of self-aggrandisement. Meanwhile people who are not cis-men are more likely to second-guess their own knowledge, intelligence and political opinions. Both of these factors are mutually reinforcing and can lead cis-men to take the lead on political direction and decisions.

Being “Not Sexist” as a Political Identity for Left-Wing Men

In an ideal world, the topics covered in this article would be easy to bring up in productive conversations within far-left organising. We should be able to talk openly and critically about the ways in which the patriarchy negatively impacts patterns of labour in our organising spaces, and cis men should respond positively and work to combat patriarchal patterns. However, left wing cis men consistently and notoriously fail to see their own complicity in upholding the patriarchy. Left-wing cis men are aware on a theoretical level that sexism is bad and is to be avoided for leftists. This means, though, that when left-wing cis men have their own complicity in sexist patterns pointed out to them, this can serve to violate their self identity as “good leftists”. Rather than taking on-board constructive criticism around gendered labour patterns and other symptoms of the patriarchy and working to change behaviours accordingly, these people can become combative; it is not just a sole behaviour being pointed out as “bad”, it is their entire self-identify as “good feminist” and by proxy “good leftist” that is being called into question. A combative response is not one that always arises, however the legitimate worry of a combative response is often enough to deter those who would otherwise initiate a necessary conversation about particular sexist behavioural patterns.

In order for far-left political organising spaces to function optimally in the struggle to dismantle capitalism, cis men need to recognise their complicity in patriarchal patterns, take seriously the concerns of non cis-men around unequal gendered division of labour in these spaces, and engage productively in conversations around combating the patriarchy wherever it emerges.



Art: Katie Thorburn

Yes, I Fucking Know Who Slayer is

MADDY WARD / Despite her lady brain, Madeline Ward really has listened to that band you think women aren't into

If I had a dollar for every time a man has questioned my knowledge of the band on the front of my t-shirt, I wouldn't have a HECS debt. Men who question the authenticity of a woman's love and appreciation for an artist or kind of music seem to think that women are incapable of listening to anything other than what's charting in the Top 40 (though of course there's nothing wrong with that at all). The kinds of things women and girls enjoy are often dismissed as being poor quality or vacuous, especially when it comes to music. It seems as though we can't win- no matter what we listen to or produce, men will find a way to make us feel like shit about it.

Music bros are the worst genre of man, mainly because they are boring snobs who seem to think they're the only one with access to a premium Spotify account. The logic behind questioning whether a woman actually knows who the band is on her T Shirt is pretty stupid- if she's taken the time to find, buy and then wear the shirt she's

probably got a good idea of who the band is. I feel as though the stupidity is amplified the more famous the band is- I can somewhat understand surprise at someone wearing a West Thebarton shirt, for example, because they're a relatively obscure band. I don't even know if they've released any merch. When men get shitty at women wearing merch by a band as large as Slayer however, I feel as though there is something more at play.

The surprise that men seem to collectively possess at the female ability to listen to and enjoy music stems from a deeper issue of sexism in the music industry, one that is visible from the composition of festival line ups to the way women are treated in mosh pits. It creates a kind of musical boy's club, establishing an authenticity of listenership that is divided by gender. Women are often physically unable to access the larger fandom, even in a literal sense: I have never felt more afraid or at home in any place than in a mosh pit. My first year attending St Jerome's Laneway

festival was also a new record in the amount of times my ass had groped in an 8-hour time span. At a Spiderbait concert I spent the duration of the gig pushing assorted hands off my waist and ass. Once, happily watching Rufus ring in the new year with my best friend, I smacked a man across the face as he pulled me in for an unwanted kiss. In short: men are awful.

It's not all bad: this year APRA introduced a strict minimum of 40% female participation in its music programs, including external ones as well as the same percentage of female participation on its own boards. Will Wagner of The Smith Street Band has spoken out against violence toward women in mosh pits on several occasions, as have many other bands and artists in Australia. The music scene is slowly moving toward gender quality, and I look forward to the day when I can wear a Queens of The Stone Age shirt in public without having to show that I'm a card-carrying member of the fan club.

Not Half a Whore

SYDNEY DAWN / Won't have their work be diminished

I'm sitting on the knee of a 55-year-old man with nice eyes, good intentions and no clue. On his other knee is a fellow sex worker. We drive the conversation. He's an agreeable, kind man and nods along to most things. He's asked Gemma how she came to work "in this old place" and she laughs that I was the bad influence. We're still laughing, but genuine in affirming our like of our work. "Bit of sex work never hurt anyone" I say. He frowns and is quick to a misguided form of kindness, "don't call it that! It's not sex." We explain, gently and keeping the mood light, that we embrace the term sex worker and even "whore" as a reclamation of societal stigma, and that we're proud to work where we are. He appreciates our confidence, as always. He really is a good client.

While all sex workers face discrimination some of us are only subjected to a watered down version.

And the conversation moves on.

One of the higher ups in the place once told me "it's the best way for a girl to make a bit of money without being naughty." I told a godmother I no longer speak to I'm an erotic masseuse - I give hand jobs. Her first response (well, second after bursting into laughter and saying "it's so you") was to firmly advise "Don't go further though. Like penetration."

It seems everyone is eager to inform me just how un-sex work my sex work job is. Odd, because I still felt it necessary to hide my work from my parents for over a year, I still have to protect my privacy from clients, I still am extremely susceptible to ever-changing sex work legislation. I still have to be aware of sexually transmitted infections, cope with the threat of rape, play therapist to sobbing drunk men, come out to potential partners and brace myself for their reaction. I get naked with another

person and make them orgasm for pay. How exactly is this not sex work? Or rather, why are the people around me from bosses to clients to friends and even fellow workers so keen to draw a dividing line between our work and "real sex work"?

Ah, because real sex work is dirty. Penetration does psychological damage - penises are that powerful apparently - and people who know me, like me. If they don't like prostitution, because they've eaten up societal stigma towards whores, they need to reconcile their like for me and their disrespect of what I do. So what I do isn't really what I do, it's something else - "just a bit of fun." Or - part of my experimental phase.

This attitude is a manifestation of the Whorearchy - an oppressive hierarchy of whores. While all sex workers face discrimination some of us are only subjected to a watered down version. Sugar babies, phone sex workers, strippers, erotic masseuses and white, cisgender, middle to upper class, first world non-immigrant sex workers enjoy a level of respect and tolerance not afforded to full service and street sex workers who experience multiple intersecting oppressions. While incredibly privileged, I am reminded of this deadly and pointless division between different areas of sex work every time I mention I'm considering moving into full service. "Are you sure!" "Why?" *Gasp!*

Few of my non-whore friends have reacted with anything but concern and shock. They're not aware I already did the deed a while ago, with a nice client I met at work. And so far it hasn't shattered my sense of self or left me traumatised.



Art: Brigitte Samaha

Branded

DEMI WALKER

The moon lives in the lighting of my skin
 And so although I never invited you in
 How could I allow you to stay?
 Three index fingers, branded whorls
 Like secret marks, I'll come if he calls
 Or he
 Or he
 The three, resting dormant, as if it will happen again.
 And again.
 And again.
 Transfigured from my dreams.
 But how, how! Could I have allowed you to stay
 Find your home splintered in my flesh
 And cobwebbed on my cortex
 How, when I have found my home in this sky
 I can be touched now and pick and choose the fingerprints I keep
 I wear him like a badge because
 I saved me, so I can,
 And on days when I need to remember
 My strength, I can take him off,
 Leave him on my shelf for when I come home
 March through my day with a vibrant, patterned cloth
 That I harvested, spun and wove alone
 So bright that three brands start to fade
 And cobwebs tatter
 And I can almost not feel
 Three sets of hands
 Signing their names with thievery and indignity.
 Almost.
 I once believed that giving and receiving love
 Was a mark of failure at self healing
 But now I know that on my dull days
 I can leave that vibrant woven head dress on its hanger.
 I can be small, softly brushing my quiet badge of self – actuation.
 I have built my strength,
 But I do not need to carry all of my parts
 All of the time.



Art: Katie Thorburn
 Art: Harriet Cronley

Things to tell my little sister

BRIDGET NEAVE

Show no resistance to the leaking of your heart, from between your ribs.

let it first trickle slowly away from your chest
 then allow it to flood like a river.
 Or like a mist,
 let it be syphoned from you.

Do not clutch your body shut, with frozen hands
 to trap the water in.
 Hoping it will turn back into gold,
 if you could just warm it.

For it will stagnate.
 And flies and larvae will be drawn inside of you
 to drink from your algae pool.
 And taint everything your delicate hands make, like leprosy.

Give your heart permission to pour,
 down the drain of your ribcage.
 let it ruin the bed sheets
 let it ruin the carpet
 let it ruin the wooden foundations
 But not you

And let it go, let it go

My Secret

MARLEY O'NEILL

I know to stay quiet,
 I know when to lie,
 To say that I'm fine
 So I'll be safe tonight.

People see and people ask.
 "Did you see her bruises?" I hear them say.
 But I say nothing and keep wearing my mask.
 If I tell the truth I know he'll make me pay.

No one can save me, no one can help.
 I'm all alone in this fight.
 Nowhere is safe, my home is hell,
 I hope I can make it through the night.

No one would suspect a thing.
 I smile and laugh all the time.
 I dance, I act, I run, I sing
 So everyone will think I'm fine.

But I'm not fine at all, inside I'm breaking.
 Father's aren't supposed to act that way.
 When I see my friends with their fathers my heart is breaking.
 I close my eyes and walk away.

I try to cry but I don't know how to,
 Years of trauma have caused that.
 But father i've accepted that I'll never be loved by you,
 Even if sometimes it makes me sad.

When I talk about it I force a smile.
 I put on a brave face all the while.
 Everyone thinks that I'm ok,
 And even though I am, it hurts every day.

But I'm a survivor,
 And I'm surviving.
 One day I'll be living,
 One day I'll be free.



Art: Brigitte Samaha



ALL BOOKS HALF PRICE

OR LESS

UNTIL THE END OF THE UNI YEAR



Level 4, Wentworth Building, University of Sydney
(Next to the International Lounge)

p: 02 9660 4756 | w: src.usyd.edu.au/src-books

President's Report

ISABELLA BROOK

This week, the chair of the University's Academic Board has invited the student members of the Academic Board to present to the board on the topic of the "the student experience". Usyd's academic board is quite unique in that there are a large number of students who sit on this board compared to the 1 or 2 students at other universities. Student representation in the upper levels of university decision-making is extremely important as it means that the student voice is given a platform. The decisions made at the Academic Board are decisions that will directly

affect students and it's important that the university listens and responds to student concerns.

That's why it's great that the student members of the board have been given the opportunity to present to the board. We hear many members of our university community talking about "the student experience" but we very rarely see students given the chance to talk to academics and university management about the issues that are affecting them. The university's latest Student Experience Outcomes Report highlighted the dissatisfaction of students in several

key areas. These areas included student support, academic and career advice and the experience of international students. It's no surprise to see these areas highlighted as areas of dissatisfaction. These results come at a time of constant change within our university and the centralisation of more services, which are having a detrimental impact on the student experience.

Whilst these areas are important facets of the student experience, I think it's important for the university to acknowledge that this notion of "the student experience" encapsulates

so much more. It's important that we remember the inordinate living costs that students face, the often-unstable work students find themselves in, and the disadvantaged backgrounds that many students come from. All these seemingly external factors contribute to the student experience, as students are feeling stressed and uncertain about their future and this undoubtedly impacts their ability to enjoy and embrace their time at university. I hope to see the Academic Board and the university take action to better support students in order to improve the student experience.

Enviroment Officers' Report

SETH DIAS, ANDY MASON, JODIE RAE and MAUSHMI POWAR

The Environment Collective has had a busy semester so far! 10 students from USYD Environment Collective participated in a mid-semester road trip organised through the NSW branch of the Australian Student Environment Network. The trip visited a number of communities affected by coal and coal seam gas mining in the central west and north-west of the state. First we visited Wollar, a small community near Mudgee which was promised prosperity by a number of open-cut coal mines in the area, but has been completely decimated by noise and dust pollution with the area's population falling from over 300 to only 6 people. We heard from locals about the devastation which coal mining has brought to the social life of their community, the Wiradjuri people's cultural heritage and the local ecology, as well as their ongoing legal battle to prevent further expansion of coal mines nearby. We will be keeping an ear out for their rally at the NSW Supreme Court in February during the next round of

hearings.

Next, we visited the Pilliga, the site of the Narrabri Gas Project which has received intense media attention in the last few weeks. Energy giant Santos plans to build over 850 coal seam gas wells in the Pilliga forest, threatening local farmland, Gamilaraay culture and heritage, and the ecology of the largest inland forest in eastern Australia. Furthermore, the project poses an enormous risk of polluting the Great Artesian Basin, an underground aquifer covering a quarter of Australia's landmass and essential to much of the country's agriculture. We saw firsthand Santos' appalling environmental record on this project so far, with toxic spill sites from nearly 20 years ago still unable to support plant life, and evidence of pipes and wells being poorly maintained. We also visited a local Gamilaraay elder, who explained the demeaning way in which the Aboriginal community has been treated by this industry and the government, and the links between the destruction of their land through

mining and the other social issues they face such as the appalling rate of removal of Aboriginal children from their families.

Finally, we visited Maules Creek and talked to local farmers affected by massive new open-cut coal mines in their area. One farmer told us about chronic health problems he has experienced as a result of coal dust, which contains lead and other heavy metals, blowing into his rainwater tanks. Noise pollution from the 24-hour operations has also been a significant issue for this community. We heard about the history of this campaign, which saw farmers, environmentalists and the Aboriginal community unite in opposition to the mine and over 300 people arrested for participation in civil disobedience. Farmers told us about harassment they experienced from the government and the police, but also their determination to continue fighting for their community and trying to prevent further destruction of the local environment.

Last week, Enviro Collective members collaborated with Women's Collective members in holding a reading group around eco-feminism, a school of thought which explores the links between women's oppression and the destruction of the environment under capitalist patriarchy. Based on a chapter of Val Plumwood's "Feminism and the Mastery of Nature", we discussed the concept of the nature/society split and its gendered implications, the colonial origins of the idea of wilderness, and the importance of dualisms in Western thought and their legitimating role for systems of social oppression. On the 18th of October we will be holding a repeat of this event since it was so successful!

If you're interested in getting involved, we have meetings every week on Thursday at 1pm on the law lawns. Also, on Tuesday evenings from 5pm we have drinks at the Royal hotel on Abercrombie Street. Or you can join our Facebook group, 'USYD Enviro Collective 2017.'

Sexual Harassment Officers' Report

NINA DILLON BRITTON and JESSICA SYED

At the end of August, Rape and Domestic Violence Services Australia chose to withdraw from the 1800RESPECT Trauma Counselling Service due to its privatisation. 1800RESPECT provides a service to victims of sexual assault, harassment and domestic violence and remains one of the easiest accessible trauma counselling services in Australia. The Federal Government's decision to privatise the service and profiting from the service this provides to victims of rape is deeply appalling.

Why did R&DV Services Australia choose to leave? The system will be transitioned to a reference point for victim in traumatic situations, rather than a counselling service; the sorts of training of counselling staff

would be outsourced and all records would be made available across 5 organisations – making it unclear what sort of confidentiality victim-survivors can expect from the service. Already, 70 skilled counselling staff have been made redundant, with the government refusing to pay their owed redundancies. Current advertisements for the jobs that would replace them at 1800REPSECT is offering less than \$20 without comprehensive clinical supervision from staff. It appears that the funds required to continue to fund Rape & Domestic Violence Services Australia will not be given by the Federal Government – this means the organisation may have to liquidate, closing its doors. This spells the end to services like the NSW Rape Crisis

Centre, Sexual Assault Counselling Australia and the NSW Community Based Counselling Service.

Perhaps the blind pursuit of "efficiency" at the cost of quality services to individuals undergoing deeply traumatic experiences would be less horrific if the Medibank Health Services Director (who is overtaking 1800RESPECT) did not publically state that their goal was to double its profit from sexual assault and domestic violence services over the next 5 years. Survivors did not experience rape, violence and abuse to make up corporations' profit margins. They are not a group that their government can ignore, or worse, try to monetise. They are individuals who have experienced

what no person should, who deserve at the very least, the decency of quality support in dealing with their trauma.

If you're reading this and you're feeling angry, you're feeling helpless know that there are things you can do. This race to the bottom not only harms valuable staff but the people this government and our society claims to care most about: survivors of rape and domestic violence. Call your local MP, send an email to Turnbull, write a letter to Minister for women Michaela Cash, donate to Rape and Domestic Services Australia.

If you wish to get involved with the Women's Collective, like us on Facebook and email usyd womens collective@gmail.com for more information.

DO YOU NEED A SHORT EXTENSION?



You can ask your course co-ordinator for two days extension on a non examination task, eg. a take home assignment. This is an informal arrangement, and does not stop you from applying for Special Consideration (still within 3 days of original due date). For more details check out the quote below from the University's Coursework Policy:

66A Simple Extensions

- (1) A unit of study co-ordinator, who is satisfied that it is appropriate to do so, may permit a student to submit a non-examination task up to two working days after the due date with no penalty.
- (2) Such permission is an informal arrangement between the unit of study co-ordinator and the student which does not:
 - (a) affect the student's entitlement to apply for special consideration under this policy;
 - (b) alter any *time limits* or other requirements relating to applications for special consideration; or
 - (c) constitute an academic decision for the purposes of the University of Sydney (Student Appeals Against Academic Decisions) Rule 2006 (as amended).

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 | src.usyd.edu.au | fb:/srchelp



When does your student visa run out?

It is your responsibility to ensure that you comply with all your student visa conditions, especially the length of stay allowed under your visa entitlement.

You can find out about all the applicable visa conditions and your visa expiry date using the online service (Visa Entitlement Verification Online – "VEVO") on the Department of Immigration and Border Protection website. Use this URL: <https://online.immi.gov.au/evo/firstParty>

When accessing this online service, you will need your passport number and other identification details which can be found on the visa grant email sent by the Department.

If you are not sure how to use VEVO or have trouble with this online service, you can get FREE help from the SRC registered migration agent by contacting 9660 5222.

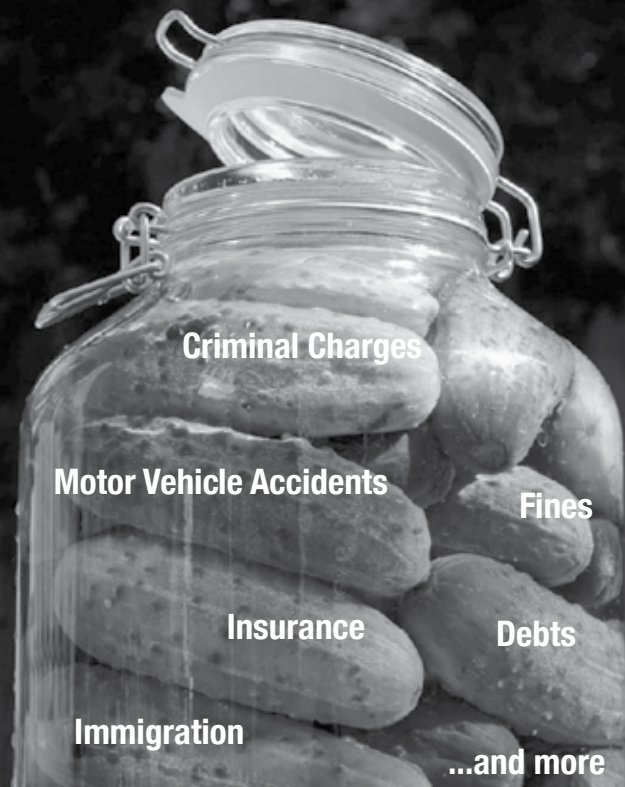
Make sure you put the visa expiry date in your calendar and remember to NOT overstay your visa! Overstaying leads to serious legal consequences which in some situations may require you to leave Australia immediately and you will not be able to come back again for 3 years.



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



IN A PICKLE?



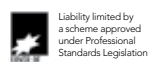
**If You Have a Legal Problem,
We Can Help for FREE!**



Level 1, Wentworth Bldg, University of Sydney
p: 02 9660 5222 | w: src.usyd.edu.au
e: 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



DID YOU KNOW?

**If you apply to
discontinue a subject
before the last day of
semester* you will get
a Discontinue Fail (DF)**

This WILL incur HECS or fees, and WILL affect your "academic progression", but WILL NOT affect your WAM. This is particularly important for students avoiding Show Cause & Exclusion.

* Semester 1: 9th June, 2017
* Semester 2: 3rd November, 2017

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 | src.usyd.edu.au | fb:/srchelp



src activism advocacy representation

Centrelink Got It Wrong and They Should Pay

Reprinted from ombudsman.gov.au
and finance.gov.au

The Scheme for Compensation for Detriment caused by Defective Administration (the CDDA Scheme)

What is the CDDA Scheme?

Members of the public can suffer loss or damage because of a government agency’s mistake or poor administrative practice. When that happens, they may not always be able to seek a remedy through administrative appeal, litigation or another legal mechanism. This can be applied to decisions made by Centrelink.

The CDDA scheme is an administrative scheme established to allow Australian Government agencies to provide compensation where there is a moral rather than a legal obligation.

The CDDA scheme applies to all non-corporate Commonwealth entities (NCE’s) under the Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013, with the exception of the departments of the Commonwealth Parliament. This includes all departments and many of the large statutory agencies that provide services to or deal directly with the public. This includes Centrelink. The CDDA Scheme is generally an avenue of last resort and is used only where there is no other viable avenue to provide redress.

The aim of a CDDA payment is to restore a person to the position they would have been in if there had been no defective administration. ‘Defective administration’ broadly means an agency’s unreasonable failure to comply with its own administrative procedures, institute appropriate administrative procedures, or give proper advice.

Who has the authority to make decisions?

The CDDA Scheme is an administrative, not a statutory (legislative) scheme. It has been established under the executive power of section 61 of the Constitution.

Portfolio Ministers have responsibility for decisions made under the CDDA Scheme. Ministers may also authorise



departmental officers to make decisions.

What is defective administration?

Defective administration is defined as:

- a specific and unreasonable lapse in complying with existing administrative procedures; or
- an unreasonable failure to institute appropriate administrative procedures; or
- an unreasonable failure to give to (or for) an applicant, the proper advice that was within the officer’s power and knowledge to give (or reasonably capable of being obtained by the officer to give); or
- giving advice to (or for) an applicant that was, in all the circumstances, incorrect or ambiguous.

What is detriment?

Detriment means quantifiable financial loss that the applicant has suffered. There are three types of detriment:

- detriment relating to a personal injury including mental injury (personal injury loss);

- economic detriment that is not related to a personal injury (pure economic loss); and
- detriment relating to damage to property.

When are compensation payments made?

Payments made under the CDDA Scheme are discretionary. This means there is no automatic entitlement to a payment. A mistake has been made by an entity or an official of an entity does not automatically mean compensation is payable under the CDDA Scheme.

Common examples of CDDA payments being made are when a person incurs expenses or loses eligibility for a benefit because of incorrect agency advice; a penalty or debt is wrongly imposed; personal property is damaged or documents are lost by an agency; or a computer error results in a delayed payment or unreasonable delay in approving an application.

Payments may be made by the relevant portfolio Minister or authorised officer if a Government officer or NCE has directly caused an applicant to experience detriment as a result of defective administration.

Who can apply for compensation?

Any individual, company or other organisation can apply for compensation, either for themselves or on behalf of an authorised third party. There is no guarantee of a favourable outcome.

How do I apply?

Claims are made in writing to the NCE to which your compensation claim relates.

Your application should address:

- the criteria for determining defective administration;
- explain how the actions or inactions were defective;
- provide details of the detriment being claimed, including an explanation of how the amount claimed is calculated; and
- explain how the defective administration directly caused the loss.

Please include all relevant evidence in support of your application e.g. correspondence between yourself and the relevant NCE, medical certificates etc. Please send all information to the NCE.

Contact details for large NCEs are listed below.

Further information

ombudsman.gov.au

finance.gov.au

Ask Abe

SRC caseworker HELP Q&A

SCAM WATCH

Dear Abe,

I’ve heard of people missing out on important emails because they looked like scams. How can I tell if an email is genuine or fake?

Optimistic

Dear Optimistic,

Telling the difference between a real and a scam email can be difficult. The NSW Department of Fair Trading gives these 10 rules:

The Ask Abe column allows you to ask whatever question you might have that affects you as a student, gaining the best advice that a very worldly mutt* can give.



1. Don’t respond to offers, deals or requests for your personal details.
2. Never send money or give credit card, account or other personal details to anyone who makes unsolicited offers or requests for your information.
3. Don’t rely on glowing testimonials.
4. Never respond to out of the blue requests for your personal details.
5. Always type in the address of the website of a bank, business or authority you are interested in to ensure you are logging into a

- genuine website.
6. Don’t open unsolicited emails or click on a link provided in an unsolicited email as it will probably lead to a fake website designed to trick you into providing personal details.
7. Never use phone numbers provided with unsolicited requests or offers as it probably connects you to fakes who will try to trap you with lies.
8. Don’t reply to unsolicited text messages from numbers you don’t recognise.

9. Always look up phone numbers in an independent directory when you wish to check if a request or offer is genuine.
10. Never dial a 0055 or 1900 number unless you are sure you know how much you will be charged.

If you think you might be scammed contact Fair Trading as soon as you can.

Abe

Five sex positions where you can't see his Southern Cross tattoo

Man upset over smaller wallet size even though his paycheck is bigger **P8»**



Ultimate eco-warrior uses divacups as keercups

Outspoken feminist “hurting her own cause” throws rock through own front window **P3»**



Relieved woman finds Apple store full of men who disappeared after first date

Janet Albrechtsen
Garter Press Editor

A Camperdown woman was filled with relief after learning every man who had abruptly dropped out of her life over the past year really was just having trouble with their Messenger app.

Samantha Peters, 22, was walking along George St in Sydney’s CBD, when she observed the city’s flagship Apple store filled with every man she had hooked up with in 2017.

“Sam,” the men yelled in unison, as Ms Peters entered the store. “I’m so sorry I missed your message! My phone is being really weird.”

The men proceeded to form a line in front of Ms Peters, entering times for second dates directly into her iCal app.

“I thought it was unlikely that every guy I’ve

been romantically interested in over the past nine months had a malfunctioning phone,” Ms Peters said. “But I guess that’s just iOS 10 for you!”

Thomas Shelton, 24, said he had truthfully messaged, “Heyyy sorry, my Messenger app sometimes misses things :/” when he replied to Samantha’s message at 3am on a Saturday, two weeks after she sent it.

“I’m hoping that, after a trip to the Genius Bar, I will no longer have this issue and will be able to reply to communication in a prompt and polite manner,” he said.

Ryan Utrecht, 22, had a similar experience.

“As I said in my message dated July 7, ‘Soz, my phone is stuffing up.’ What was I supposed to do: Say something one of the five times we have seen each other at parties since? Facebook DM her on desktop? Making contact was impossible.”



Jesus seen in woman’s pubes

Miranda Divine
News Correspondent



He may have been crucified 2,017 years ago, but when you masturbate, he’s watching.

Last night in Ashfield, a large crowd gathered around the house of Angela Nolan, 34. The cause of all the ruckus was revealed to be an image of Jesus Christ found in her pubic hair yesterday morning.

“I was just going about my morning routine and just before I stepped in the shower, I saw Him! Right there, staring back at me in the mirror, a miracle on my very own lady parts!”

Believers were gathered around Angela’s house, hoping for a glimpse of the miracle. We talked to one of the pilgrims, Fran Bartlett, who told us

“When I heard the news, well I just got moving straight away! It’s not every day you see a miracle like this. God moves in mysterious ways, you know.”

If you were hoping to catch a glimpse of what has become known as the “bush of Christ” in person, unfortunately Angela had to take a shower, and the image was destroyed. However several photos were taken (see above), so that the miraculous image may live on in our memories.

Earth-moving blowjob tips to help convince him to leave the Liberal party

Chris Kenny
Lifestyle Reporter



You'll want to ensure you've moistened your lips for a blowjob that will convince any dude to throw his Liberal membership card in the trash. When going down on said Liberal, you want to remind him that you're in charge here! It's time to remind him that the patriarchy is on its last legs, and this is the final frontier! Don't let him pull your hair, or push you down. You'll want to put your arm up, and push against his chest. (If he's wearing a Liberal shirt, make sure to pull this off first) Now for the action!

#1: The Horseshoe theory: This is a great starter move. You'll want to start on the right testicle, using your tongue as you gently tease, gliding up the right side of the shaft, and coming back down via the left side. You'll want finish up on the left testicle, continuing to tease. At this point you may use your lips (and even some teeth, if you're into that), to really bring his radicalization home. If done correctly, this maneuver will surely bring him from the right to the left, proving the horseshoe theory once and for all.

#2: The Rad Fem: With this move, your aim to is destroy the patriarchy once and for all. Start by teasing the tip with your tongue. Start gently and softly, and when he's least suspecting it, go deep, and do it quickly. You'll want to perform the in-and-out motion at high-speed. He'll be so surprised; his masculinity will crumble within seconds, and ejaculate with surprise!

#3 The Trickle-down: Inspired by the fallacy of trickle-down economics, this move will have your Liberal begging for more. It's generally considered a finishing move, and is a great follow-up to either the Horseshoe Theory or Rad Fem. Once your Liberal is about to ejaculate, be sure to put your mouth around the tip. After he ejaculates, let the cum trickle down his shaft. He'll be left wanting more.

After implanting these scientifically proven successful blowjob tips, share a post-sex ritual as you collectively tear his Liberal membership card to shreds.

Save us from panettone – the festive delicacy nobody likes **P9»**

I dread the day my daughter's poos get smaller **P12»**

'Wear this on the way to a march!': Woman's march...merch?

Ray Hadley
Senior Fashion Writer



Plain and practical are the obvious styles for protesters to aim for – but nothing in army green.

In what is being dubbed as the 'year of responsible fashion,' 2017 saw thousands of women converge in the political hubbub of New York City., wearing some of Chanel's latest protest-inspired pieces for the Women's March. "This isn't just the way of the post-truth future, it's an effective form of fashionable protest," stated a spokesperson for Chanel. "And the truth will only cost our politically fashion-forward clients \$200,000! What a steal!."

The official site of the Women's March has confirmed the collaboration with the giant fashion house to produce their highly popular diamond-encrusted "Dump Trump" tees and "Oh please pay me more than the women who made these pants" apartment pants. According

to their website, these non-refundable style gems are only to be worn every day of a particular 'protest week'...expect on Wednesdays. Only pink is to be worn on Wednesdays.

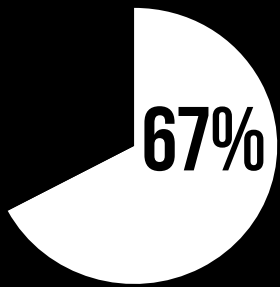
"I am wearing these Chanel pants in solidarity with the women who made them!" shouted a woman, protesting from her fifth avenue apartment. "Protesting for women's rights only becomes fashionable when you protest in style!"

Asked why the unnamed woman decided to protest from her lavish seven bedroom apartment instead of marching alongside those throughout the maze of the city, she answered: "I can only protest with those who can afford to protest for the right to protest for my rights."

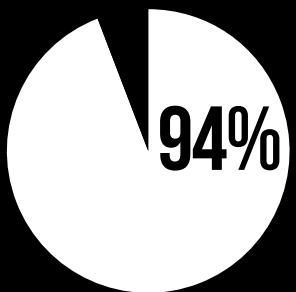
BROCIALISTS: 'from each according to their ability...'
WOMEN: can you help in the kitchen please
BROCIALISTS:



IT'S TIME FOR THE UNIVERSITY TO TAKE ACTION ON SEXUAL ASSAULT.



of women students in Australia surveyed in 2015 have had an unwanted sexual experience.*



of those students did not report it to their university.*



of students who reported their experience to the University of Sydney felt that the procedures "did not help at all."**

ACTIONS RECOMMENDED:

- ☐ Survey into the beliefs & attitudes about consent and sexual assault
- ☐ Overhaul the reporting system to meet industry standards
- ☐ Mandatory online consent module for all students
- ☐ Train staff and students to respond with compassion
- ☐ Train staff and students about vicarious trauma
- ☐ Consultation and transparency in the College Taskforce
- ☐ Specialist sexual assault training for on-campus counselors
- ☒ Keep screening 'The Hunting Ground'
- ☐ Key resources in all Unit of Study Outlines
- ☐ Statement of policy on supporting survivors and handling complaints

STUDENTS DESERVE BETTER.
