

HONI SOIT

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International students sweep the floor in hotly contested SUPRA elections

Janek Drevikovsky

Tickets led by Chinese international students have won nearly half of the seats up for grabs in council elections for SUPRA, USyd's postgraduate student union. At the same time, the elections, which were held on 26 and 27 April, have recorded their highest voter turnout in recent times.

SUPRA, which stands for the Sydney University Postgraduate Representative Association, currently represents 26,174 postgraduate students, who can access its caseworker services and vote in its annual council elections. This council, in turn, elects SUPRA's executive, which is drawn from among the 33 councillors. The executive—made up of a singly or jointly-held presidency, secretary and several other office bearer positions—is charged with implementing SUPRA's policies and taking care of day-to-day management.

A record 66 candidates ran in the main ballot, vying for 27 council seats. Four broad groupings made a showing: far-left tickets Postgrad Action and Postgrad Action for Health received six seats between them. 'Impact', a centrist alliance with international student ties, won three seats. HD Reform, which advocates for the rights of students in postgrad research degrees, won three seats.

The final grouping is a looser one: four tickets led chiefly by Chinese international students, though comprising both international and domestic students. Of these tickets, Weihong for International won six seats; Team for Continuous Development won four seats; Jarkz won three seats; and Jinghan for Change won two. From SUPRA insiders, Honi understands it is likely these tickets will vote together in SUPRA's council, including in the crucial executive elections.

However, councillor-elect Weihong Liang, who headed up Weihong for International, said he would "work with any people, as long as they are willing to do the things that meet the needs of the most postgraduate students."

If the four tickets do work together, they will control 15 votes—just shy of the 17 needed for a majority.

In 2017, council was controlled by a broad centrist coalition, which included 'Impact' and another ticket 'Change'. This coalition secured the bulk of executive roles, including the presidency, which went to then-Change leaders Kiriti Mortha and Mariah Mohammad, who did not contest this year's election. Postgrad Action was the second largest group in 2017, and had

some representation on the executive.

Apart from the main ballot, six seats were filled at separate autonomous equity elections. In these elections, minority groupings vote for their dedicated representatives, chosen from candidates who share that group's identity. Four equity seats were elected on 18 April: 'Impact' candidates took the International and Satellite Campus positions, and independents were elected to the Wom*n's and Disability roles. Honi understands these two independents will vote with 'Impact' in council, bringing that ticket to a total of seven councillors.

The Queer Portfolio was initially won by an uncontested joint nomination, comprising two Postgrad Action candidates. After concerns that only individuals could nominate under the regulations, one member of the joint ticket stood down, leaving the other validly elected. That adds one more Postgrad Action councillor, bringing their total to 7.

Elections for an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Officer, the remaining equity seat, remain to be held.

This year's elections brought 1449 postgraduates to the polls—a sevenfold increase on the 198 who voted in 2016.

At the same time, international student involvement continues to surge—a trend replicated campus-wide. Panda, a Chinese international students' grouping, holds eight seats on this year's SRC; three USU Board Directors are international students, and five more international students are contesting the 2018 USU elections.

Councillor-elect Oliver Moore, who ran on Postgrad Action and was SUPRA secretary in 2017, said that higher engagement is the result of a larger postgrad population:

"I think a lot of the increased engagement is because of the increased number of postgraduate students at the university, many of whom are international students and are seeking the support and assistance that SUPRA provides."

Liang, in turn, suggested awareness of SUPRA had been historically low, reducing engagement with elections. Nonetheless, he explained that "international students have good expectations" from SUPRA, but added a caveat: "If the performance of these candidates after their election is disappointing, I think the turnout and the number of candidates will decline in the future."



Verge Festival renamed to USU Fringe: USU Board

Janek Drevikovsky

The USU has decided to rename Verge Festival, its premier annual culture event, to 'USU Fringe', in a move intended to align the festival more closely with the Sydney Fringe Festival. Though the USU is seeking an official partnership with Sydney Fringe, the name change comes without endorsement from the Fringe Festival itself.

Held over a week in October, Verge Festival is an opportunity for the USU to showcase its creative side. Though USU staff are heavily involved in the festival's planning, two student directors (now renamed to "coordinators") have creative control.

At last Friday's Board meeting, USU Head of Programs Louise Anthony delivered a report which claimed the Festival's current name was confusing.

According to the report, the Festival had originally been meant to revolve around Verge Gallery, a USU-run art space located outside the Wentworth Building. But the connection had become tenuous, Anthony argued, and the Festival had expanded to the point where a new name was needed.

When later asked for clarification, USU President Courtney Thompson explained that it had "gotten to the point where we believed it needed a fresh and

new name that will make the purpose and aims clear."

In previous years, Verge Festival has been criticised for lacking direction, according to 2016 Verge Director Andrew Rickert. The USU was anxious for the directors "to find out what Verge was actually about."

During the meeting, Anthony confirmed the USU was seeking a formal partnership with the Sydney Fringe Festival, an alternative arts festival which takes place in October every year. According to its website, Sydney Fringe aims to "work with our community to transform the landscape of our city

into unique experiences not found in Sydney at any other time of the year". Like Verge, the Fringe Festival involves a variety of performance media, and prioritises voices that are "unique" to Sydney.

Anthony noted that negotiations with the Sydney Fringe were ongoing, but Cowie pushed for a name change nonetheless: "The word 'fringe' is not trademarked," he said. Board Director Jacob Masina agreed, noting that the fringe brand aligned well with Verge Festival's subversive aims.

The Board resolved by 12 votes to adopt the new name 'USU Fringe'. Grace Franki abstained.

Shuckai: private eye

Zoe Stojanovic-Hill profiles Robert Shuckai, digital privacy expert.

It must be strange for someone like Bob, a tech expert working in digital identity, to be talking to someone like me, a self-proclaimed grandma, who will probably be made redundant for lack of tech skills before she even enters the workforce.

Robert Shuckai, 50-something, is the Global Head of Design, Digital Identity Solutions for Thomson Reuters. He's a thin man with wavy, grey hair that he often wears in a ponytail. He has flown into Sydney from Atlanta, Georgia, and we're sitting in Reuters' Pyrmont office, overlooking the sunlit harbour. His Atlanta-based team have designed digital ID software and he is in Australia to introduce the software to the big banks and the federal government. At this stage, they are just testing the market.

It must be strange for him, but Bob is patient with my questions, which may or may not have been written whilst watching Westworld.

"I got off Facebook eleven years ago," he says, with a trace of a Southern accent. "I had content I thought was in private mode, and then Facebook suddenly changed their terms and conditions and I wasn't aware of it, and then it was public. At that point, I was done."

Our society is currently prioritising convenience over privacy, he continues. Take the Facebook/Cambridge Analytica controversy, for instance. Bob agrees with the general consensus that Facebook was wrong to share users' data without their consent; that much is a given. But he also believes that we, the mass of users, were wrong to trust Facebook with so much data. We overshared, and are still oversharing, because using Facebook is convenient. The way Bob sees it, digital identity would eliminate the tension between convenience and privacy.

Bob's 'first computer' actually belonged to the local RadioShack, an electronics store in St. Louis, Missouri, where he grew up.

"The RadioShack TRS 80. We used to call it the Trash 80."

A chunky model launched in 1977, with a screen that seems to have sunk into the monitor, judging by pictures on the internal. (I googled it after we spoke).

"Here's what you'd do," Bob tells me. "You'd go up to the local RadioShack store and you'd go on their computer and you'd go:

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10
PRINT
RADIOSHACK SUCKS
20
GO TO 10
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...so then you'd hit '20' and what would it do, it would print 'RadioShack sucks' all the way down the screen, and you'd leg it out of the store...This is what counted as humour in 1980-something."

Bob's dad was an engineer who worked for the electricity company Union Elektra, and his mum was a nurse

who became a stay-at-home mum. Bob describes himself as a "smart but also problematic" kid—curious, and mischievous.

"We'd build our own rockets and launch these things, and we thought it'd be fun to immerse them in petrol or gasoline...light them on fire and shoot them up," he recalls.

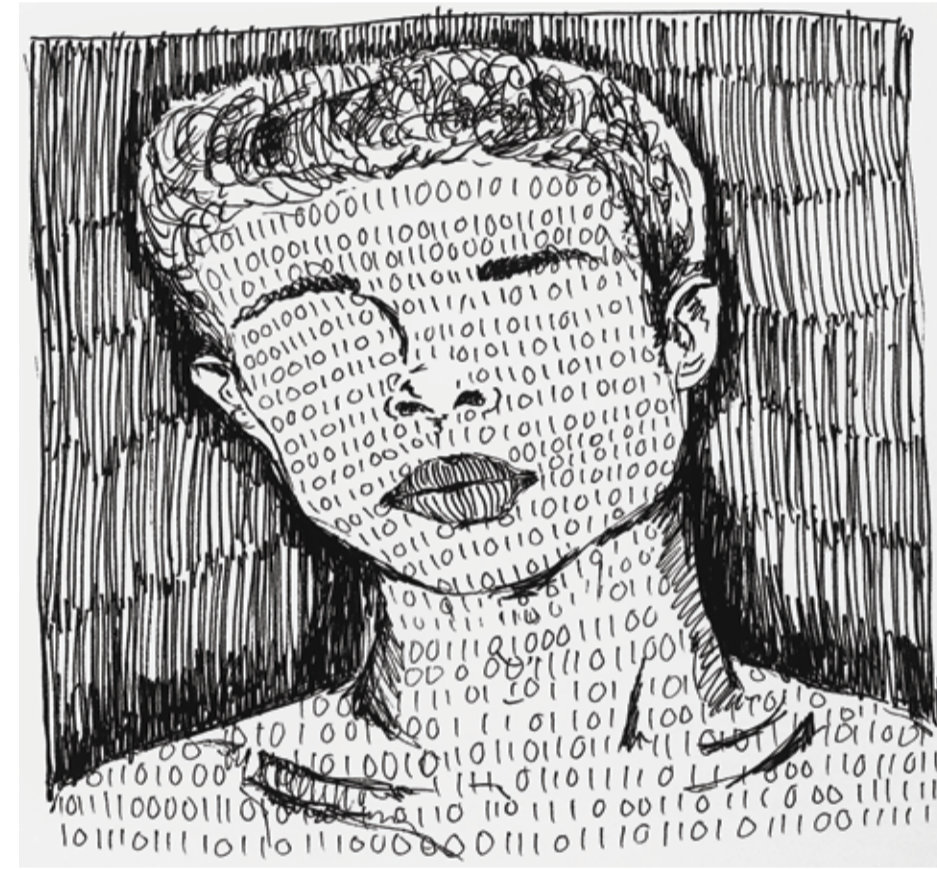
He studied electrical engineering at college, and worked on NASA's Cassini Mission early on in his career.

It was an exciting time in tech, when digital signal processing was just taking off. "The book was being written on a lot of stuff we were doing...Out in California, we were consuming [books] right off the press and then turning them into products we were building."

Many of Bob's colleagues were rocket scientists—literally—and, at times, Bob

At the moment, we have a "sledgehammer approach" to identity—we give away more information than is necessary and that data drifts around, unsecured, on the internet. It's overkill, and should be replaced with "selective attribute disclosure"—only revealing what you need to reveal.

A digital ID would be a digital profile of yourself, which you can access on your phone, based on four facets of your identity: physical biometrics, like the physical attributes used in facial recognition; government-issued proxies, like your passport; online proxies, like your social media presence; and behavioural biometrics, which can include anything from your typical transactions, based on your transaction history, to how you type on your phone, based on keystroke dynamics.



Artwork by A. Mon

found it intimidating to work with such accomplished co-workers. "Some of these guys who have worked in the space business, I'm a nothing compared to them," he reflects, modestly. "Someone could spend 26, 27 years of their life tied to a single mission."

Bob probably could have stayed on the Cassini Mission too, until the probe crashed into Saturn last year. But he left and traversed the tech world. Since then, he has worked in blockchain and biometrics, in artificial intelligence and machine learning. In 2014, he was awarded an MBE for contributing to education and to the start-up community in the UK, whilst working with UK Trade and Investment.

"I like working on stuff when there is no path, when you don't know what the answer is," he says. "Once the path kind of gets defined, I want to move on."

Bob begins, and falls into a familiar

"Are the government going to install some surveillance state—no...if anything, where I think the 'surveillance' could come in probably has to do more with the way in which people could be 'compensated' in a new economy, and what they may or may not be allowed to do with the compensation that they receive."

For instance, he's wary of universal basic income as a solution to imminent joblessness, in the wake of widespread automation, partly because he is skeptical about whether UBI would actually be unconditional.

"I don't know what the answer is to it," he sighs, and mentions the end of Finland's UBI experiment. In January 2017, Finland's conservative, austerity-inclined government started paying a random sample of 2000 citizens, aged 25-58, €560 (\$895.95AUD) a month, to see if basic income could spark Finland's economy. The program has been criticised for being a poor imitation of the UBI ideal: for one thing, it was only paid to the unemployed, rather than being paid to every citizen. The government recently announced that the experiment will not be extended into 2019.

Bob adds, "Certainly, something has to change in the separation between the very rich and the very poor...I think there is going to have to be an evolution away from the hardcore capitalism that exists today. It just can't be all me, me, me and how much money can I take with me to my grave."

Reminders of the present—his body and the earth—help Bob forecast the future. He's a marathon runner, and he has dreamt up a lot of the ideas behind Reuters' intellectual property while running.

I got into running for a while, although I never came close to running a marathon, and I think that running can put you inside and out of your body at the same time. A part of your mind is keenly aware of your muscles, sweat and breath, but as the thoughts flow through you, you drift into a meditative state. Bob is Catholic, and sometimes he constructs his running mantra out of prayers.

When I called Bob a week later, to ask a few follow-up questions, he'd just been for a run around Washington DC.

"You start off the run, and you're running down the hill and on the left side is Arlington Cemetery..." he described the scene for me, over Skype.

"So I continue on, I'm running across the bridge, and now I'm in DC proper, and there's this monument that's over by the Korean war memorial...and there's this big marble slab and it says, 'Freedom is not free'. Running makes you think, and it reminds you of how lucky you are to actually be doing that. Because there's someone over there who's six feet underground who isn't getting to do what you are doing right now... It's a humbling thing."

For digital identity to work, you have to trust the state to store your data—arguably, more data than it has ever had access to before, including data derived from behavioural analytics. Suffice to say, such a proposition raises a number of privacy issue in and of itself. Bob is more worried about paternalistic 'guidance' than classic track-your-movements surveillance.

Not with a bang, not with a whimper

Felix Faber has seen the end of the world.

Nowadays, it seems everyone's thinking about the end of the world. With the constant fear of a nuclear war with Russia, or North Korea, or China, it's easy to forget the more boutique forms of apocalypse. Fortunately for you, a life of nervous fretting has given me an encyclopedic knowledge of the ways this flimsy house of cards we call life could come crumbling down.

Asteroid impact

Maligned for being a cliché, the possibility of an asteroid colliding with Earth is nonetheless a classic. Let's not forget the the famous 1.2km Barringer Meteor Crater was caused by a meteor only 60m wide. Imagine what an even bigger space rock could do!

Rating: 8/10 *Russian Nukes™*. If it worked for the dinosaurs, it can work for us!

Supervolcano

Although more of an underground choice, this edgy candidate is still worth considering. Upon eruption, a supervolcano creates more than 1000km³ of cubic deposits. Should one of these bad boys go off, the world would enter into an indefinite volcanic winter, plunging us into famine.

Rating: 9/10 *Bee Extinctions™*. The deadliest volcanic eruption of all time was roughly tenth the size of a supervolcanic eruption!

Antibiotic-Resistant Bacteria

Essential as they may be in fighting disease, the overuse of antibiotics has caused new strains of super-resistant bacteria to emerge. With the world's first strain of super-gonorrhoea appearing in England recently, it seems like a major epidemic is on the cards for humanity.

Rating: 8/10 *Robot Uprisings™*. Maybe your aunt from Balmain was right about traditional medicine.

Climate Change

The silver tuna of armageddon, climate change is projected to cause the deaths of 250,000 people per year between 2030 and 2050, and with the current inaction of governments, it looks like we're only heading faster to losing our planet to completely avoidable developmental practices!

Rating: 10/10 *Freak Solar Flares™*. We had a nice run.



An earth in plastic is not fantastic

Mala Rigby argues that this is the last straw.

The drink bottle, straw, takeaway cup and cling film that you used today will remain in the environment for up to 600 years. Used only once, these plastics choke our oceans, threaten our wildlife and harm our health. There is currently enough plastic to wrap the Earth four times over, and with only nine per cent of plastic being recycled, the problem will only worsen.

In a rare piece of good news, scientists may have engineered a solution to the plastic crisis, using the PETase enzyme produced by the bacterium *ideonella sakaiensis*. PETase naturally breaks down plastics and now scientists have improved its efficiency to the point where it can break down plastics into its components in just a few days. In doing so they may have created a 'magic bullet' that could save humanity from itself.

However, implementing this 'quick fix' is not as easy a remedy as it first seems. The CSIRO, Australia's federal science agency, found that plastic debris on both land and sea is highly concentrated around urban areas, suggesting that littering and illegal dumping is the main cause of plastic pollution. Plastics that are illegally dumped cannot be processed and so PETase would not be able to break them down before they entered the environment.

Nor can PETase fix a consumerist culture, which trains us to prioritise pleasure and convenience over the long-term survival of our planet. This zeitgeist encourages us to 'throw away' plastic without thinking about who will inhale the plastic tag on the bread bag after the loaf has been finished. We consume and consume.

Thus, one million drink bottles are sold every minute. One trillion plastic bags are produced every year; each being used for an average of just 12 minutes.

Even if PETase could solve the plastic crisis, it ultimately addresses only one link in a long chain of environmentally-destructive supply and demand. Fossil fuel power, water waste and rampant development are

driven by the same culture of conspicuous consumption as plastic waste. It is not sustainable in the long-term to keep trying to find last minute solutions without changing our culture. To do so is to gamble with our planet's future.

Developing countries are particularly hard hit by the plastics crisis. Consumption of plastic is rising in developing countries, but they often lack the infrastructure to process or store plastics safely. In Tuvalu, residents have begun to burn plastic as a source of cooking fuel, exposing themselves to toxic, potentially carcinogenic, gases.

But will countries like Tuvalu, who sorely need PETase be able to access it? A patent has been filed on PETase which opens the door for the exclusive rights of PETase to be sold to the highest bidder. If there are no alternatives to PETase, a monopoly will develop and prices will rise. We've seen this with Daraprim, a lifesaving HIV/AIDS Medication, that was increased by the infamous pharmaceutical executive Martin Shkreli from \$13.50 to \$750 per pill. It is not a stretch to propose that PETase will be monopolised by the West at the expense of developing countries.

In Tuvalu, residents have begun to burn plastic as a source of cooking fuel, exposing themselves to toxic, potentially carcinogenic, gases.

Therefore, worldwide cultural change is needed alongside technological solutions to truly fix the plastic crisis. Co-ordinated government action can encourage and incentivise this cultural change. For example,

plastic bag bans in the ACT reduced plastic landfill by 36 per cent just six months after coming into effect.

Recycling is also an important way to manage waste, but when recycling is more expensive than making new plastic, there is no incentive to recycle. In Australia, oversupply of recyclables has decreased their value to the point that the cost of providing a recycling service is more than the finished product. Previously this problem was mitigated by exporting waste to China, but following China's ban on foreign recyclables, NSW and Victorian Councils are now accumulating plastics that cannot be processed domestically. To solve this problem, Australia could follow Germany by implementing recycled material quotas, in turn increasing demand for recyclables.

A better long-term solution is reducing the amount of waste that needs to be recycled in the first place. The single-use model could be disrupted through bottle deposit schemes, where plastic bottles are sterilised and re-used, which is often cheaper and less energy intensive than recycling.

We as consumers can also make a difference. Keep cups, reusable bags, and bamboo straws are all relatively cheap and can be used for years rather than for 12 minutes. By using these alternatives, we begin to re-conceptualise plastic as a product that is highly valuable, rather than seeing it as 'disposable,' gradually leading to cultural change.

We cannot rely on PETase as a 'magic bullet.' Change isn't easy, especially when it involves modifying our perceptions of resources that we are constantly told are both essential and mundane. We need other solutions to push cultural change; and with co-ordinated government action, consumer choices and technology we may just be able to 'unwrap' our plastic earth.

But it won't necessarily be a PET-easy fix.

Communitarianism: What money can buy

Kida Lin mulls over the contradictions of prominent political philosopher, Michael Sandel.

In Switzerland, an immigration law required a certain town to resettle a number of refugees. Under the law, the town had to take ten people and would be fined if they did not. The town held a referendum to decide whether or not to comply. It chose to pay the fine. The question now is: did they do anything wrong?

This was the question Michael Sandel posed to his audiences on the ABC panel show Q&A last month. A leading political philosopher from Harvard University, Sandel was invited to visit Sydney by the UNSW Centre for Ideas. Described as a "rock-star moralist" by *Newsweek*, he is particularly famous for the free online course *Justice*, where he challenged people's conceptions of right and wrong using the Socratic method (asking and answering questions in order to stimulate ideas and draw out presumptions). The lecture series has been viewed by tens of millions of people around the world and is especially popular in China, South Korea and Japan.

Was the audience actually confronted with meaningful ideas on the nature of truth? And how could this mode of deliberation possibly be practical on a larger scale?

His popularity is a manifestation of the rise of "public philosophers"—academics who promote philosophical engagement with the general public in a non-academic setting. Similarly, other public philosophers such as Noam Chomsky, Slavoj Žižek and Peter Singer

have drawn big crowds to their events in recent years.

As a philosopher, Sandel is known for his critique of consumerism and his advocacy for communitarianism. In 'What Money Can't Buy', Sandel challenges the commodification of society—that is, the phenomenon where market logic governs virtually everything we do. He argues that "when we decide that certain goods may be bought and sold, we decide, at least implicitly, that it is appropriate to treat them as commodities, as instruments of profit and use. But not all goods are properly valued in this way." This can be seen in many aspects of our life: money can now buy you privileged access to scarce medical resources such as human organs; money can buy you a fast track through airport security; it can even help you rent a friend, upgrade your prison cell and obtain the right to kill an endangered animal.

It's worth noting that Sandel does not outright reject the market or capitalism, which some may argue necessarily gives rise to consumerism. His main contention is that some of the good things in life are most appropriately governed by non-monetary values—the value of fairness, compassion, justice and love. As he puts it: "We don't allow parents to sell their children or citizens to sell their votes. And one of the reasons we don't is, frankly, judgmental: we believe that selling these things values them in the wrong way and cultivates bad attitudes."

In *Liberalism and the Limits of Justice* Sandel makes a related argument, criticising political liberalism for putting



Artwork by A. Mon

undue emphasis on individual autonomy and choice.

He argues that in order to lead a good life, individuals have to realise their conceptions of the good in a community setting, and more importantly, to reason different conceptions of the good with one another.

The story of Sandel is, for me, deeply personal. His course 'Justice was what hooked me on philosophy in the first place, and his views on consumerism and communitarianism have had a profound impact on my philosophical outlook. When I learnt he would be coming to Sydney, I rushed to book my ticket to his UNSW event and applied to attend Q&A weeks in advance. I didn't anticipate at the time that my encounter with Sandel would end up casting doubt on my former convictions.

For a start, Sandel's 90-minute public lecture at UNSW had a \$45 entry fee, a clear barrier to accessing this supposedly educational event. Of course, pricey non-profit public events are hardly uncommon—Peter Singer's recent lecture in Sydney also charged \$50 for a ticket. What's a bit more surprising, however, is that if attendees wished to get a book signed by Sandel after the talk, they would have to pay twice the price than that at a local bookstore or Amazon. Of course, there are often good reasons why these events and books are expensive. After all, it can't be cheap to arrange for a public figure to clear up their schedule and fly from the other side of the world. Nevertheless, I couldn't help notice the irony—a book that criticises consumerism has to be packaged and sold in a pretty consumerist way.

In addition, Sandel's events paradoxically revealed the limitations of a communitarian ideal public forum, where everyone is invited to come together and reason about important issues. Discussions in this setting tend to be incredibly inefficient—at times even peripheral to the issues that are meant to be up for debate. At his UNSW event titled 'What's become of truth', Sandel spent more than half an hour recounting Trump's infamous lies (e.g. "I had the largest inauguration crowd in history", "millions of people voted illegally in

the 2016 election"). Admittedly, this did provoke laughter from the audience and there's a case to be made that laughter will in turn cement bonds between participants. But I wonder how much everyone got out of the discussion: was the audience actually confronted with meaningful ideas on the nature of truth? And how could this mode of deliberation possibly be practical on a larger scale?

To be clear, this is not a personal critique of Sandel, who I believe has made good-faith efforts to promote what he believes in. Sandel deserves credit for the popularisation of philosophy in an era where the humanities are being cast aside in favour of more economically 'useful' subjects such as STEM and business. Sandel's course *Justice* was also the first Harvard course to be made freely available online and he has been an impassioned proponent of MOOC (Massive Open Online Course).

Nonetheless, it has become clear to me that a cosmetic critique of consumerism, even coupled with a communitarian ideal, will always be inadequate. It's not enough to aim for a world where some aspects of society are governed by non-monetary values. In part, that's because even the access to that knowledge is still distributed evenly and rendered inaccessible by monetary value.

You might almost hope that the values governing the choices of an individual like Sandel might be something other than prestige or prominence.

Worse perhaps, the consumerist culture Sandel criticises has only become more pervasive. When he was still at high school in Los Angeles, Sandel tried to bring Ronald Reagan, the California governor at the time, to give a talk at his school. Despite initiate hesitation, Reagan eventually agreed to make the trip, speaking in front of many who were still ineligible to vote and who were ideologically opposed to him. Ahead of his Sydney visit, *Honi* reached out to Sandel for an interview—to no avail. It is not at all unusual for a prominent public figure to turn down an interview request from a student newspaper, considering the almost overwhelming opportunities they have to communicate with the public. Nevertheless, you would almost hope that the values governing the choices of an individual like Sandel might be something other than prestige or prominence. Ultimately, I think Sandel is right that there are many things in life that money cannot and should not buy. But it seems money can at least buy you access to events that discuss what money can't buy.



Putting democracy to work

James Monaro asks why we don't hold employers to the same standards.

I was employed at Collection of Style (COS) for about two years before I resigned last November. I worked casually to support a convenient lifestyle: rent-free residence, studying, and occasional debauchery.

The main pitfall was the hours. Some weeks I'd work 12 hours and make about \$200. Other times I'd work 5 and make \$60. On a few occasions I got an unwanted holiday and a strong sense of rebuke. When you don't want to appear unprofessional or take hours from friends, you pretend you're okay with it. The same goes for directives from above, and contempt from clientele, as most employees know.

In Australia, the number of casual workers increased from 850,000 to 2,239,900 between 1984 and 2003. They have constituted about one-fifth of employed Australians since the turn of the millennium. Young people, women—particularly young women and students—are disproportionately acquainted. They know that they are not guaranteed work; that they are usually rostered on abruptly, with short and scattered schedules; and that they don't receive paid sick or annual leave. And while casual workers can resign pretty much unimpeded, employers are just as free to jettison them.

These are some of the Laws of the Service Sector; regulations that workers are expected to conform to in order to get by. You comply with them until the money coming in isn't worth the happiness going out, and then you try again somewhere else. But none of this—as well as the meagre wages, poor working conditions, and unreasonable workloads—is preordained. It has become ingrained through legal mandate and bureaucratic control.

Under 18th century English Common Law, freely contracting 'Servants' were legally bound to serve their 'Masters'. For indentured workers and apprentices this meant a number of years. Explorers brought this jurisprudence to the colonies. The 'Master and Servant Acts Australia 1902' declared that recalcitrant workers would "be liable to penalty... [and] forfeit the whole or such part of the wages then due." Absence was "punishable by imprisonment... with or without hard labour."

The modern workplace took shape when managers began monopolising planning the execution of technical work, specifying and imposing it as strictly as possible. BHP invested in just this approach at its Newcastle Steelworks: American consultants were

appointed managers, foremen ensured conformity, dissidents excised. As Guillaume Delprat underlined to his supervisors, they could "never give way on the question of changing a Foreman" because "the moment such a demand is given way to, it invariably brings with it many other demands from all sections of men." This unyielding control developed alongside the large corporation, and entailed unprecedented bureaucratic planning. Two centuries ago in the United States, four-fifths of the population were self-employed. Today it is around five percent.

If you quit voluntarily, Centrelink is not required to provide unemployment assistance for eight weeks.

Elizabeth Anderson is a Professor of Philosophy and Women's studies at the University of Michigan, who recently published her work *Private Government*. She explained that the corporation drastically transformed employer-employee relations. Contracts today "entitle the employer to fire the worker for any or no reason at all. The same goes for hiring, promotion, [and] altering the conditions of work". She thinks it's "enough to establish the undemocratic, dictatorial structure of the workplace." Managerial power over the workforce has been partially checked in Australia, but is returning: the Fair Work Ombudsman website states that employers do not "need to provide notice of termination (or payment in lieu of notice) to employees who are casual".

In service industries, employees learn another form of servility in 'customer service'. Researcher Isabella Farreras interviewed cashiers in Belgium who were instructed to "never talk back", "never argue", and "accept contempt without reacting". Farreras compared these directives to those imposed by slave-owners on domestic servants. The fact is that deference is profitable.

At COS, one Google reviewer was "absolutely disgusted" when an "aggressive and rude" sales assistant informed her and her colleague that the store was closed. The situation destabilised when the reviewer's colleague offered to try a shirt "on the spot" rather than in the fitting-rooms. In what the reviewer described as "a rant about her being a human too and

needing a life", my coworker rejected the offer.

This one-star appraisal was left partly out of national shame: the colleague was from "over seas and that is now an impression of Australian service [sic]". It was nevertheless screenshotted and shared our unofficial Facebook page, so that the offending coworker's insubordination could be applauded. It was: roundly. The employee, a middle-aged mother, had told the man four times that the store was closed, ignored each time.

Despite the woman's concern, their disrespect was fairly moderate. In 2016, the Shop, Distributive and Allied Employees Association surveyed 6,000 retail and fast food workers. 85% had experienced abuse from customers. One of Farreras' interviewees was called a "stupid cunt" when a product didn't scan. "Subordination" and "injustice" were persistent themes in her research.

Casual workers, shouldering the burdens of precarity, home duties or assessments, are concentrated largely in these kinds of workplaces. They are highly prone to stress. Australian researchers found that generations who "experienced the peak of the suicide epidemic during the 1990s have continued to have higher suicide rates." This increase coincided with "changes to [the] labour force characterised by greater 'flexibility' and 'casualised' employment, especially in younger aged cohorts."

As industries monopolise and corporatise, and labour markets become more casual and competitive, alternative employment opportunities dry up. And costs remained stacked against workers. If you quit voluntarily, Centrelink is not required to provide unemployment assistance for eight weeks. Voting with one's feet can no longer prevent corporate despotism. One might suggest, as Anderson quipped, that "Mussolini was not a dictator, because Italians could emigrate."

This state of affairs is not immutable. Economic democracy provides a viable alternative, despite its lineage and successes having been forgotten. Alexis de Tocqueville asked if democracy, "which has overthrown the Feudal system and vanquished Kings, will retreat before tradesmen and capitalists?" John Stuart Mill believed it could be rediscovered through democratic participation in industry.

Democracy in 'private' business rests on the same principles that underlie 'public' democracy: that

we have inalienable rights over our conscience and ourselves. Democracy secures this, not by getting us what we always want, but by ensuring no one individual exercises this power over others. With equal voting rights and responsibility for gains and losses, only democratic associations permit self-government. They provide dignity, security, fair remuneration and purpose within the workplace.

These institutions privilege employees' voices. Workers, especially in service roles, are frustrated with being silenced. Ferreras' interviewees resented the fact that they had to behave like servants and saw no reason why they should have to sacrifice their dignity to earn an income.

Eroski—part of the Mondragon Corporation—is a Spanish supermarket chain with nearly 1,000 outlets across Europe. A worker-consumer cooperative, Eroski began in 1969 with 88 workers. It now employs nearly 35,000. Mondragon itself is located in the Basque region, which has the second highest GDP-per-capita of Spain and is one of the top twenty most educated populations in Europe.

Labouring members all have a stake in the company and an equal say in the election of their representatives and managers. This ensures accountability, autonomy and morale, as well as equality between managers and workers.

Cooperatives are far more likely to survive their first five years than traditional businesses.

Duncan Wallace, Education Officer at the Business Council of Co-operatives and Mutuals in Australia, says co-operatives "get overlooked" here, simply because "people don't know about them". Where minority-controlled, profit-oriented businesses have an interest in keeping workers in the cargo hold, exposed to ejection at the slightest turbulence, cooperatives provide substantial job security. "They don't have that same internal drive or ability [as a regular corporation] to grow exponentially." This means that they are "very good at smoothing out business cycles."

Wallace was quick to point out that "customer owned co-operatives are prone to problems, and there have been times where workers have been exploited." Wallace maintained cooperatives offered the fairest and most lucrative employment model for casual workers, provided the necessary rights and privileges were secure.

Regarding cooperatives and customer-worker relationships, Anderson was optimistic but cautionary. "I think there is a potential for co-operatives to better realize justice, but it all depends on the values under which they operate and the practical ideas through which they practice those values." Anderson first recommends "legal reform to protect workers against the worst abuses, to ensure that their basic rights to autonomy and dignity are effective, to enable a better ethos to develop."

Proponents of cooperatives emphasise that they are designed to foster a communal ethos. Eroski's General Assembly of Delegates is comprised of 500 representatives—half worker, half consumption partners, elected by members. Punishments for violating rules—ranging from written warnings, probation and expulsion—are adjudicated by the Assembly.

Eroski is just one of many thriving democratic production, consumption and service institutions. There is today over 3 million such organisations, employing 10% of the world's working population, and generating almost 3 trillion dollars in turnover.

One popular concern is that cooperatives will undermine the entrepreneurial incentive. Without markets allocating rewards, society would lose the capacity to motivate individuals to work or



Artwork by Liam Donohoe

invest. Anderson emphasised that, within the firm, it is managers rather than markets that decide compensation. While individuals should be rewarded for hard work and diligence, "there is absolutely no incentive-based ... justification" for the immense pay many executives now receive.

In 2016, H&M's CEO Karl-Johan Persson was paid over \$2,000,000. A Bangladeshi factory worker at the bottom of the H&M supply chain earned around \$1,300. In its Sustainability Report that year, the company claimed to have a "100% Fair & Equal ambition in two focus areas: fair jobs for all and being stewards for diversity and inclusiveness." Business leaders, like the Persson family (who have stewarded H&M for three generations), know that market mechanisms don't decide or justify pay structures; hence the propaganda.

Over half the 70,000 respondents in OXFAM's recent 'Reward Work, Not Wealth' report believed that it is difficult or impossible for ordinary people to increase their wealth with hard work. With rampant inequality, corruption and monopoly, those at the bottom lose the incentive to participate.

At Mondragon, there are democratically agreed-upon ratios between managers and shop workers. Differentials rarely exceed 5:1. As a member of a cooperative, Wallace informed me, "you are given a set of shares in the entity" and part of the profit is redistributed as dividends. "[A] cooperative has a choice to distribute the dividend to the number of shares held ... or it could distribute dividends according to the business done." Far from failing to incentivise workers, the Basque region registers some of the highest productivity rates in Europe.

Mondragon's failings show that the blueprints should be extended and refined, not replicated unquestioningly.

Some, including Anderson, have pragmatic concerns, at least as cooperatives are taking off. "Most workers can't come up with the capital. And even if they could, it's often an imprudent investment. If the firm goes under, they lose their jobs and all their savings."

In fact, cooperatives are far more likely to survive their first five years than traditional businesses. Yale's Henry Hansmann observed that "the experience at

Mondragon provides further evidence that capital accumulation and risk-bearing are not in themselves insuperable obstacles..." Even if the data were less flattering, cooperative members can claim *genuine* responsibility for their losses: a considerable moral justification for workplace democracy.

But as with traditional forms of employment, casual employees will remain, to some degree, less integrated than permanent members. They will be a minority, invest less of their time, and may not share the organisation's long-term ambition for success. This makes career advancement more difficult, and it is likely that they won't be provided the full member's suite of benefits. One must not focus on the workplace at the expense of all else: public institutions designed to provide security and protection, like those that Anderson emphasises, must be developed in corollary.

The shortcomings of existing cooperatives provide pertinent lessons. Mondragon is not a perfect model, with cases of exploitation of casuals and other non-members working overseas. But this is the exception that proves the rule. Wallace thinks that "there's no reason why a casual worker shouldn't have the same amount of votes as a full-time workers." Even if casuals are not granted wide-sweeping benefits, providing comprehensive representation ensures accountability and personal responsibility, because no one is excluded from decision-making. Mondragon's failings show that the blueprints should be *extended and refined*, not replicated unquestioningly.

Mill argued that humankind's improvement requires building "association[s] of labourers themselves on terms of equality, collectively owning the capital with which they carry on their operations, and working under managers elected and removable by themselves." This would allow, among other things, "the transformation of human life ... to a friendly rivalry in the pursuit of a good common to all." Democratic workplaces are ideally suited for counteracting the pernicious effects of casual employment, which stem largely from insecurity and lack of discretion over one's work.

Cooperative workplaces in Basque and around the world are proof that economic democracy has unprecedented potential. The ambition to institute them is not naïve or academic: besides financial security, the main reasons that people give for investing in employee ownership and management are fairness and equality.



Revolutionising USyd's assessment system

Georgia Tan investigates why the University should employ Universal Design Learning.

USyd's current assessment system, based on the Assessment Principles outlined in Coursework Policy 2014, adopts a set of pre-determined, strictly defined criteria. Although these principles establish that assessment practices should be equitable and inclusive, this does not appear to have been effectively implemented.

The 2017 Assessment Working Group reports that the current assessment system overly relies on exams and written assignments as methods of assessing students. While USyd's assessment principles stipulate that "a variety of assessment tasks are used while [considering] student and staff workloads" and SUPRA has strictly curtailed assessment tasks that represent 100% of the final mark, data suggests that exams are still the most predominant assessment method utilised across the University by a long mile.

'Exam' was the most common assessment descriptor used in the 2016 University Handbook, occurring 2754 times across 9000 entries - almost double the number of mentions of the next most common assessment descriptor 'assignment', closely followed by 'presentation'.

Feedback from the Academic Honesty Report (2016) suggests that students are under significant pressure, particularly during assessment 'logjam' periods notably in Week 7, 11 and 13, from multiple assessments frequently viewed as 'trivial' and non-integral to their learning. In particular, Disability Services believes these logjams are likely to exacerbate the conditions of students with disabilities and negatively impact their academic performance.

Student Support Services believes that reform could come by implementing Universal Design for Learning (UDL) principles to make the delivery of education and assessment more inclusive.

The long delays in receiving feedback from staff heightens students' workload stress and impedes them from implementing feedback to improve on their subsequent assessments. In fact, The Office of Educational Integrity believes that the reason full-time students and International students - who are required by the University to maintain a full-time load (18 - 24 credit points) even when possessing valid, documented medical or compassionate circumstances - are more likely to be reported than part-time students for suggested plagiarism or academic dishonesty, is partly due to the high volume and simultaneous timing of assessments.

This year, Student Support Services and Disability Services published a report (Report of Student Support Services) affirming an initiative to drastically review the University's current approach to assessment. The lack of variety in assessment methods does not allow for different types of learners to 'fully engage with the curriculum'. Student Support Services and the Students' Representative Council casework service highly recommend reforming the current assessment system to reduce the burden and volume of assessments by minimising heavily-weighted, individual assessment tasks, and providing more formative low-level or even zero weighting assessments and introducing new learning technologies to provide better, more immediate feedback to both students and staff.

More specifically, Student Support Services believes reform could come by implementing Universal Design for Learning (UDL) principles to make the delivery of education and assessment more inclusive. UDL aims

to guarantee equity of assessment by catering for the diverse learning styles of individuals and recognising that a 'one size fits all' approach does not work for learners.

Disability Services is currently advocating for the application of UDL in assessments so that academic staff can evaluate how students meet learning outcomes through multiple possible mediums. Flexible assessment options entail giving students a choice between approved formats for an assessment task, so that students can choose a format that is accessible to them. For example, it could be possible for a student to pre-record a presentation, submit a poster or have an oral exam instead of undertaking a written assignment or exam. These flexible and varying options will benefit those with sensory disabilities, learning disabilities, language or cultural differences, and will also attempt to cater for individual learning preferences, such as for visual, auditory and kinaesthetic learners.

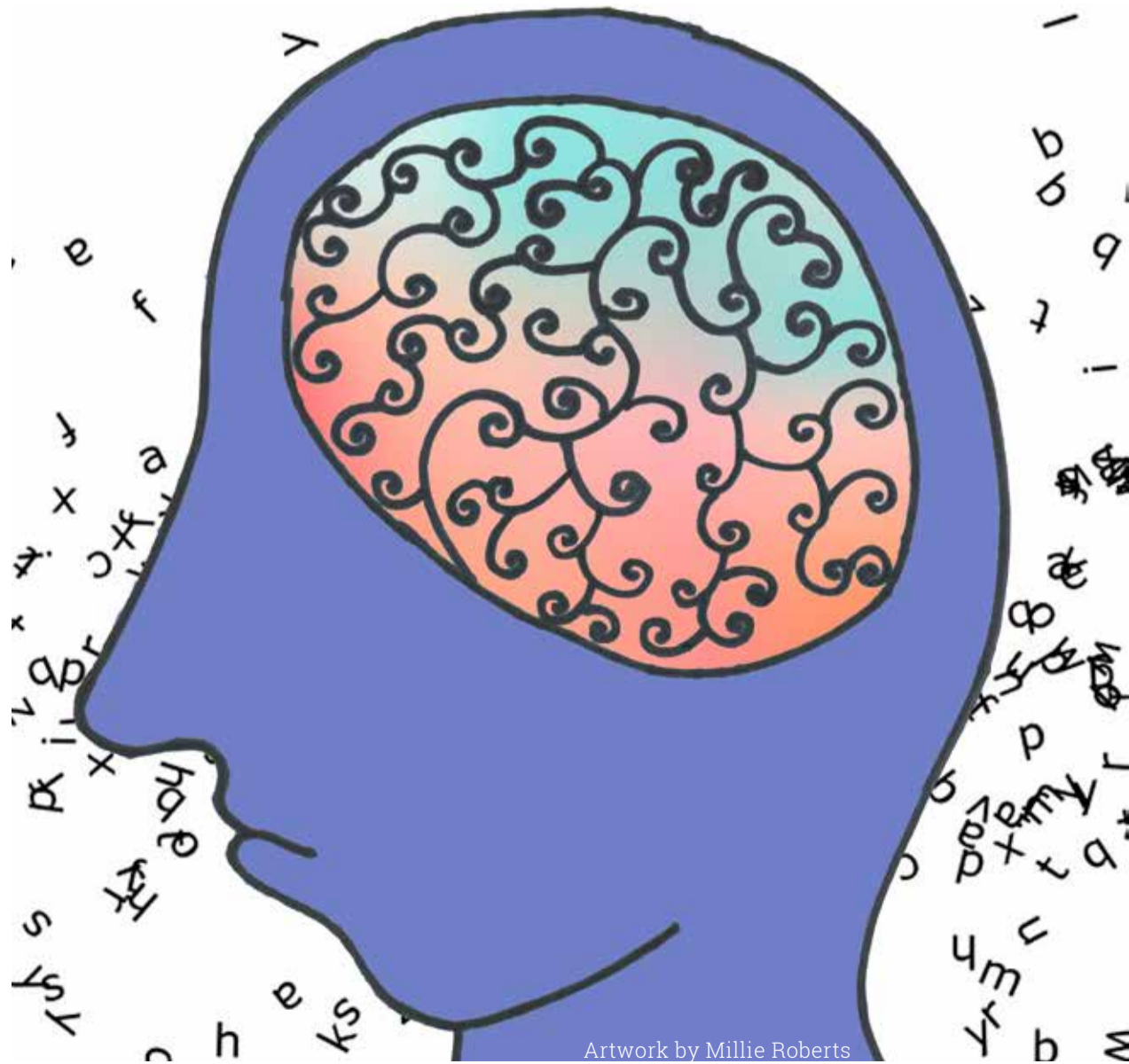
Disability Services is confident that flexible assessment options will effectively reduce the number of students who need modifications or reasonable adjustments to compensate for current assessment formats. Furthermore, by accommodating individual differences between learners, this will eliminate routine categorisation and negative labelling by both staff and students and remove students from having to disclose their disability with others, thereby protect their right to privacy.

Statistics published by Special Consideration and Special Arrangements have found 16% of the student body utilised the Special Consideration and Special Arrangement system in 2016, and of that 16%, the greatest volume of special consideration applications were for final and mid-semester exams (30.0%), assignments (30.7%) and then attendance (18.0%). In contrast, forms of assessment such as presentations (3%), skills-based evaluations (2%) and creative

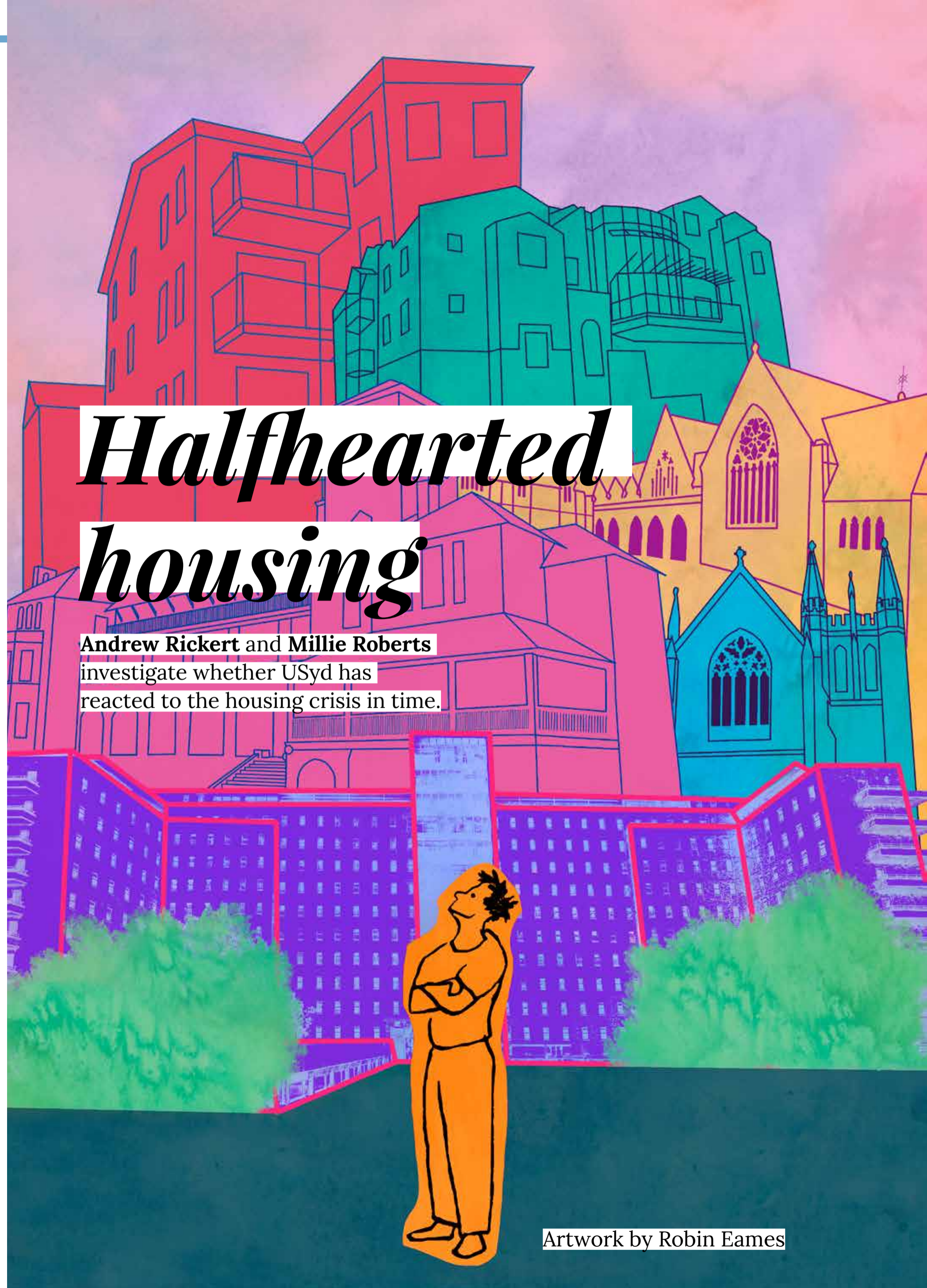
demonstrations (1%) received the lowest volume of Special Consideration applications, suggesting that they are currently underutilised but may be more effective at allowing students to successfully meet a unit of study's learning outcomes.

To address the issues raised by the Assessment Working Group and in line with USyd's 2016-20 Strategic Plan, the University is "currently engaged in a major review" of assessments and has confirmed that the implementation of these recommendations will be extended to 2020. The University has admitted to Honi that the high burden of assessments and the stress that this creates may be "counter-productive to learning". USyd has also indicated that including and recognising different learning styles is "accepted as a core educational principle" and is hopeful that the discipline-based rubrics currently under development will provide opportunities to consider different ways of assessing the same learning outcomes. Despite this, it is extremely unclear how the University and faculties can cooperate to realistically offer flexible assessment options while managing the greater workload demands this may involve for staff.

Overall, although incorporating UDL will require some staff upskilling and greater resources will be needed during the establishment phase, the numerous benefits for students, such as gaining an equitable chance to prove mastery of knowledge, and greater control over the use of their time, certainly outweigh these initial costs. However, as the University has itself commented, there remains a strong perception across the institution that maintaining a common standard necessitates that students must always be involved in the same task. Ultimately, such engrained thinking may inhibit any well-intended USyd assessment reform, such as recognition of multiple, different learning styles, from being implemented successfully.



Artwork by Millie Roberts



Halfhearted housing

Andrew Rickert and Millie Roberts investigate whether USyd has reacted to the housing crisis in time.

Artwork by Robin Eames

Kirstin, an alumnus from 1980, remembers her time at USyd vividly. She speaks of living on main campus for the duration of her Science degree and visiting her family on the weekends when she could. Her friends were “very jealous” of her living arrangement and loved to pop around for meals after class. She describes herself as extremely lucky: “Very few people lived on campus during my time and there were a lot fewer accommodation options.” Yet the scarcity of residential vacancies has not only persisted, but increased—especially as the University’s student numbers have boomed over the last few decades. What was once a minor annoyance – as ‘cheap’ housing could be found in neighbouring suburbs like Forest Lodge or Newtown—has warped into a crisis of necessity, where the University has failed to ensure all their students have a roof over their heads.

There is a crisis

Despite requiring students to provide their residential details upon enrolling, the University maintains that it doesn’t hold data on students’ living arrangements. Similarly, in the USyd-funded *Mind the Gap* report, part of a National Disability Insurance Scheme initiative, the University found homeless and ‘transient’ people, especially those with mental illness or disabilities, are “hard to track down”, making outreach programs almost impossible. If we accept this proposition, then by the University’s own logic, its plans to renovate current accommodation or add new buildings and beds are necessarily flying blind, without any data to target supply to demand.

There are only 10,493 purpose-built rooms in the vicinity of USyd, despite a student population of over 50,000.

Data from the last census, as reported by the *Sydney Morning Herald*, revealed that nearly 11,000 tertiary education students are homeless, and are forced to couch-surf, sleep on the streets or in cars, or stay in boarding houses, overpopulated rooms or homeless facilities. A similar 2013 ABS study found that 6 per cent of Australian-born students and 20 per cent of those born overseas live in overcrowded housing.

Emergency accommodation is available to students who may be experiencing homelessness or other issues such as domestic violence. According to a spokesperson, the University holds only two properties solely for the

purpose of emergency accommodation: on Burren Street and Mallet Street. Between them, these properties offer four rooms of temporary shelter. If these properties reach capacity, USyd has relationships with university residences and nearby hotels. The University’s emergency accommodation can be sought through the dedicated Student Accommodation Services, through referral by the Counselling and Psychological Services (CAPS) or through the police. But some students slip under the radar.

Another option is STUCCO co-operative in Newtown, which the University and the Department of Housing have a stake in and offers temporary accommodation for both domestic and international students “who are genuinely in need”. This emergency housing doesn’t carry a charge, but students are only able to live in the six rooms on offer for two weeks, unless their application is extended upon review. The limited number of rooms fill fast, as is often the case at the beginning and end of semester.

What choice do we have?

The student homelessness crisis reflects the poor options available in general for students if they want to live on or near campus. The *Social and Economic Benefits of the University of Sydney’s Proposed Student Housing Model* report, prepared externally for the University in 2016, laid bare students’ current accommodation options:

Recently constructed or refurbished accommodation – \$300-400/week

Older style on-campus university owned and managed affordable accommodation – \$185-250/week

On campus colleges (offering fully catered accommodation) – \$500-600/week

Private off campus student housing e.g. Urbanest and Unilodge – \$370-550/week

Private rental in the general Sydney market – \$535 for one bedroom and \$740 for 2 bedrooms

Illegal private rental in overcrowded accommodation – \$100-150/week

The range of options would suggest a large supply, and that incoming students get to choose housing that works with their budget. That is not the case: according to the report, there are only 10,493 purpose-built rooms in the vicinity of USyd, despite a student population of over 50,000. Combining that with the University’s proximity to other large institutions such as UTS means that, when it comes to dedicated student accommodation facilities, Inner Sydney has a student-to-bed ratio of 8.9:1.

Of the University’s housing, only five of the 1000 total rooms are currently available in new or refurbished accommodation, while no beds at all are available in older on-campus accommodation (excluding International House).

Recent years have seen a massive growth of private off-campus providers, such as Urbanest and Iglu, charging exorbitant fees for their services. The report notes that there are 921 beds serving USyd that are “owned and operated by major student accommodation providers who have some affiliation with a university”. Despite room sizes, facilities and inclusions comparable to those provided in university-owned properties, these companies charge between 37.5 and 50 per cent more than the latter option, and up to 34% more than their market value (which is estimated at \$412.50/week for a one-bedroom apartment, according to the *Social and Economic Benefits* report).

Another option, not included in the report, is STUCCO’s long-term accommodation—which has the cheapest rental rates by far. The co-op, one of three nationwide, ensures that its affordable housing (\$92/week), prioritises low-income students, yet the 40 ‘members’ it houses can only be Australian citizens or permanent residents. According to STUCCO’s website, potential candidates are screened based on their personal financial details, their family situation and

whether they’ve faced societal discrimination.

The high relative costs of the competitive inner-city rental market mean that students are driven to other options. Often illegal operations target international students with less disposable income or knowledge of Australian laws.

Earlier this month, the ABC reported that six international students had been sleeping in the 24-hour library at Charles Sturt University. The *Social and Economic Benefits* report notes how in 2015 alone, the City of Sydney investigated 38 cases of illegal student accommodation, including “one dwelling where at least 15 Japanese and Korean nationals were charged up to \$160 a week by a landlord to live in shipping containers and decrepit caravans stacked on top of each other.”

Last May, at an Academic Board meeting, the Vice-Chancellor noted that the University had been forced to “become more reliant on international student income than it would like to be”. ABS data shows that Australia’s international student population has increased 12 per cent since last year, and is heavily concentrated on Melbourne and Sydney university campuses. If we put these rising numbers together with the dire state of student housing, it’s clear the University is reaping profit from charging international students ever higher fees, but struggling to ensure their guests have a place to live.

It is not just the homelessness numbers that are startling. The University of Sydney plans to add another 10,000 students by 2020, and the lack of housing options is forcing students into dangerous or illegal accommodation, or out of housing altogether and into homelessness. According to Universities Australia in 2012, average weekly income is \$358 for domestic students and \$379 for international students, meaning ‘affordable’ rent would be \$152.40 for lower income students, as calculated in the *Social and Economic Benefits* report. That’s a price point verging on the non-existent, and can be found only in illegal, overcrowded squats.

What’s being done?

The University’s Campus Improvement Program (CIP) 2014-2020 is USyd’s current major redevelopment project, targeting all aspects of campus life. It’s an amalgam of smaller individual projects, separating USyd into six precincts according to their area of academic study. Honi reported in 2016 that the CIP came with a \$1.4 billion price tag, with *The Daily Telegraph* writing in 2017 that the total cost would be \$2.5 billion (inflation, hey!).

You’re probably familiar with the first crop of new buildings: the F23 Administration building and Life, Earth and Environmental Sciences (LEES) building have both popped up on Eastern Avenue over the past year, and the FASS Building is taking shape on Parramatta Road. Oval 2 Grandstand was one of the first of the new buildings to be finished, and the Sydney Nanoscience Hub and Abercrombie Business School have both

ACCOMODATION	CAPACITY
DARLINGTON HOUSE	54
DARLINGTON ROAD	116
ARUNDEL STREET	43
CHAPMAN STEPS	34
SELLE HOUSE	14
INTERNATIONAL HOUSE	200
OTHER / EMERGENCY HOUSING	8
TOTAL	469

Above: Pre-2016 University-owned housing capacity

already cemented their place in campus life.

Surprisingly, it seems the University predicted the current housing crisis. *The University of Sydney’s Strategic Plan 2011-2015* mentions the provision of affordable housing as a key point initiative for the future of the University.

There’s a massive number in the CIP that went unnoticed when it was first announced. Honi wrote in 2016 that the plan proposed to add 4,000 “affordable” beds to University-owned student housing. At the time, SRC Housing Officer Jenna Schroder told Honi that “rent will be 25 per cent less than market rate, that’s guaranteed.” That guarantee already exists at University-owned housing, and, unlike at STUCCO, there are no other conditions of entry: residents just need to be full time USyd students.

The figure of 4,000 new beds is slightly exaggerated—it includes new developments by the residential colleges, including the construction of a completely new college called ‘Postgraduate House’ to be operated by St Paul’s. It is still an incredible increase: prior to the CIP, residential accommodation serving the University’s Camperdown/Darlington campus could only accommodate 469 students. In contrast, the residential colleges on campus could house 1,389 students.

Subtracting the 1169 beds to be added by the residential colleges, USyd itself will, according to the CIP, be creating room for around 2,360 additional students. It’s more than a 500 per cent increase in University-owned accommodation—startling when you realise the CIP aims to increase the general student population only by 20 per cent.

The plan is about halfway to completion: a thousand beds have been built, and around a thousand are yet to be built. The remainder will be supplied by proposed housing upgrades in the Regiment Building, the Darlington Terraces, International House, the Mackie and Telfer Buildings, Mallet Street, Maze Street Car Park, and Merewether.

There will remain an unmet demand of approximately 6,745 beds by 2021 in the immediate vicinity of the University Campus.

The Queen Mary Building (QMB) and Abercrombie Street Student Accommodation are both part of the CIP and are already open. QMB can take over 801 students, and Abercrombie 200, with the QMB winning 2016 Asia Pacific Student Accommodation Association Operation of the year.

The University is preparing the Development Application and Environmental Impact Statement for the Darlington Terraces. The University owns 38 “Late Victorian Terraces” on Darlington Road, and plans “350 mixed single and twin dorm style bedrooms with shared kitchen and bathroom facilities”. Any rear structures which have been built onto the existing terraces will be demolished, and new three-storey blocks will be built across the backyards. The terraces will be used mainly for teaching or study spaces, while the new blocks will provide the bulk of accommodation. The University also suggested that “new retail, food



Pictured: The new Regiment Building will serve as a ‘Western Gateway’ to campus.

and beverage outlets” could be included in the redevelopment. It’s planned that the new blocks will connect directly to the rear of the Abercrombie Business School.

The existing residential colleges have planned extensive redevelopment as well: a new quadrangle being built at St Paul’s, and there will be extensions at both St Andrew’s and St John’s. Paul’s, as mentioned previously, is also constructing ‘Graduate House’, a college for postgrads that will be financially supported by the lease of subterranean space back to the University, creating a new precinct behind the Edward Ford Building. The current works at The Women’s College, while not residential, will add seven rooms to their total. The expansions are at different stages: Women’s is nearly complete but the new rooms at St Paul’s—promised for the start of this semester—are yet to officially open.

The Regiment Building is taking shape, and a University spokesperson told Honi that it is

on track to open in 2019. The new building sits opposite the Moore College development, and together, the two buildings are intended to form a high-rise ‘Western Gateway’ to the Camperdown-Darlington campus. The eight-storey Regiment Building will house 616 students, as well as rooftop gardens and a massive indoor bike lock-up.

Most rooms in the Regiment Building will be quite small, with the floor size of 10.3 m². *The State Environmental Planning Policy (Affordable Rental Housing) 2009* (AHSEPP) mandates a minimum room size of 12 m² for single rooms. But USyd negotiated with the NSW Department of Planning for a lower minimum size, claiming large common areas could offset cramped bedrooms; that “planning controls do not specifically cater to student housing”; and that the benefits of mass student housing far outweigh the cost of doing nothing.

Will it be enough?

While the University wrangled over its planned micro bedrooms, the scope of its housing crisis finally became apparent. The University commissioned the *Social and Economic Benefits* report, to be provided to the Minister for Planning, as rationale for providing accommodation with less floor space than legally required. The report made the case that the need for accommodation was so urgent, that the University had no choice but to provide as much as possible in the real estate available. The report noted that despite the construction of the QMB and Abercrombie buildings “there will remain an unmet demand of approximately 6,745 beds by 2021 in the immediate vicinity of the University Campus.” Even after the development of the Regiment Building and the Darlington Terraces, there will remain a deficit of almost 6,000 beds by the completion of the CIP.

Upon completion, the QMB and Abercrombie buildings were filled almost immediately. Currently, QMB has two vacancies out of 801 rooms, while Abercrombie has three vacancies out of 200. These are the only vacancies on the Camperdown/Darlington Campus (excluding emergency housing which is kept vacant, or International House, for which the University did not provide data). It says something about the sheer hunger for housing at USyd when 1001 rooms get snapped up almost as soon as they hit the market.

The University has set rent in its new developments

at “below \$300” per week, aiming to match local median prices and charge below the “affordable” market rate. It’s clear, though, that more needs to be done for the low income student who, according to Universities Australia, can only afford to pay \$152.40/week or less.

The University cannot rely on these ‘benefits’ on one hand to get its way with the Planning Department, and ignore them on the other to argue for fee deregulation.

A University spokesperson told Honi that the University is currently formulating a strategy known as CIP2, which will remain in development throughout 2018. The current CIP (‘CIP1’) plans for the addition of 10,000 students from 2014-2020. If CIP2 is to add 10,000 more students by 2025, there are two things that need to be addressed: 1) How can the housing deficit be brought to zero, and 2) How can affordable housing be made available for those that need it most?

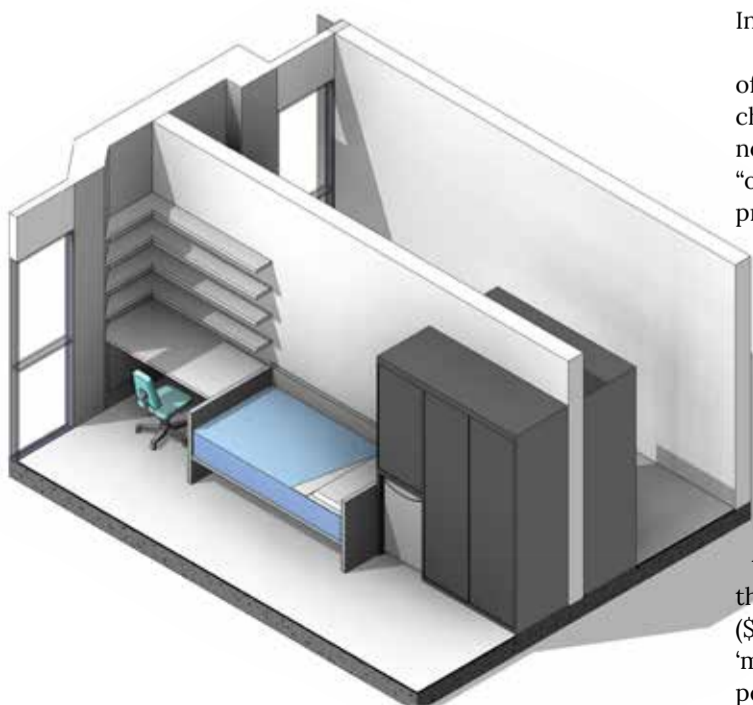
The answer to 1) is simple: build more rooms. Mallet Street and the Maze Crescent Car Park are large precincts, but will they be enough for 6,000 more rooms? The University will need to consistently consider the question of student housing throughout potentially decades of further CIPs.

The answer for 2) needs more thought.

Last year, Vice-Chancellor Michael Spence pinned the annual Federal Budget as a main player in “cost-of-living challenges for students”. The solution, according to Spence, is fee deregulation, which would give the University enough funds to provide “financial support to underprivileged students”, including more adequate housing options and sponsored accommodation. “It’s frankly ridiculous for Michael Spence to suggest that deregulation of the university sector would act as some great ‘equaliser’, so that the extra money could be funnelled into student housing,” say SRC Education Officers, Lara Sonnenschein and Lily Campbell. The Vice-Chancellor’s controversial take would instead push low-income students away, according to Sonnenschein and Campbell, especially those from regional and rural areas.

Fee deregulation to ‘free up money’ is not a solution to the problem of housing accessibility. The University’s own *Social and Economic Benefits* report notes the benefits of providing housing over simply throwing money at underprivileged students. The University cannot rely on these ‘benefits’ on one hand to get its way with the Planning Department, and ignore them on the other to argue for fee deregulation. Drawing directly from benefits listed in the report: If the University was to provide this financial support in the provision of housing, it not only makes a meaningful contribution to the crisis, but it also reduces competition for existing off-campus low-income housing for those non-students who need it most, such as city workers. Arguably most importantly—it reduces the risks of overcrowding in illegal accommodation. Developing lasting affordable accommodation today will benefit students in need for decades to come, while increasing fees and directing some of the revenue to housing will only fuel the need for more students and continue the vicious cycle of the housing deficit.

The five-decade CIRP *Freshman Survey*, as well as analysis by Ernest T Pascarella and Patrick T Terenzini of over 5,000 studies of university students, are clear on the benefits of student housing: on-campus students were more likely to graduate than those living off-campus. So, good, affordable accommodation improves the learning environment for everyone involved. The University may have caught the crisis just in time, but it will need to seriously address the question of ‘affordability’ to keep the most vulnerable students from slipping under.



Pictured: A bedroom in the University’s new Regiment Building

Sexism swept under the rug

Neil O’Grady is fed up with gender inequality in the music industry.

Of all professions in the music industry, sound engineering and producing are the most unequal in terms of gender diversity. Worldwide, women occupy 5% of record producing and sound engineering positions. This gender inequality is also the least recognised in the Australian music industry. It’s these behind-the-scenes positions that are recurrently driven and strengthened by established male professionals and it’s this hierarchy that leads to inequality we see across the music board.

A Sydney University study released last year labelled women in Australian music “chronically disadvantaged”. The study suggested women are facing double the disadvantage, with men in the industry deciding “who makes it”. It’s a strange, concealed issue that comes to light in annual waves—sparked in festival-related discussions of line up complaints, or in the Triple J Hottest 100 releases which provide measurable statistics. It’s there for a moment and then it’s gone, and the momentum for change must rebuild itself once more.

At only 20 years of age, Australian artist Odette released her debut album, had her single Watch Me Read You’ hit number 56 in the Triple J hottest 100, and announced an Australian tour.

Odette uses her platform to highlight how far the music industry has come and how far it still needs to go. She says, “Often women in the industry are told how to be polite and how to act...but you just have to speak your mind, stand by what you believe in and keep going.”

Statistically, it’s irrefutable that men continue to dominate positions in the music industry. In 2016, 72% of newly appointed APRA members were male, while the membership make-up of public board positions on Australian music bodies were over 65% male, a Triple J study showed. For performers, statistics are similar. “Women represent only one-fifth of composers registered with APRA, despite making up 45% of qualified musicians and half [of all students] studying music,” says Dr Rae Cooper, who authored the Sydney University study.

Statistically, it’s irrefutable that men continue to dominate positions in the music industry.



Odette, Source: Youtube

“I’ve worked with maybe three female producers and I’ve been in this game for a while now. It’s disheartening but when I do work with female producers it’s amazing,” Odette says.

While there have been obvious developments in the music industry regarding gender equality, the question that remains is whether developments are able to continue in constructive ways.

Emily Collins, Managing Director of Music NSW, is concerned about current conversations that publicise gender imbalance without creating lasting change. “There’s a lot shifting and we need to make sure it’s deep change as opposed to superficial conversations,” she says.

In this “the media can play a really crucial and often damaging role.”

“Journalists are still asking what it’s like to be a woman in the music industry and I think women in the music industry are sick of being portrayed as particularly women artists. Artists are artists first.”

These representations affect young women breaking into the industry.

“I know there was negative feedback from women in the industry about the Sydney University study. It wasn’t telling the story of all the good things that are happening as well,” Collins says. “You can’t talk about nothing changing without talking about things that are changing.”

Peterson reflected on the fact that this industry depends a lot on who you know. “It makes sense if those communities are male based. Male on male interaction feeds and there ends up being less women in the environment. It makes it harder to break into but I think we’re starting to.”

Ultimately it seems we should be working to remove unconscious biases, and that starts with educating

the younger generation about feminism. 54% of Australian year 12 students studying music are female. Flash forward into professional employment and only 29% of people who specified ‘music professional’ in the census were female. At what point, and at what rate, do these characteristics shift?

Working with women in the industry is a priority for Odette.

“People often can get a bit standoffish if I ask to work with a female musician. Mostly wondering if it matters whether they’re male or female and asking ‘don’t you want the best musician?’ and I understand that completely. However, the ratios off.”

“We’re not at a point where we can say it doesn’t matter. Because it does. Representation matters, inclusiveness matters and it’s important to be including women in all spaces.”

Certainly, female musicians are gaining traction in the current music landscape.

51 songs in Triple J’s hottest 100 are either led by or include female musicians. Music NSW’s Women in Electronic Music workshops and Triple J’s Girls to the Front program also work to remove unconscious biases.

Emily Collins says although Music NSW doesn’t have any policies exclusively concerning women, they still “have a 60% female board” “an all-female staff” “most of our programs are around women and that’s just because, that’s where we want to work.”

This industry is just one cog in the social and cultural understandings of the rights, roles and representations of women – understandings that begin early. As such, education plays a huge role. It’s up to the music industry to work with these institutions in order to create an inclusive culture in our music industry.

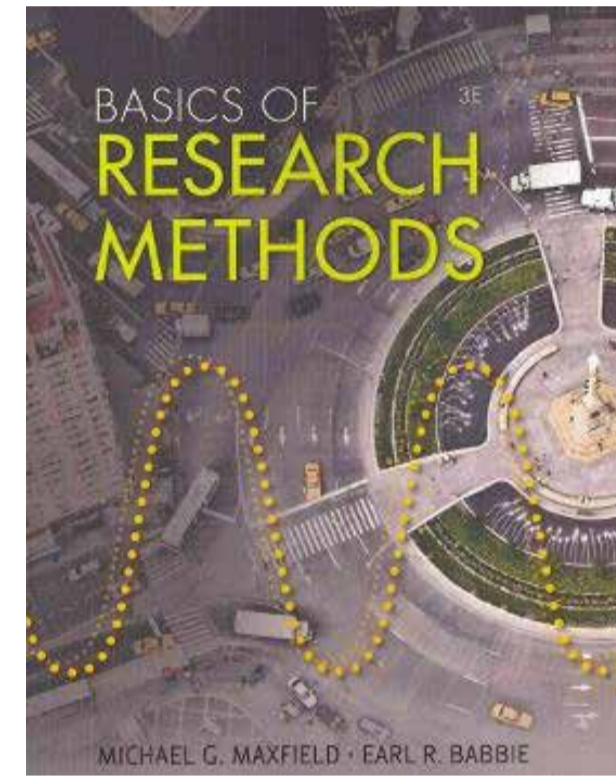
The most aesthetic textbooks you will ever see

Nick Forbitt stumbles into Co-op and emerges with a chic developmental psychology.

Textbooks, for me, have always had a certain kind of allure. Perhaps it’s the sense of a fleeting, semester-long fling. Maybe it’s their chunky form, symbol of opulence only attainable for those who prioritise tutorial participation over mimosas and sourdough. Or, it could just be because I once met a cute guy through a black-market textbook exchange app. Whatever the reason, after stumbling into Co-op, I was accosted by the same sensation that swept across me whilst reading a VICE article titled ‘Photos of People Who Didn’t Get into Berghain’; it’s what’s on the outside that counts. A textbook is only as vogue as its cover. I was adamant to trace down the most avant-garde covers on campus and champion textbooks that transcend their subject matter clichés. Strike this happy medium between ingenuity and pertinence, and the textbooks are guaranteed international claim, or at least another 10 years on the shelves of Co-op.

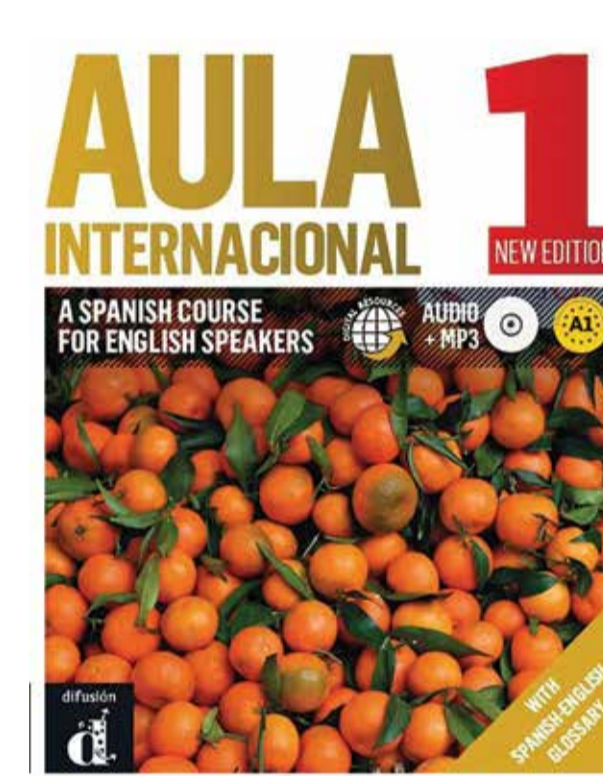
6. Basic of Research Methods

Aerial photography, although a favourite for brunch shots on Instagram, rarely looks good capturing anything else. This textbook cover, however, is the one exception—the zooming cars and large circular roundabout makes any criminology class feel like the first episode of Sherlock.



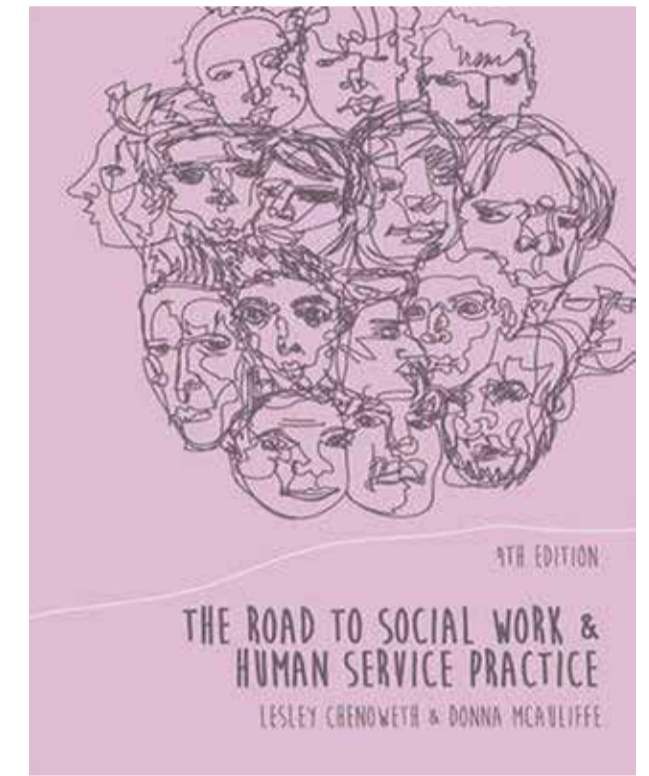
4. Aula Internacional 1

While my Spanish fluency starts and ends with the salsa emoji, the linguistic journey should always begin with a box of tangerines. This explosion of citrus hues creates a visual-gustatory harmony that will leave you dreaming of fruity sangria rather than complex conjugations.



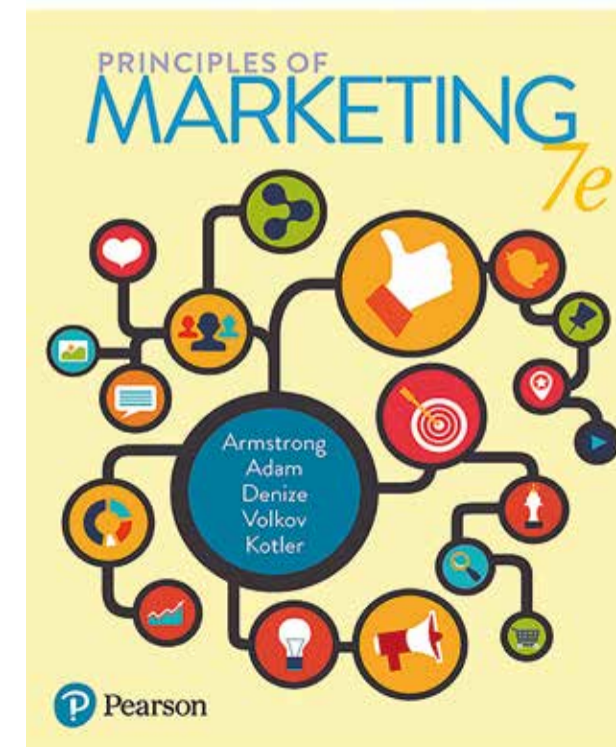
2. The Road to Social Work

This is the most perfect integration of title and image I have ever seen. It manages to be abstract and representative at the same time, offering a visual symphony that shocks and captivates. I would proudly place this textbook next to my almond latte over lunch and play ‘tag yourself’ at every opportunity (I’m top right).



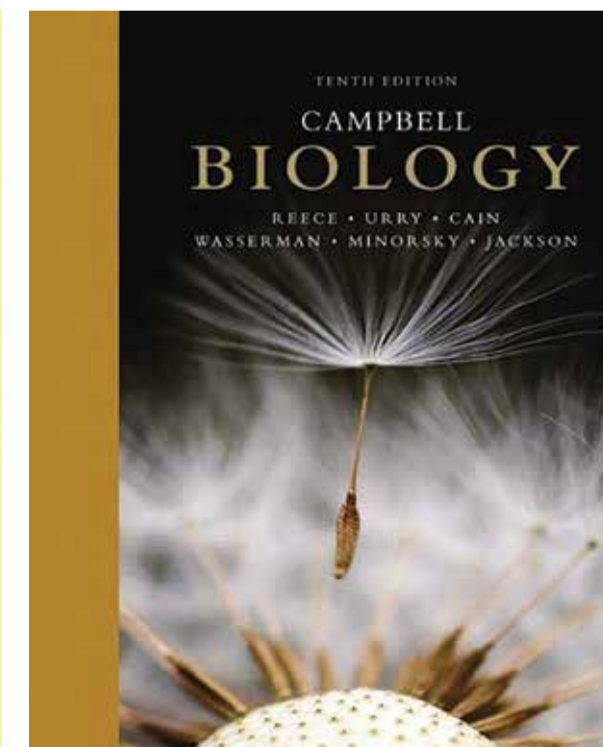
5. Principles of Marketing

I know from personal experience ‘structured’ and ‘busy’ is a difficult look to achieve, but after one glance of Principles of Marketing I felt a sense of tranquillity. The embedded love react symbol is a nod to millennials that this is no longer the recycled sixth edition.



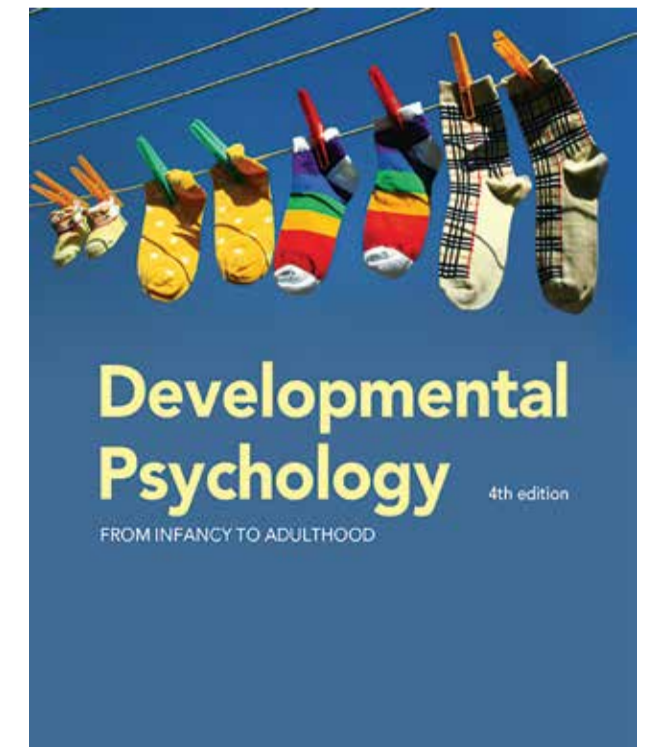
3. Biology

The floating dandelion in amalgamates science and the imagination—two offshoots from the flat-earthing genealogical tree, each having evolved to become own intellectual fields. This cover is not only sensual, but also provides Biology majors’ with the tools to wish their way out of their three-hour practical.



1. Developmental Psychology

As someone who thinks about socks a lot, the socks in this cover disclose all you will ever need to know about developmental psychology. While I’m clearly cemented in the Drag-Race-loyalist-rainbow-socks epoch, the subtle maturation of the socks is delightful and offers a comforting sense of linearity.



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* This service is provided by the Students' Representative Council, University of Sydney and is available to USYD undergraduate students.

Andrew McCloud: Proudly gay and Christian

Wilson Huang speaks to a Uniting Church assistant chaplain at USyd on how to reconcile faith and sexuality.

It's March 3, 2018, and Oxford Street is full of cheering crowds, rainbow colours, and fireworks. Among them is Uniting Network Australia, an advocacy group for LGBTQIA Christians within the Uniting Church in Australia. The 2018 theme for the Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras is '40 Years of Evolution'. Corresponding with this, the Uniting Network marked 30 years since the first time a group from the Uniting Church marched in the parade—their theme, 'Coming Out Since 1988'. Among them is 27-year-old Andrew McCloud. On every other day, McCloud is a Uniting Church assistant chaplain at USyd. But tonight, he has a bass drum strapped to his chest, celebrating marriage equality.

I met McCloud on the steps of Leichhardt Uniting Church, a small building, founded in 1880 as a Methodist Church. McCloud is a mission worker at the church; he takes me through the front door, and I see an intricate and colourful artwork of Jesus inside the hall.

Church has always been a big part of McCloud's life. His parents met in the Churches of Christ in Adelaide. He also spent much of his childhood in church. Originally from Melbourne, McCloud moved to Sydney after finishing kindergarten. In Sydney, he didn't start going to church until Year Seven when he began visiting an Anglican Church.

"As a church, it sat just slightly to the left of the Sydney Anglican Diocese, the most conservative Anglicans in the world. High school wasn't the easiest experience for me though, and the church gave me friends that I wouldn't have otherwise had."

Marching in Mardi Gras this year was particularly special for McCloud as he and his siblings grew up in a non-affirming church. In an online article for Christian Students Uniting (CSU) he writes, "I was lucky enough to have my sister alongside me this year. She is an ally and an incredibly special person to me. Just ten years ago it would have been unthinkable that we would have attended Mardi Gras, let alone marched together."

McCloud started working as an assistant chaplain from Semester 2 last year. He is openly queer while most USyd chaplains are not queer affirming, like Tony Mattar from the Catholic Church, who campaigned against same-sex marriage during the postal survey last year.

McCloud's time at the USyd Multifaith Chaplaincy Centre coincided with the start of the postal survey. He tells me these circumstances made his job partly difficult. In spite of the inherent tension of working in the same building as non-affirming chaplains, McCloud has proudly supported same-sex marriage. One day he went into work wearing a marriage equality singlet. "I wanted to illustrate there are Christians for marriage equality." He told me he received no negative feedback. The environment, he said, was generally "polite and collegial". I asked him if his presence there would encourage a cultural shift at the Chaplaincy. "That'd be nice!" he remarks.

Part of his job at USyd is working with Christian Students Uniting (CSU), the Uniting Church student group which runs bible studies and social events. McCloud has helped differentiate CSU from other USyd Christian societies including the Evangelical Union. He told me he wanted to illustrate that the CSU cares about social issues including reconciliation, climate justice and equality.

During the postal survey last year, CSU actively promoted a Yes vote, and this year, CSU openly identified themselves as having an affirming theology at their OWeek stall. McCloud said he had discussions with conservative Christians because of this. He tells me some were genuinely interested in where he was coming from, while others were more strident in their beliefs.

McCloud told me a bit about his basis for his queer



Andrew McCloud marches in 2018 Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras. Image by Velushomaz.

affirming theology. "Many of the passages that refer to homosexual acts in the Bible have other things going on in them at the same time. In some cases, in the Old Testament, the act of sex is an act of violence, it is men flaunting their power over another. Most of the debate though hinges around the passage in Romans in the New Testament but in that instant, many people are reading the text purely at face value.

"There's no consideration of the context the text was written in. In our modern society, we have a very different understanding of identity and sexuality that wouldn't have existed in the Ancient world—for instance—there was no word for sexuality then."

I asked him why he wanted to be involved with the Uniting Church and its tertiary ministry. Part of that was due to the community it gave him. "The Uniting Church has provided me with a place where I can reconcile my faith and sexuality. It was nurturing and

supportive of me when I came out, and now I watch RuPaul's Drag Race with my friends on Friday nights!"

"As I see it, tertiary ministry is the future of the Uniting Church. I care about the institution and want to support its future. I studied politics at uni. Being gay is a political statement. Being a Christian is a political statement. So, there's a fascinating intersection there to live out."

McCloud has hopes for the future of the church. "My hope for the church...is that it...chooses to actively celebrate same-sex relationships, sexuality and gender diversity and take a lead on defending, protecting and advocating for the LGBTIQ community."

Note: Views presented in this article represent McCloud's own beliefs and not necessarily those of the broader Uniting Church.



A group from the United Church sends a float to the 2018 Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras parade. Image by Velushomaz.

Christos Tsiolkas: The art of fiction

Pola Fanous poses questions to one of Australia's most acclaimed authors.

Christos Tsiolkas, one of the most important writers working in Australia today, is an intriguing man. Greek-Australian, gay, born and raised in suburban Melbourne, his life has gifted him with a unique, multifaceted perception—a perception that one might call all-encompassing. It is not surprising then, that as a writer, he has been credited with capturing the very essence of Australia today. His precise portrayal of family, class, ethnicity, community—and in my opinion —people, has made him a looming literary figure. Recognised mainly for his work as an award-winning writer of fiction, Tsiolkas has had four of five published novels adapted for television. His most famous book —*The Slap* (2008)—is also his most controversial and critically acclaimed. It has since been adapted into two mini-series, one in Australia and one in the U.S.

Every good writer has to be bisexual.

His latest effort, *On Patrick White*, is a thrilling analysis of the Nobel Prize-winning author's work. Ahead of his discussion of the book on the May 3, as part of the Sydney Writers' Festival, I spoke with Christos Tsiolkas to get to the guts of why, and how, he writes the way he does.

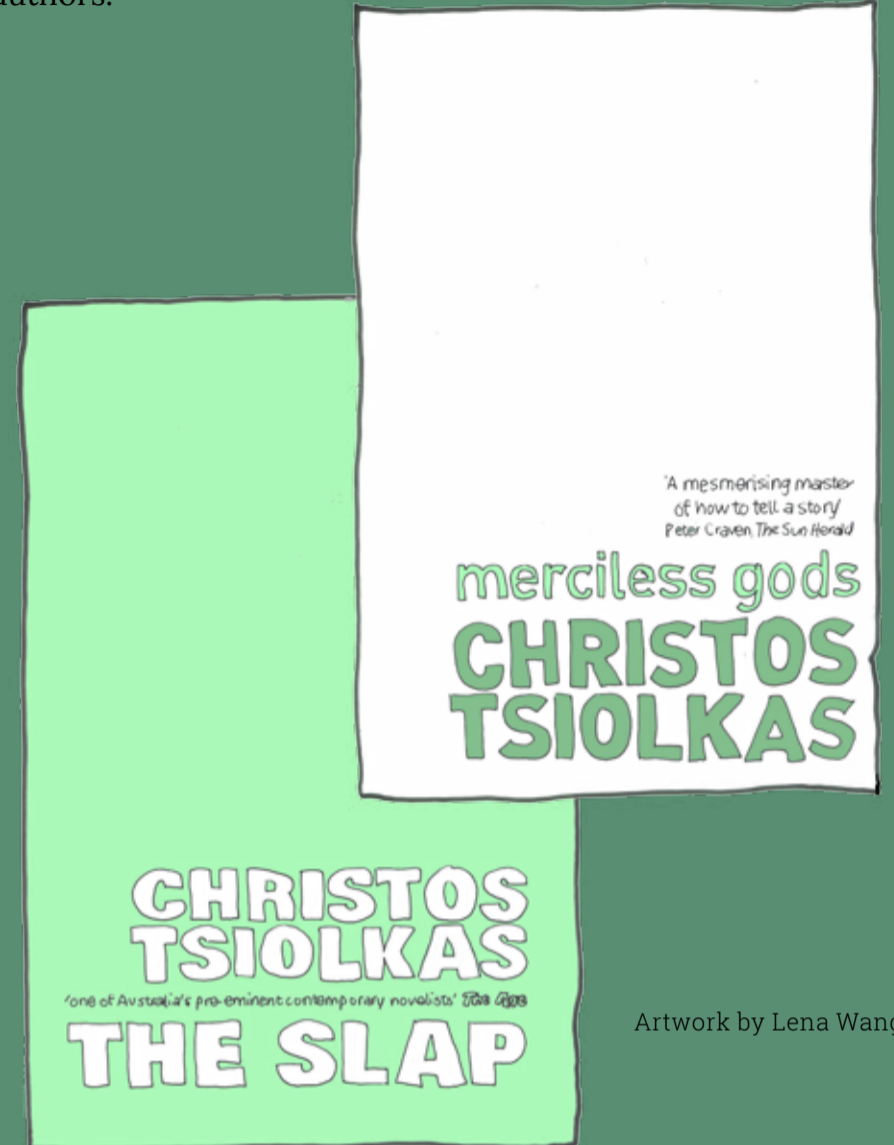
It is Tsiolkas' belief that all humans, irrespective of creative inclination, have a duty to be ethical. What separates the artist, is "a responsibility to their art." Yet, he is quick to defend the artist's right to creative expression because they should, and "can do whatever the fuck they want in their work." As a poet, I am quick to agree. We discuss the censoriousness of contemporary culture, and its crucifixion of those who dare to ask questions, the innovators. Soon, we come to the same conclusion: "We have to give each other the grace of fucking up."

He is quick to tell me that when it comes to making a great novel, there is no secret. This is the magic of art, in his opinion—that there is no recipe for success. However, he does observe that to be immersed in a great novel, is to hear a voice that you have never heard before.

And often that voice can be vulgar, an element that Tsiolkas uses regularly in his fiction. He says this crudeness is merely the by-product of his commitment to writing as precisely and as realistically as he can. He expresses his distaste for being limited to and by 'proper speech', declaring that: "The vulgar is the expression of the common people."

His greatest literary influences are an eclectic mix. The thinking of the Greek giant, Nikos Kazantzakis and the daring of the Frenchman, Jean Genet. However, his greatest influences, he says, were authors such as Norman Mailer, Ralph Ellison and James Baldwin. "They had such a muscular language," he exclaims. What truly affected him, however, was that they too, being Jewish-Americans, African-Americans, wrote of worlds in which they were outsiders—worlds like his.

I divulged to Christos that my favourite thing about *The Slap* was the tenderly savage ways he captured the human psyche; the ways we think, act and feel. I ask him how he did it, and he says that "every good writer has to be bisexual". He elaborates before I have the chance to register my confusion: to understand people, one must immerse themselves in both the feminine and the masculine. He also stresses his profound fascination with "what people are". A fascination tempered by a lack of judgement, one attained through a humility only the shames and pains of life can teach.



Artwork by Lena Wang

If you're serious about writing, make the time for it. Treat it as work. This is your craft.

For aspiring writers, Tsiolkas has three gems of wisdom. The first, be fearless: "Fuck em', just do the work that you think is most honest and true to yourself." The second, be disciplined: "If you're serious about writing, make the time for it. Treat it as work. This is your craft." The third, read, constantly: "It is through reading that you will find words."

When it comes to writing and literature, Tsiolkas reflects on timelessness as an indication of a text's greatness. Literature, like everything else, goes in and out of fashion, he says. Though as an 'old-dead-white-man', Patrick White has fallen out of fashion, he is timeless nonetheless. "As a writer, I fell in love with him," Tsiolkas says.

When I ask Christos how his Greek heritage affects his writing, he reflects on the importance of Greek being his first language, and the Greek tradition of storytelling. However, he is just as quick to explain that a discussion of his heritage should not be limited to his ethnicity. "What you and I share is a migrant heritage," he says, identifying war, poverty, and a true working-class life. "[My parents] did all that, so they could raise their children in a relative freedom and educate them ... and that's not the Greek experience, that's the migrant experience." It's a constant that many Australians can resonate with—that despite Tsiolkas' Greek heritage and migrant experience, he is also Australian: "As much as I struggled against that definition of being Australian, that's my world."

Posed with the question of how *The Slap* blossomed into the international phenomenon it became, Tsiolkas admits he doesn't know, but credits its authentic representation of a new Australian middle class—one that was multicultural, and no longer resembled the cast of 'Neighbours'. He also acknowledges the book's existence in a context of hyper-consumerism over the past few decades, which created a unified middle class across the world. Ultimately, though, he reiterates that he doesn't know, and he never could. "Every book you write is a kind of dare," he tells me. Tsiolkas' novels have dared me to dare ... and dare I will.

Somewhere only we know Mt Wilson

Zoe Stojanovic-Hill is (not) a smarty pants.

I must have been about six or seven years old when I stood up in front of my class for Show and Tell, and announced that I knew a place where Smarties grew on trees.

It was a frightening moment. For the first few years of primary school, I was so shy that my mum nicknamed me 'Little Mouse'. Throughout Kindergarten, I'd follow my teacher around instead of playing with the other kids at lunch, wandering over imaginary expanses alone but never drifting out of her orbit.

So you can imagine how much energy it took to join in with Show and Tell. But this, this was worth telling - I'd found a life-size fairy garden, and I needed everyone else to be as excited about it as I was.

Every autumn, my family and I would drive up to Mt. Wilson, in the Blue Mountains. Mum and Dad, filming on a hand-held 90s video camera. Me and Poppy, dressed in gumboots and op-shop jumpers. We'd drive along the Old Bells Line of Road. We'd stop at pick-your-own apple orchards on the way there, and at Devonshire tea houses and woodfire pizza places on the way home.

We'd always stop at Bilpin Fruit Bowl, a produce shop attached to an orchard in Bilpin. The whole place felt old-fashioned - the faded sign, the buckets of honey, the house-made apple pie, the chunky statue of a fruit bowl, which looked as if it were made of papier-mâché.

Mt. Wilson was a European grove, surrounded by bush and rainforest. It was a village of gardens and picnic grounds, linked by wide streets lined with deciduous trees. The gardens felt huge - they felt like forests. Poppy and I would scramble down mulchy banks and come out in clearings, where autumn leaves fell so thick that you could drag your feet and draw patterns on the ground. We copied things we'd seen in movies; we lay back, and used the leaves as a substitute for snow.

The colours were astounding,

compared to the colours we were used to. During school holidays, every family holiday was the same: camping in the Snowy Mountains. I loved the greys of the Snowy Mountains too; I loved icicles on snow gums and understated flowers in the alpine heath.

In comparison, Mt. Wilson was so vivid. Red and gold foliage, bold against the indigo undergrowth.

Looking back, going on a daytrip to Mt. Wilson felt like going on a holiday because it was a holiday, of sorts. Mt. Wilson was a miniature of the English countryside. The drive to and from Mt. Wilson also had English or American overtones: Devonshire tea and apple pie. I never thought about where the quaint, foreign influences came from. Never thought about what Mt. Wilson would have been like before colonisation. And for that, I'm sorry.

Apple-picking was a novelty, the autumn leaves were gorgeous, but the real reason Mt. Wilson seemed magical - and yes, I know it sounds corny, but I literally mean magical - was because little rainbow chocolate drops grew in the gardens. Poppy and I thought so, at least. And so we started calling Mt. Wilson 'the Smartie Tree'.

Of course, Mum and Dad planted the Smarties there. I never realised; my sense of wonder just faded away, melded into a sense of nostalgia.

When Mum, Poppy and I visited Mt. Wilson later, when Poppy and I were in high school, I'd walk around Mt. Wilson alone, in these quiet, almost brooding moods, but I'd have a nice time. I think I was aware of how change, even positive or necessary change, is comprised of a series of little losses.

Nothing tragic, just something a tiny bit sad. It's strange to think that you will never perceive something the same way, or strange to me.

Mt. Wilson or 'the Smartie Tree' is still the first thing I think of when I think of autumn, and nostalgia.

Deep Tea Diving



Snow-global domination

Not content with its monopoly over our Courtyard caffeine addictions, the USU is itching for control over every cranny of university life. Nothing is sacred: at last Friday's Board meeting, the USU unveiled a plan to become the sole on-campus provider of kitsch. The USU has designed a snowglobe so gut wrenchingly naff that even your grandmother who collects spoons with pictures of cats on them would feel slightly sick. The globes feature a miniaturised Quad, floating in a flurry of pink, sparkly snow. The globes are already embedded in the mind of the masses: Unimart, the USU's merchandise outlet, ordered 350 of the globes last week; after an instagram promo went viral, the globes sold out in one day. Now, hordes of kitsch-addled students are said to be demanding a restock. One "faculty", said the report, has placed an order for 500 globes. Soon, every graduating student will walk down Eastern Avenue, toting a shiny pink orb as a reminder of the totality of the USU's corporate empire.

Debating: The pros and cons

As you may know, at this year's recent Australian National Championships (or Easters), our exchanged a streak of victories for a defeat. The organisation is looking for something to blame, and has set its sights on the longstanding 'novice policy'. Unlike any other

Australian debating society, the USU sends teams to Easters which are made up of only novice debaters. A 'novice', under this policy, is a debater who has debated at no more than two previous Easters, and who has never debated at the other major intervarsity tournaments USyd takes part in. The justification is that as many new debaters as possible should attend Easters, which is seen as an entry-level development opportunity.

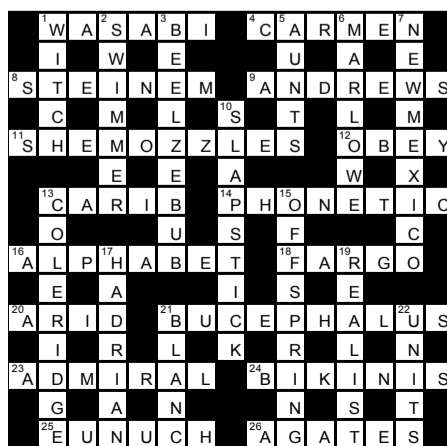
But faced with this year's ignominy, Director of Debates Kevin Lee, along with Libby Johnstone, tried for a radical shakeup. At Debates Committee, they moved a motion which would have scrapped the novice policy, allowing in 'pros' (debaters with more than two Easters under their belt, or another major intervarsity appearance). The proposal, if carried, would have restricted pros to one per team, meaning two novices would have been able to debate alongside a more senior debater. This is the model used by other major universities.

An explanatory note claimed the proposal would push back against the ridicule Sydney teams allegedly face: "Remarks like 'I thought Sydney was meant to be good' are not uncommonly heard at Easters". Having a wizened pro on the team would give emotional support to the innocent novices, the argument seemed to go.

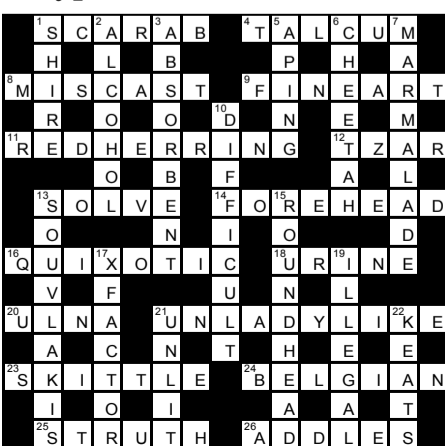
But, in the end, the motion was voted down. Looks like novice debaters will be monopolising Easters for another year yet.

Solutions

Quick

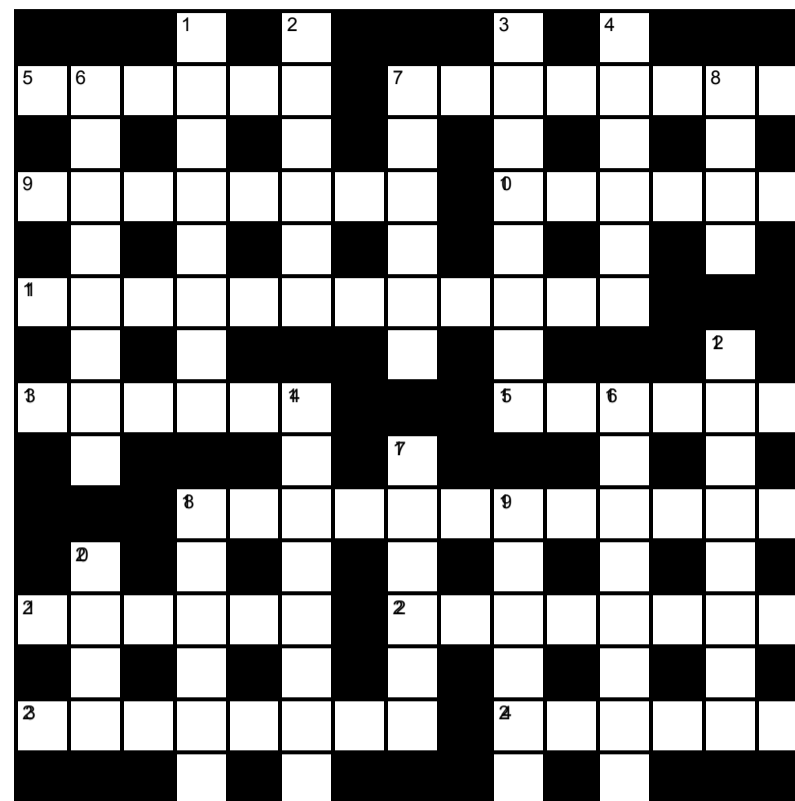


Cryptic



Target: Antipasto

Quick



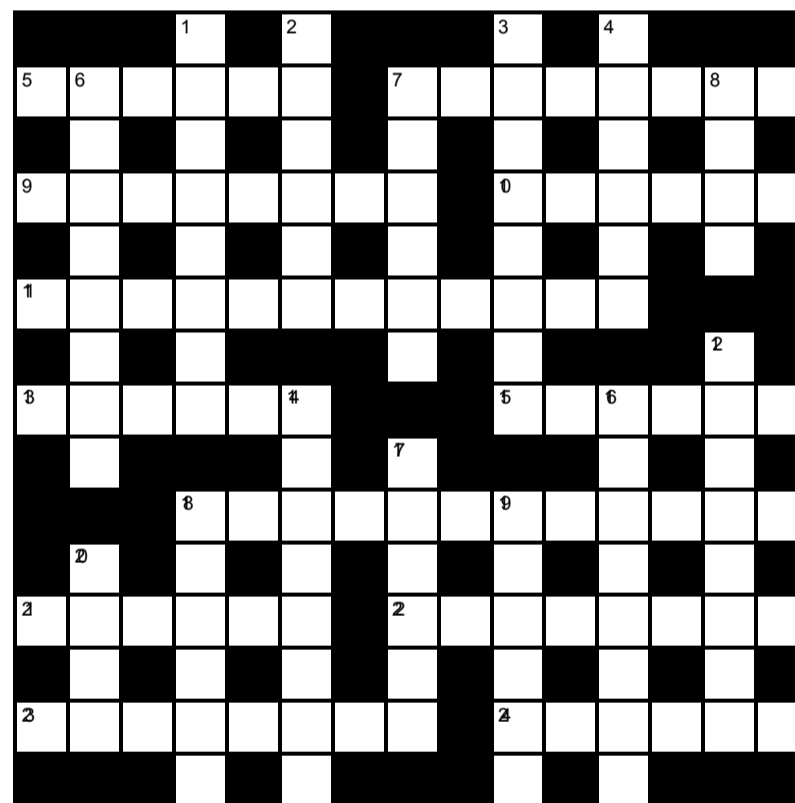
Across

- 5 Salty (6)
- 7 Situation (8)
- 9 The person credited for the film (8)
- 10 Afraid (6)
- 11 Irritable (12)
- 13 Suit (6)
- 15 Method (6)
- 18 Repressed or latent (12)
- 21 Type of dance (6)
- 22 Juice flavour (8)
- 23 On the warpath (2,2,4)
- 24 Burnt, a little (6)

Down

- 1 As good as a hotel gets (4-4)
- 2 He discovered gravity (6)
- 3 Sexy (8)
- 4 Annoy (6)
- 6 Films like Wreck-It Ralph and Cars (8)
- 7 Cool dude on a board (6)
- 8 Couple (4)
- 12 Control (8)
- 14 Tragic past (3,5)
- 16 Curved sword (8)
- 17 A very tiny baby (6)
- 18 Tacit (6)
- 19 One who is married to you (6)
- 20 Gay, or a row of tents (4)

Cryptic



Across

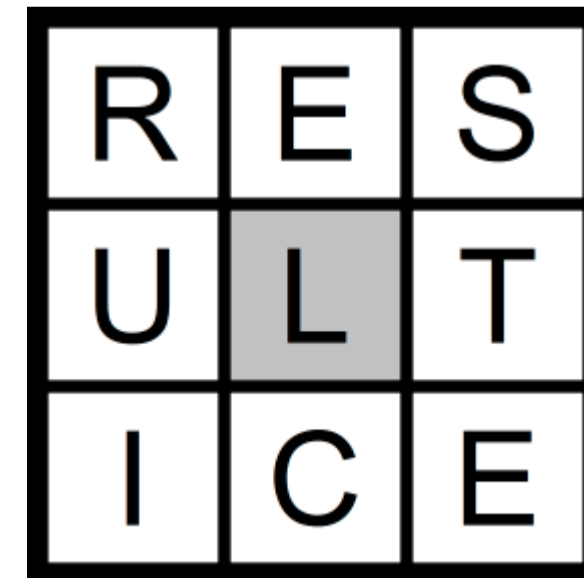
- 5 Convinced both used timber-harvesting tool (6)
- 7 Awkwardly aired bit of criticism? (8)
- 9 Exercise flying pens (8)
- 10 Next raspberries include bonuses (6)
- 11 Defier of society's expectations - e.g. nerd, be nerd (6,6)
- 13 Hell, Mark sounds frenzied (6)
- 15 Cowboy shows or odes, perhaps? (6)
- 18 Pearling knit potentially reclaimed symbol (4,8)
- 21 Coins hang in the church (6)
- 22 Water bird gives up drug, takes a bit of trouble to become bar owner (8)
- 23 Teenager spilled hot beverage (5,3)
- 24 Lap up alien box (6)

Down

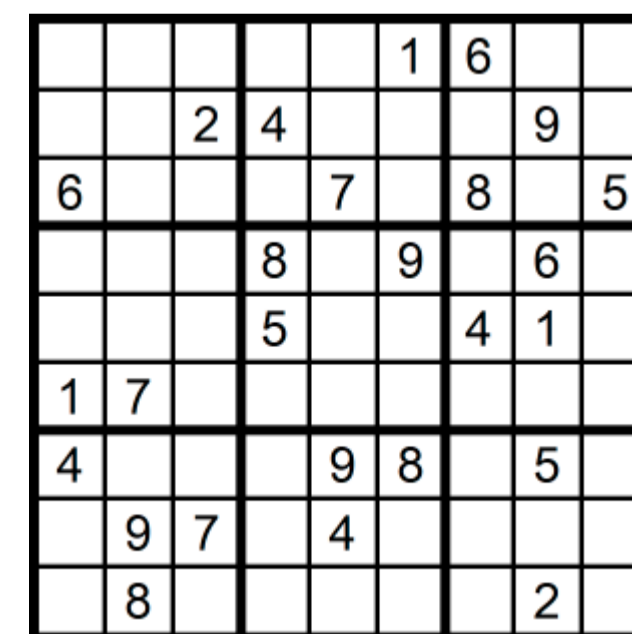
- 1 University road a Sydney hotspot? (6,2)
- 2 Cooler, yet more anxious (6)
- 3 Navel red could be a purple colour? (8)
- 4 Loudly correct her critic, for example (6)
- 6 Alert work organ in finale (4-4)
- 7 Lisped badly: "scatter!" (6)
- 8 Tolerate ruggedly masculine one? (4)
- 12 Sound like only friend is destiny (8)
- 14 Every cent of it all over the floor (after a wedding)?! (8)
- 16 Improperly dated sin: terrific! (8)
- 17 Society's ideal Aussie sitcom (6)
- 18 Cajole Patricia first, and the Queen (6)
- 19 Secretly I'm bi-better drink! (6)
- 20 Diva spread (4)

Target

Words must be at least five letters in length and include the central letter. Plurals encouraged. 10 words: Plastic. 20 words: Stainless Steel. 30+ words: Silver.



Sudoku



President

Imogen Grant

Last Week Al Jazeera released a documentary titled 'Australia: Rape on Campus' which focuses on the experiences of international student survivors of sexual assault. The Human Rights Commission's 'Change the Course' report found that five percent (or 7665) of international students are sexually assaulted each year, with more than a quarter of incidents happening in a university setting.

Some international students are afraid to report sexual violence due to social isolation, fear they will be blamed for their assault, and due to the belief

that their student visa may be affected. The threat of visa cancellation is often used by abusers.

Al Jazeera also highlighted the results of a Freedom of Information investigation that found 575 sexual misconduct complaints to universities had resulted in only six expulsions. Many perpetrators were given apology letters and even a \$40 fine as punishment. It is heartbreaking that cases of plagiarism have been treated much more seriously than sexual assault.

The National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training

to Overseas Students 2018 requires universities to give overseas students information about living and studying in Australia, including information about safety on campus and while living in Australia. Education providers must comply with the National Code to maintain their registration to provide education services to overseas students.

It is a atrocious that universities are not giving this vital information to international students and are failing to meet basic legal requirements. It is time for the government to step in and take actions against universities who

are failing to act on student safety. If you wish to be involved in the campaign against sexual assault, please get in contact with the SRC Women's Officers and join the Women's Collective.

Feel free to email me at president@src.usyd.edu.au if you have any concerns or wish to get involved with the SRC. If you are experiencing any academic, personal or legal issues and wish to seek the advice of an SRC caseworker or solicitor, contact us at 9660 5222 or help@src.usyd.edu.au.

Beware International Fees 'Scam'



The SRC has recently become aware of instances of a wide spread financial deception or 'scam' targeting international students - specifically those from Chinese background based on the current reported cases - in order to steal their money.

The circumstances involve students getting into an agreement with someone through social platforms such as 'WeChat', whereby the students will transfer Chinese Yuan to a person's bank account in China, in return for this person to pay for the students' tuition fees in equivalent amount in Australia. Students do this to avoid having to pay large bank transfer fees that might run into thousands of dollars.

In cases we are aware of the person in Australia often use a stolen credit card, and the fees paid to the University will ultimately be reversed back to the bank once the owner reports the card stolen.

This results in the student loosing the money they transferred, while still owing the University the outstanding tuition fees. Sometimes, they might also face a misconduct allegation based on the suspicion around the students' involvement with the unauthorised use of those credit cards. Triple whammy.

The SRC has recently become aware of instances of a wide spread financial deception or 'scam' targeting international students

Take care and avoid these arrangements. If you have problems make an appointment to see a Solicitor at the SRC. Call 9660 5222.

General Secretary

Nina Dillon-Britton and Yuxuan Yang

Last week, the SRC submitted its final submission for SSAF funding. If that sentence doesn't mean anything to you, let me explain. The SRC as well as other student organisations on campus like the USU (which runs clubs and societies), SUPRA (which is the postgraduate student representative organisation) and SUSF (which does sport and fitness?? I guess) is funded by the University. Students pay for that indirectly through your Student Services and Amenities Fee, which is about \$150 each semester.

That money is crucial for everything

the SRC does: like printing this paper, providing the largest legal and casework service at Sydney University (for free!!) and launching campaigns that fight for student interests.

Amongst other things we've asked the uni for funding for this year is an additional research officer to help us understand student problems and create solutions for them; more outreach events so students know about services available to them and an increase the amount student office bearers (including the editors of this rag) are paid so they are more in line

with how much the office bearers of other organisations are paid and they can do their jobs without as much financial strain.

The SRC's services are vital to creating a vibrant student life, by providing a safety to students in trouble, letting students be informed about what is happening at uni (again, here in Honi) and by fighting back when the government or the uni tries to fuck you over.

It's very easy to be cynical about student-led organisations. But they're student-led for a reason: no one

represents student interests like students. The government and the university pump money out of students in every way they can by making it harder for you to graduate, charge exorbitant fees to international students and cutting funding to your degree.

Moves by other student organisations to let the university run them need to be opposed because it's just another way for the university to silence opposition when they make decisions that fuck over students. Student unions need to stay in student hands.

Wom*ns Officers

Jessica Syed and Maddy Ward

The mid-semester break has been as busy for students as the past few weeks have been for those who have been pushing for safe access zones around abortion clinics in New South Wales. The amendment to the current Summary Offences Act, proposed by Penny Sharpe MLC, would make it so that it would be a criminal offence to protest within one hundred and fifty metres of any NSW abortion clinic. This would alleviate the intimidation and harassment patients are subject to when going to abortion clinics, when there are hoards of pro-life protesters attempting to stop them from entering the facilities. It would also get rid of the unnecessary burden placed on clinic staff to counsel and reassure patients,

something that they are not necessarily paid (nor qualified) to do.

Abortion is an issue of public health, and access to abortion clinics an issue of public safety. No one should be precluded from accessing essential healthcare due to strangers intruding on their personal space, in order to voice their opinions. The successful passage of the proposed bill is an important stepping stone in building a solid and visible movement around abortion rights. In our opinion, it will inevitably open the door to decriminalisation of abortion in New South Wales (yes, that's right - you could still be prosecuted for having an abortion).

Your officers have been in contact with Family Planning NSW who

are currently looking at drafting a decriminalisation bill along with other feminist groups. More pressing, however, is our correspondence with Penny herself. In a conference call last week, she informed us that the bill will be introduced and debated within the next month. Keep your eyes peeled for actions organised by the Wom*n's Collective that you can get involved in helping the bill get passed. If you're a Liberal/conservative/et cetera, and you're against abortion, and you're reading this: while this bill is linked to abortion, it largely revolves around women's safety. If you can't get behind that, well, there's not much we can say to you. Otherwise, get in touch with your MPs, and get them on our side,

please!

To help, sign the petition <http://www.pennysharpe.com/womenneedsafeaccesszones>. Or even better, join the Wom*n's Collective if you identify as a wom*n or non-binary person, by hitting us up at usydwomenscollective@gmail.com. We have a weekly clinic escort service where (until the legislation comes through) we assist patients into abortion clinics past pro-life protestors, and generally do feminist things as well. We are also doing our own edition of Honi Soit later this semester. Send your ideas to the aforementioned email! We can't wait to get the ball rolling.

International Students Officers

Mengwei Yuan, Yi Man, Zimiao Gao and Zhuonan Li

In the past weeks, we interacted with students mainly in the form of the network. We have taken over the daily administration of 'USYD International Students Collective' page on Facebook from former international officers. It is great to see that students share the events held by the university or

associations on this platform with each other. As international officers, we give some advice to newly enrolled students based on our previous experience as well.

The basic preparation for Opal campaign is still going on to fight for concession card for international

students. Our student representatives in SRC are communicating with other universities in Sydney to form a stronger power to push it forward.

In addition, to help students relax from the busy study and have an unforgettable memory of studying abroad in Sydney, we are trying to

cooperate with some clubs and societies such as Unimates to organise some exciting events. Join us to have an enjoyable trip of Port Stephens at the end of this semester!

Renting your home and dealing with the paperwork



There are so many bits of paper involved in renting a house. Some of these can end up being worth hundreds of dollars to you, so it's definitely worthwhile knowing about what to keep and what you can throw. If there is a chance that you might lose an important document, scan or photograph it, and email it to yourself for safe storage.

sign it. Again, it must be in English. If you have paid by a bank transfer you should still ask for a receipt. There are some situations where the landlord is not required to give you a receipt, but there is no harm in asking. You should definitely keep all of your receipts.

Condition Report

The Condition Report is what you agree, with the landlord, as being the condition of the property at the time that you moved in. If there is damage to the property, beyond reasonable wear and tear, you will be liable to pay for its repair, unless it is noted in the Condition Report. In addition to the Condition Report it is a good idea for you to take photos of the property (e.g., anything broken, damaged, or dirty) and email them to your landlord. This will "timestamp" those photos and will allow you to refer to them at a later date to show that whatever damage you are being blamed for, was already there when you moved in. You should definitely keep a copy of the Condition Report and the photos.

General Communication

It is a good idea to email your communications to the landlord. This will give you a record of the time and date that you spoke, plus what was said. If you have a telephone conversation with the landlord it is a good idea to send a follow up email that states the outcome of your phone conversation. It's a good idea to keep these on your email account.

The SRC has caseworkers trained in many different aspects of accommodation laws. You can email your questions to help@src.usyd.edu.au, or if you prefer a face-to-face appointment call 9660 5222 to book a suitable time.

Receipts

You should get a receipt for anything you pay to your landlord or housemates. This includes bond, rent, bills, deposits, etc. Your receipt should have the amount that you paid, what it was for, the date, and what the address of the home is. The landlord/housemate should also

Ask Abe

SRC caseworker HELP Q&A

Centrelink: Keeping Receipts



Dear Abe,

Someone told me that I should get a receipt from Centrelink just for talking to them. I don't understand what that means, and whether that is important.

Receiptless

Dear Receiptless,

Centrelink get lots of stuff wrong. Lots. When a Centrelink worker accesses your file their computer generates a receipt number for that transaction. If you keep a record (email it to yourself) of that receipt number you can trace back the information that they have given you, and that you reasonably believed was true. In the future if that turns out to be false information, or if they say that

you didn't tell them about something that you did tell them about, you will have the receipt to prove your point. If you have an interaction with someone at Centrelink and they do not access your file, you will not have a receipt number, so instead ask them for their name, and note that together with the time and date. It might seem a little over the top, but if you have problems with Centrelink in the future, the receipt numbers, and other notes, might become helpful.

Abe.

The Ask Abe column runs in every edition of Honi Soit. It 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.

Student With Sandstone Allergy Has Made a Big Mistake

Andrew Rickert Creep



I met James for the first time at Courtyard. After a brief introduction, I decided it was time to start the interview.

James, 19, spots me pulling the manilla folder out of my backpack. "Don't", he says, "I know what's in there."

It's too late: I pull out the image of Eastern Avenue. It's a portrait looking towards the Quad, and just manages to capture the edge of the Anderson Stuart Building. "Tell me how this makes you feel".

"Stop! Please — I'm beginning to break out in a rash already." James, studying a Bachelor of

Arts/Commerce, pleads. He's not wrong: the red sores are beginning to spread along his hand and up his arm.

James, like many other young people, is allergic to sandstone. He tells me how he thought the Quad and the other heritage buildings at USyd were purely for decoration, and that he didn't think he would have class in them. He's majoring in Philosophy, and so spends the few contact hours he does have in Quad lecture theatres and tute rooms.

"I feel like the boy in the bubble! I have to wear a special

jacket when I have a class in the Quad — people think I'm on my way to play bubble-soccer."

It's true, he does look like an overly-enthusiastic bubble-soccer player who has forgotten to de-bubble.

"Are you a real journalist?" He asks, "I don't think a real journalist would treat me like this! Can you at least put those photos away now?"

He's right, I'm not even a journalist. I just couldn't resist — I mean come on, a USyd student allergic to sandstone?

Hey! These are just the same pictures from last week...



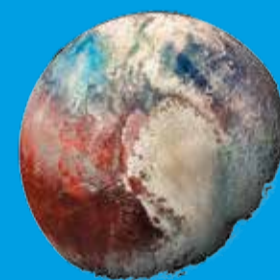
Taurus

A bold force has recently entered your life, and you will begin to notice it this month in particular. Tread carefully but don't be afraid to take risks!



Aquarius

You get jettisoned straight into the Sun and die.



Gemini

Wait, who is that behind you? Don't trust anyone, least of all yourself. Keep an eye out for hidden dangers.

Whoops! Police Storm Second Year PIL Test

Liam Hugh Donohue Homonym Enthusiast



Confusion reigned at the University of Sydney last Thursday as the riot squad stormed a New Law Building seminar room.

The exam, part of LAWS1023, had been underway for just over half-an-hour when the heavily armed police arrived at the scene. The third-year cohort were

extremely confused, with several young men arrested for disturbing the peace after arguing with police whether their detention was lawful.

Newtown LAC Commanding Office Superintendent Jason Whitmarsh told *hunny* that NSW Police have a zero-tolerance policy when it comes to PIL testing.

"It's just the law, mate. We don't make 'em, but we've gotta come out here to enforce them to make sure everyone gets home safe."

The University of Sydney has been attempting to introduce PIL testing for several years, but has been knocked back on numerous

occasions by local authorities. A University spokesperson told *hunny* "it's in the interests of the entire law community that we conduct these tests — otherwise how will students know if their legal knowledge was made in a sandstone institution like ours, or cooked up in some back-alley operation." More to come.



Local Woman with Poor Uber Rating Fills Backpack with Water Bottles and Mints to Give to Uber Drivers

>> pg. 11

Korean ABBA Fan Having a Great Week

Andrew Rickert Reunion Island

Pae Yong-Su arrived at work with an extra pep in his step on Monday.

The 23 year-old had spent the weekend watching back-to-back ABBA and Korean War documentaries on Netflix, and was eager to share his excitement with his colleagues.

"I'm so excited for the 'Abbatar' tour," he told *hunny*, "I've always been a massive ABBA fan but have never been able to make a concert. Now I'll finally be able to fulfill my lifelong dream of seeing them in concert, albeit as avatars."

He said he was more shocked by the announcement than anything else that occurred last week. "All wars will

eventually end, it was just never clear if it would happen in my lifetime or not — but the chance to hear some last new music from ABBA and even maybe hear them in concert, before they start dying off, now that is something that nobody saw coming!"

I guess I'll have to teach my family from the North who ABBA are, but once I do, then it will be such a wonderful time we can all share."

Pae reflected on the significance of the week: "maybe we will even finally have the *Friends* reunion — I wonder what the gang are up to today!"



SAIt Member Actually Just Wants To Talk and Catch Up, Is Feeling a Little Lonely Lately >> pg. 9

STAND WITH PALESTINE

RAISE THE FLAG AT USYD

Palestinians demanding the right of return to their homelands are under violent attack from Israeli military forces. At current count, 31 protesters in the #GreatReturnMarch have been killed by sniper fire. Disturbing videos have emerged of Palestinians convulsing from unknown nerve agents hurled at them by the IDF to drive them away from the Gaza "border".

The courage of Palestinians fighting against their oppression demands our solidarity. Join this speakout on campus to condemn the Gaza massacre, to demand the Australian government cut ties with Israel, and to support freedom and justice for Palestine.

WEDNESDAY MAY 2

1PM EASTERN AVENUE
UNIVERSITY OF SYDNEY

• NUS Against Racism • Students for Palestine – Sydney Uni • National Union of Students NSW •
Sydney University Education Action Group • University of Sydney Women's Collective • USYD Queer Action Collective