

# HONI SOIT

VOL 90 SEM 2 WEEK 10



# THE STATE OF THINGS

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

We acknowledge the traditional custodians of this land, the Gadigal people of the Eora Nation. The University of Sydney—where we write, publish and distribute *Honi Soit*—is on the sovereign land of these people. As students and journalists, we recognise our complicity in the ongoing colonisation of Indigenous land. In recognition of our privilege, we vow to not only include, but to prioritise and centre the experiences of Indigenous people, and to be reflective when we fail to. We recognise our duty to be a counterpoint to the racism that plagues the mainstream media, and to adequately represent the perspectives of Indigenous students at our University. We also wholeheartedly thank our Indigenous reporters for the continuing contribution of their labour to our learning.

## EDITORIAL

What is the state of things? What is happening? Everything is moving so fast I barely have a second to catch up on the last thing before everybody's on to the next thing. The world is in such a state, if they gave me a chance to fix it I wouldn't even know where to start.

Unless you are just right off your rocker, you probably feel the same way. Which is why this week, I thought it would be good to try and simplify everything that's happening in one handy compendium (that will rapidly decline in relevance the second it hits stands).

Right off the bat we have Liam demystifying our University's senate by collating all of their corporate affiliations. Very good stuff. I knew maybe two of the things on that page before I read it and those two things were a face and a name. (Try and guess which ones they were!)

Then we move swiftly along into the single greatest, possibly longest themed section of *Honi Soit* 2018: The State(s) of the Art(s).

If you want the most up-to-date information on USyd urbex, the plants on our campus, the Sydney music scene, Chinese anti-government art, the best ways to keep up with the Platinum Age of Television or ~very~ ~not~ ~real~ tips on how to evade public transit fares, this is the edition for you!

You will also want to check out the incredibly well researched article on pages 6 & 7 about the Seymour Centre that was penned by myself and Millie Roberts. I can safely say I have not penned anything that well researched all year. It's so good, I won't even say I wrote it. I penned it.

Well, that's all from me. Hope you enjoy this edition and enjoyed the past year of *Honi*. Not long to go now. **NH**

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## MAILBOX

### A word from our lawyers

Dear HS

The SRC Legal Service is seeing students seeking legal advice for a bizarre penalty related to false fire alarms in normal living conditions – think Igloo, Urbanest and no doubt others.

One student used under arm spray deodorant for 2 seconds. Another ran their shower and opened the door briefly to turn the music on. Yet another burnt the toast a few seconds.

The common factor was the arguably over sensitive fire alarm triggered in their room, poor ventilation via window or air conditioning, a weak interruptor button procedure. No opening of door, window, pressing button, waving a towel or anything would dis-engage the fire alarm call out. One student was even too far away from the alarm to hear it, and was meant to notice a tiny red flashing light to make a timely press of the interruptor button.

Very soon the (invariably international) student is being pressured to pay the \$1,800 call out fee levied by the brigade on the building manager, passed on the vulnerable consumer of the accommodation service.

Conclusion: Surely it is a human right to spray fragrance, sing in the shower, and over cook the toast once or twice. Legal issues arise in Consumer Law, Contracts Review Act, Fair Trade Act.

When SRC Legal Service has been contacted, and written to challenge the \$1,800 penalty – the building manager has been known to pause to consider that perhaps the builder, ventilation or fire alarm contractors may have a case to answer for faulty design and the penalty may be redirected.

Our firm view is students should be able to live a normal life in their home without a bill shock of \$1,800.

Kind regards

Thomas McLoughlin,  
Solicitor Practitioner Director [Tuesday, Thursday, Friday]

### Nice try, factions

Dear Honi Soit,

We write in response to reports in last week's edition of *Honi* that certain campus factions are currently negotiating amongst themselves for the role of women's officer. We write to let these factions know that they can fuck off, and that they will have to pry the positions from our cold, dead hands. We ask that

they please also refrain from messaging us on our private Facebook accounts with copious amounts of emojis, demonstrating a trite interest in our wellbeing to ultimately ask us in the most indirect manner how we may help them break collective autonomy.

Yours sincerely,

Jessi Ca and Wadeline Mard  
P.S. respect collective autonomy or GTFO

There are two (2) regular editions of *Honi* left. If you've hated us this year, prove it. Send us a letter. The more scathing the better. What are you waiting for? There is no greater taste than victory. Will you fight? Or will you perish like a dog? Do it for yourself: editors@honisoit.com

### WHOOPS

'SRC elections: The fallout, the future', published in week 9, incorrectly labelled Dane Luo a moderate liberal. Luo is an independent.

Week 9's quiz also featured a couple of mistakes.

- 7 should have read "Which country contains the waterfall with the longest drop?"
- The answer for 9 was Girl's Generation.

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# The Senate: Putting faces to the faceless

**Liam Donohoe** briefs us on some of the people responsible for making the University's most important decisions.

The Senate is the University's highest decision-making body. Its 15 Fellows make decisions about how to spend the University's money, have considerable influence over the University's investments and infrastructure plans through various sub-committees, and make final determinations over the strategy and policy that affect staff and student learning, research, and welfare conditions.

Legislation requires that some Fellows have a background in the financial and corporation sector. Not ones to fall short of any mark, USyd goes well beyond the

call of duty, with the Senate full of figures with deep and varied connections to some of Australia's most powerful corporations.

But many students haven't the faintest clue who our Fellows are, let alone ties they might maintain elsewhere. This article, which is by no means exhaustive, makes note of some of these Fellows' connections to the and includes some potentially germane details about their line of work.

**Ilana Atlas**

Ilana Atlas will be a Fellow of Senate until the end of 2019. In addition to the involvement listed above, she is also on the board of Jawun Pty Ltd, an organisation that "forms partnerships to benefit corporate, government and Indigenous Australia" formed by Noel Parson.

**Peter Scott**

Peter Scott is a non-executive director at Transurban, which owns most of the toll roads on the east coast. He is also one of 25 directors of the elite O'Connell Street Associates. Interestingly, the University awarded an honorary doctorate to one of their most high profile Associates, James Dominguez, in late 2016.

**Karen Moses**

Karen Moses is the former Executive Director, Finance and Strategy for Origin Energy, Australia's fourth largest climate polluter. She is currently a director of Orica Ltd., an explosives company with a patchy environmental record, and her 30 years in the energy industry includes works for Exxon and BP.

**Francis Tamer**

Francis Tamer was just elected the Undergraduate Senate Fellow. He has extensive connections to the Catholic church both on and off campus, and was widely quoted by the Murdoch media in the aftermath of 2017's "Vote No" stall counter-rally at USyd, bemoaning the conduct of protestors.

**Belinda Hutchinson**  
Chancellor

Belinda Hutchinson will be USyd's Chancellor (theoretical top dog) until the end of 2021. She is currently the chair of Thales Australia Limited, one of the world's largest weapons manufacturers. She is also a non-executive director of AGL, Australia's largest climate polluter in 2016. She has previously served as a director of TAB, one of Australia's largest sports betting companies, EnergyAustralia, Australia's second largest climate polluter in 2016, Telstra, Australia's largest telecommunications provider, Coles, and Myer.

# The inaccessibility of sexual assault support services for international students

Lena Wang explores what resources are available to non-English speakers.

CW: Sexual harassment and assault

The Redfern Legal Centre (RLC) has been providing free legal advice and casework to the inner-city community for 34 years.

RLC's International Students Legal Service helps with issues pertinent to international students—housing problems, visas, and employment. But recently, their international student solicitor Sean Stimson has noticed a distressing pattern.

"We started to see [international students] coming through to us and they weren't characterising their real concern," he explains. Instead, they cited "an employment issue they'd like to discuss...as a bit of a cover story".

"We started to see that there, at the core of their problems, were other issues."

According to Stimson, international students were disproportionately hesitant to seek advice and information on what support services were available to survivors of sexual harassment and assault.

In 2017, USyd counted 19,000 international students in its student body—more than 30%. In the same year, the joint Australian Human Rights Council (AHRC) and Universities Australia survey on sexual assault and harassment revealed that one in four students had been harassed on campus, and 22,000 students assaulted at university over the past two years.

The Red Zone report, released earlier this year by End Rape on Campus (EROC), identified international students as a particularly vulnerable group. Its investigation found that a "disproportionate amount of assaults against international students occur within their first month in Australia", citing potential culture shock as a reason. Uncertain boundaries due to a newfound sense of freedom and new age limits on drinking, may also leave international students at risk, it reported.

The AHRC survey, however, found that domestic students (27 per cent) were more likely to be assaulted than international students (22 per cent) in a university setting. But as many activists, and the Red Zone report noted, systematic flaws in its methodology would have caused underreporting of instances of assault and harassment.

"The survey was not available in other languages and was not written in a way that would be considered culturally appropriate to many international students, resulting in poor response rates," EROC observed.

Stimson believes that these were the same barriers preventing international students from finding help at the RLC. In particular, the language barrier made it "incredibly difficult for some of our clients to understand what their rights were" as information was "delivered in reasonably complex legal language". He also notes the existence of cultural confusion in knowledge of local laws—actions may be "slightly different or more acceptable as a behaviour" in the student's country of origin.

Councillor-elect Abbey Shi, who ran for the SRC elections on a platform of helping international students, agrees. "[International students] are afraid of getting legal assistance because of language barriers," she says.

"[Students] might not even know they are being sexually harassed," because they aren't aware of their rights within an Australian legal framework.

Further factors such as unfamiliarity with Australian policing and judicial systems, access to support services, and informing families at home create additional difficulties.

USyd's current support services include the helpline 1800-SYD-HLP, student liaison officers, and an online reporting portal. Students can use these mechanisms to make complaints and disclosures.

Given the large proportion of international students at USyd, it seems obvious that these support services should take the specific language and cultural barriers international students face into account. Beyond criticisms already been levelled against the online portal, however, there seems to be very little in these support services catered especially to international students who may find it difficult to disclose details of sexual assault in English.

USyd's website helpfully informs survivors that reporting incidents of harassment and assault will not affect their visa status. This aside, the online portal only seems to go so far as to ask whether the reportee is indeed an international student.

## *Being a victim of a crime will not affect your visa or employment status*

According to USyd, a "support team" can then "take into account [the student's] status". When asked about specific support services for international student survivors, USyd notes that its student liaison officers have experience supporting all students.

Wom\*ns Officer Jessica Syed notes that a large flaw in the University's current services is "its lack of advertisement and the fact that it is mostly monolingual".

"When dealing with matters as sensitive as sexual assault, survivors should be entitled to relay their experiences in the language they are most comfortable speaking," she says, criticising the lack of translational services as an "extreme oversight".

Shi agrees, noting that the "[trauma] of the event might stop international students from following the process of reporting online". She suggests

that the distribution of translated flyers and the running of workshops on campus during OWeek could help vulnerable students become more aware of their rights and how to get help.

Stimson reiterates that "there's an obligation to be able to provide information very early on to those that are wanting to study in Australia".

In response to gaps in accessibility for international student survivors to get help, the RLC has developed the multi-lingual factsheet *Your Body, Your Choice*. Available in 11 different languages, the resource is designed to be a "one-stop" guide explaining firstly, the rights and legal terminology surrounding assault and consent, secondly, the counselling services available, and thirdly, medical and legal support, and reporting mechanisms.

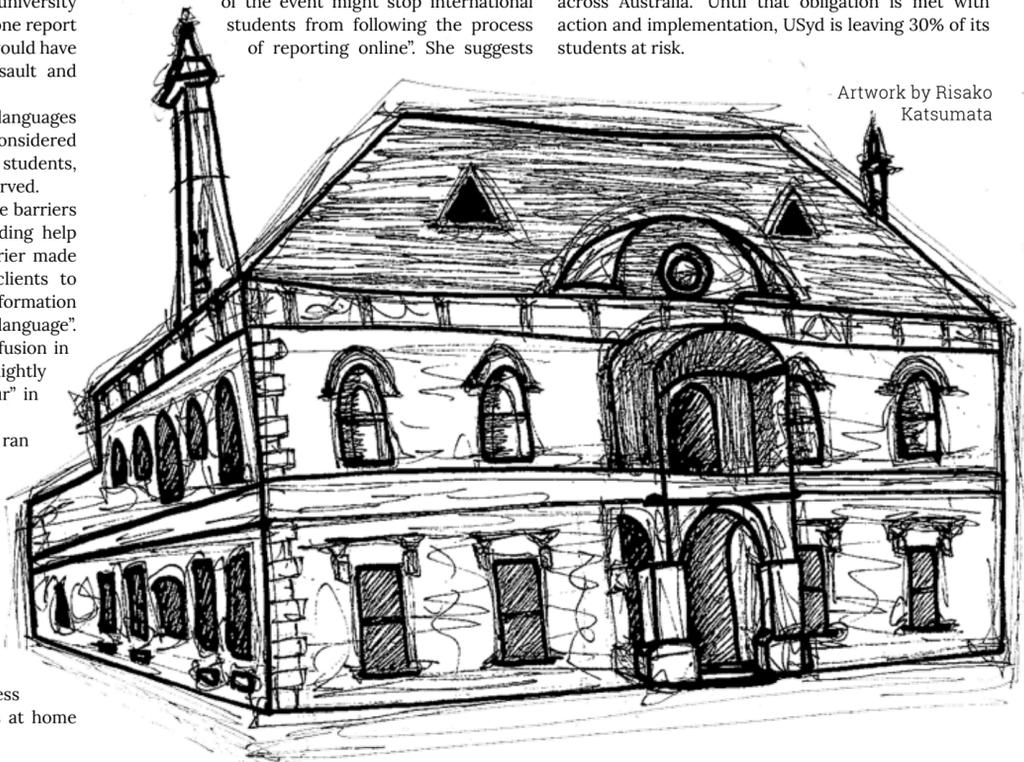
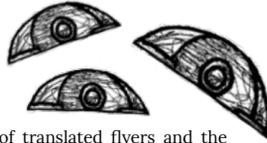
The sheet goes on to specify that "anyone, including international students and visitors can receive help and support from these services," and that "being a victim of a crime will not affect your visa or employment status".

"We tried to create a resource that was in very plain language, and that was culturally sensitive", Stimson says.

Though activists have praised the new resource, they also raised concerns that the factsheet prioritises police services as a primary contact for support of survivors. "This often disallows survivors the ability to control the narrative around their experiences," says Syed.

She acknowledges that "the RLC factsheet is a step forward in making support services more accessible for a broader range of people." The factsheet may very well be one of the translated flyers, that as Shi suggests, could be distributed during OWeek next year.

Our university is not doing enough. Its current services are not adequate in recognising the vulnerabilities of international students and the barriers they encounter in reporting. As Stimson says, "we have an obligation, as do our education providers across Australia." Until that obligation is met with action and implementation, USyd is leaving 30% of its students at risk.



Artwork by Risako Katsumata

# The State(s)

# of

# the Art(s)

Words by  
Lots of people

Art by  
Eloise Myatt  
(Unless stated otherwise)

# State of The University

## Why we deserve more from the Seymour Centre

Nick Harriott and Millie Roberts have waited long enough for a good campus theatre.

In 1974, an Honi opinion piece tackled the state of theatre on campus. "One of the most important [problems] is one shared by all drama groups, professional or amateur, and that is the nature of the facilities available to the particular group," wrote Mark Radvan, a Honours student at the time. USyd has struggled to provide an answer for its thespians, with adequate venues popping up and disappearing over the years.

A year after Radvan's thinkpiece, one such structure hit the scene. The Seymour Centre was built on the corner of City Road and Cleveland Street with a \$1 million bequest from Everest Reginald York Seymour, philanthropist and retail chain magnate. His request was simple: to provide a facility for "musical and dramatic arts" for the people of Sydney. After passing in 1966, Seymour's funds were entrusted to the University of Sydney, who have owned and managed the site ever since.

The performing arts centre is an important site for cultural engagement: it hosts international productions, primary and secondary school students, prolific guest speakers, artists and annual festivals. It is comprised of three main theatres, named after its benefactor: the York (near 800 capacity), Everest (over 600 capacity) and Reginald (up to 200 capacity). The Seymour's reported demographic spans from 'young inner city dwellers' of 20-year-old university students, to 'mature cultural urbanites' and 'intellectual oldies'.

Historically, the Seymour Centre has

struggled to fill vacancies all year round. CreateNSW, the State Government's arts funding body, couldn't justify "major public investment" in the Seymour's future direction "given the theatre's history of relatively low utilisation and lack of acceptance from the public as a first-class venue", in a 2011 review.

It's a sentiment shared by John Bell, actor and founder of Bell Shakespeare, who reflected on the Centre in his 2003 memoir. "[I]n spite of having three workable auditoria, the right amount of seats...spacious foyers and good facilities, the place has never taken off, even though it packs out for one-off events and festivals". He had had some successful productions prior but it was a struggle "to bring the Seymour to life".

***It seems unfair that students should have to contend with professional production companies to secure a theatre at their own university, but that's the reality of the situation***

"Geographically, it's in a dead spot and its image is blurred in the public eye—neither quite on or off campus," Bell said. It's a view that haunts the Seymour, and makes it a questionable choice for non-

USyd productions.

The Sydney Morning Herald reported on rumours that the University was looking to repurpose the space as a museum for an unnamed benefactor in 2008. Professor Andrew Coats, who at the time held the now-defunct Vice-Chancellor (Community) portfolio, denied these allegations. However, he said that the centre was "showing signs of age" and "could be demolished and rebuilt." Artistic Director and General Manager, Tim Jones defended the Seymour six years later, telling the paper that he "angrily disagrees" with the claim that the centre is "awkwardly located" or "unfashionable".

• • •

Dating back to the early parts of last century, the burgeoning S.U. Dramatic Society (SUDS) had no on-campus theatre to call home. The smaller SUDS productions were staged in Wallace Theatre or in the upstairs rooms of what is now the Holme Building; and the larger, more spectacular productions were staged in the Great Hall.

Students would have to wait until the 1960s for the first bona fide student theatre to pop up on campus, when The Union Theatre was built during extensive renovations of "the Union" (now Holme). During the theatre's construction, it was described as "great both as an achievement and an acquisition" for the University, and so receptive to the renovations was the student body that they even copped a 400 percent increase in union fees from £1 to £4 to help cover the costs.

Before it opened, the University announced that the Union Theatre would be used "primarily for university drama" and that "it will be the policy of the Union Board to give, in general, preference to university societies over outside bodies in its use." Although, this did come with that caveat that "the Board has paved the way for future development of drama in the city by declaring that if a theatre company... were to be established in Sydney, the Board would consider use of the theatre by such a company."

For a community of students who had been deprived of a facility like this for so long, the development of the Union Theatre sounded too good to be true. And in some ways, it was. There was an explosion of groundbreaking, phenomenal student theatre in the years that followed, at least, according to campus folklore. But when you pick apart the myth of that era, you start uncovering the same persistent problems with the dramatic arts on

campus.

The Union, later renamed "The Footbridge Theatre", was not only dirty and poorly-maintained—it was also not free for students to use. And, wouldn't you know it, that policy about allowing theatre companies to use the space became increasingly useful as a form of revenue for the uni. In the 1980s, the Union even went so far as to lease it out to a professional production company—the Gordon Frost Organisation—which meant that students had an even harder time jockeying for a slot in the program.

The Footbridge Theatre was sold in the mid-2000s, along with many other Union-owned properties, to make up some much needed cash. The Footbridge is now just another large lecture hall. There are a few traces that it was once a historic theatre: the dated signage on its former foyer, and the remnants of lighting rigs and catwalks visible in the adjacent Elliott Miller Studio.

Now the University is back to having just two main performance spaces. On one side of campus, the Seymour Centre services larger University shows like revues and the major productions of societies like Barbersoc, MADSOC and MUSE. And on the other, you have SUDS' basecamp, the Cellar: a space where performances are routinely drowned out by the sound of wedding receptions held upstairs in the Refectory. Truly, you've never heard Bassanio's heartbreaking pleas at the climax of Merchant of Venice until you've heard them against a muffled remix of Daft Punk's One More Time.

• • •

The limitations of the Cellar are part of its grungy charm. But even its biggest fans, the SUDS exec, recognise that it is insufficiently equipped to host more adventurous productions such as the annual SUDS major. For the past three years, SUDS have hired off-campus venues to mount their major productions, such as this year's Love & Information which was staged at Erskineville's PACT Theatre. As with most cases, USyd is quick to advertise that SUDS is one of the longest continuously running theatre companies in Australia—and slow to provide the appropriate support.

2018 SUDS Vice President Elliot Ulm explained that even if they wanted to perform at the Seymour, they would barely be able to afford the Reginald, the Seymour's smallest theatre. "The only show that can afford it would be the major production which gets up to \$8000...but half the time it's already booked in advance."

The SUDS general meeting, where members decide on what will be the



next year's major production and who will direct it, is held in September, which sometimes leaves less than nine months to write, cast and rehearse an original piece of theatre before opening night.

For even a standard play that's a short turnaround, let alone one that challenges the form of contemporary theatre as many of the SUDS majors do—last year's major In Two Circles was an immersive experience that was staged in a Camperdown warehouse. It seems unfair that a society of students should have to contend with the organisational power of professional production companies to secure a theatre at their own university, but that's the reality of the situation which drives SUDS off-campus.

It's not just SUDS that gets a raw deal with the Seymour Centre. If a society or a group of enterprising students decide to mount a production at the Seymour, they can expect that almost all of their budget will be sunk into merely hiring the venue. When the USU allocates the budgets of the faculty and identity revues, the amount that they receive is based on which one of the Seymour's theatres they have the potential to sell-out. If a revue could feasibly fill the York—the Seymour's largest theatre—they are granted more money by the USU.

Of course, not only does this model favour revues that have already proven

they can sell out larger venues, it also guarantees that almost the entire budget goes into hiring a venue which USyd already owns. It may not sound dire, but you can understand why this is frustrating for newer identity revues like

***To make up for the lacking government funding at a state and federal level, the Seymour relies on sponsorships and partnership opportunities to stay afloat.***

Queer or POC when they are contending against established faculty revues like Arts or Science for an amount anywhere between \$4000 and \$8000.

In 2017, a meagre budget allocation led Wom\*n's Revue to forgo having AV sketches because the projector was prohibitively expensive. Even this year, Holt the Musical—a student production that harkened back to the halcyon days of unruly undergraduate theatre—had to get a USU Bright Ideas grant just to hire a theatre at the Seymour. In almost every case, the money that could be going into the production budget for

props, costumes and set design—or even into the promotional budget to bring in bigger, non-uni crowds—is going straight into hiring theatres that the University itself owns.

The high fees are understandable in the current arts climate—earlier this year, CreateNSW was criticised for scanty project commitment. In an Arts Funding Program Review submission form by the Seymour Centre in 2013, Tim Jones challenged the decision a year prior that NSW Universities were ruled ineligible to apply for Arts NSW program and project funding. Similarly, Jones wrote to the Parliament of Australia to respond to the 2014/15 Federal Budget, expressing fear that "without a substitute funding pot for core funding, it is possible that organisations of significance will not be able to continue operations entirely or at current levels".

As part of its bequest, the Seymour runs as a non-profit organisation. It remains unclear what role the University plays financially, or how much they invest in it. The Centre has not featured in the USyd's financial asset reports since 2014, nor are the Seymour Centre's annual reports publicly available.

To make up for the lacking government funding at a state and federal level, the Seymour relies on sponsorships and partnership opportunities to stay afloat. Its function space often hosts once-off private events, with corporate hiring in the past seeing Microsoft, Sony and Peugeot taking advantage of the space. During the March showing of Sydney Uni Revue, staff reprimanded students for walking through the foyer during rehearsals, due to a Dyson event being prepared outside; it is clear which of the paying clients were valued more. Despite a focus on all members of the community in the bequest—students cannot always be prioritised.

• • •

Although unconfirmed by the USU, Honi understands that the union plans to build a full theatre on one of the levels of Manning House, possibly challenging the role of the Seymour Centre on campus. Entertainment business Century Venues acquired Manning Bar last year. If it goes ahead, Century Venues will no doubt create a professional performance space, in keeping with the standard of its other managed venues: the Enmore, Metro and Factory Theatres, the Comedy Store and Chatswood's Concourse. However, according to the University's Campus Infrastructure Services (CIS), the University would still need to find a donor, sponsorship or alternative fund backing to put this plan into action.

The worry is that this venue might

have no obligation to students at all. Given the kind of events that Century Venues organises for its other, very successful venues, it wouldn't be surprising if smaller student events at Manning were scrapped in favour of big bands and established comedians. But wouldn't it be great if, for once, USyd students had access to a state-of-the-art theatre that prioritised their needs, nurtured their talent and didn't charge them an arm and leg for the privilege of using a theatre on their own campus. Maybe some healthy competition will be enough to drive the Seymour's prices down a bit. Or maybe the Manning Theatre will be even more expensive and less accessible than the Seymour Centre is now. Only time will tell.

• • •

In 1972, when the Seymour was first approved by the University's Senate, it was designed to provide seamless operation for both "the highest professional demands yet [still] permit simple operation when required by amateur or student groups." At Everest Seymour's request, the Centre's core purpose was to serve Sydney—all of Sydney, and everyone within it. The Seymour's dedication to the University's students and campus theatrics is unquestionable; however in the name of financial viability and pleasing the general public, it simply cannot give students alone what they need.

At the bare minimum, the Seymour Centre provides an adequate, dedicated performance space for the University's theatrical and musical groups. USyd has never had a theatre as well-equipped or professional as this—but it has also never had one so challenging to organise a performance in. Students deserve a performing arts centre that feels like it belongs to them. A university's theatre should be free, accessible and prioritise student productions over outside companies.

The Seymour Centre could be that theatre—if it would just scooch a couple of metres back towards the campus.



# X marks the spot on USyd's Marauder's Map

Jess Zlotnick is not done urban exploring the university.

A few months ago I wrote an article about an anonymous student, known as 'L', who made a 'Marauder's Map' of secret spots on campus. A few weeks ago, I received an anonymous message. The author had his own map of USyd, he told me, and wanted to get in touch with L. He knew about other stairwells and rooftops, and offered to show me a few of his discoveries.

He signs off the letter as X, and when we meet up he declines to give me another name. I can't tell you who he is or what he studies. I can tell you that he's known about L for a few years now, and that they're not the only explorers out there.

Our first stop is the Old Teacher's College. We round a corner, and I keep walking for a moment before I realise that X has stopped. There is a set of stairs before us, which lead to a small, cupboard-like door, the kind of thing you'd normally walk past.

X climbs the stairs, with me following close behind, and opens the door to an abandoned room that might still be used for storage. Empty shelves line the walls.

We go up a smaller set of stairs and suddenly we're in the roof of the Old Teacher's College. It's warm in here, the old tiles retaining heat. Gaps in the roofing let in small slits of light. There's also an asbestos warning sign. X mentions that he's been in here before with a dust mask. I half-heartedly hold my notebook over my mouth and we don't venture further than the entrance.

From the outside, there are few signs that there's a room up here. That's something that sets X apart from your regular explorer: attention to detail. He's made most of his discoveries by noticing the little things—things that don't seem right, space that doesn't quite add up.

He confesses that there's a degree of luck involved in exploring the campus. X's adventures often consist of ten minute detours, stopping at point C on the journey between points A and B, and being lucky enough to find something in that ten minutes.

X says that you also have to go exploring regularly to find places. He visited the Electrical Engineering rooftop every two weeks when he was in the area. Most of the time he'd leave unsatisfied. But then, one time, he found it unlocked.

I ask if he's ever been discovered.  
"Not directly, no."

I laugh, and ask what that means.

He says that in some cases it's forgetting to close doors properly or lock them on your way back out. In others cases, it's doing the opposite: locking an unlocked door you didn't realise was unlocked in the first place.

We amble down the fire escape of the Wentworth Building, passing each level because none of the doors have handles. We reach the bottom level, which has a door with a handle. We can hear voices from the other side.

"This is a corner I haven't been in before," says X.

He listens at the door for a moment, before slowly turning the handle and peeking around it. He relaxes slightly, and opens it further:

"Back of Hermann's apparently"

This is a magical moment. The door opens into Hermann's Bar, next to the stage in the corner. Emerging from the other side into a space I consider familiar makes the familiar strange; I've never seen Hermann's from this angle, and there's something truly thrilling about that.

We go through the door and walk out. If we get any strange looks on our way out, we ignore them.



Our final destination is the roof of an Engineering building. It's late in the afternoon and a few doors are locked for the night. But one door is not locked, and X pushes it open.

"How do you feel about stairs?"

The fire escape winds around tightly, each level marked with a big number on the wall. It's around 5 that my confident strides start to slow down. We get to 7, and X says, "We're halfway".

I joke about 7 being halfway, but he's not kidding. The building's fire escape goes up 12 levels, and they're not easy. I struggle my way up to level 12, and to a locked door.

It doesn't really matter that the door is locked, the roof inaccessible; the journey up here is most of the fun, and X seems to extend that attitude towards all of his discoveries. He apologises a few times for things not being exciting enough, but I think he knows that the adventure itself is well worth the effort.

I'm glad to be there, especially because there's a collection of graffiti at the top of the stairwell. The most striking piece appears to be a contract of some description. I won't reveal the details of the contract; you'll have to climb those 12 flights for yourself to find out. All I'll say is that there is a table of conditions, two signatures, and a date: an imprint of two people who climbed these stairs and left their mark.

It's here, at the top of the stairs, that X reveals his

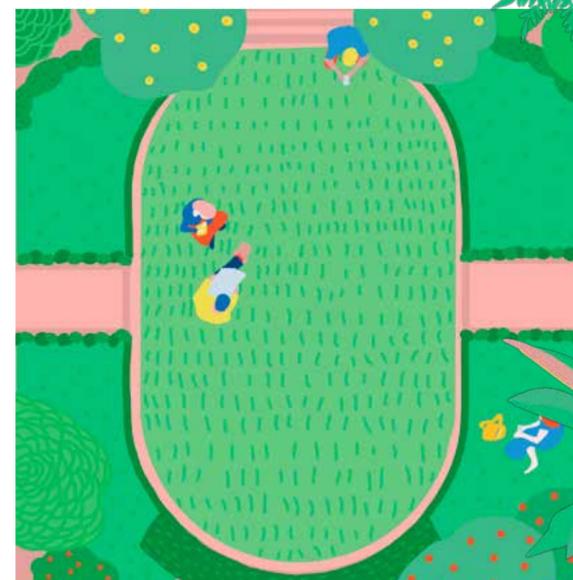
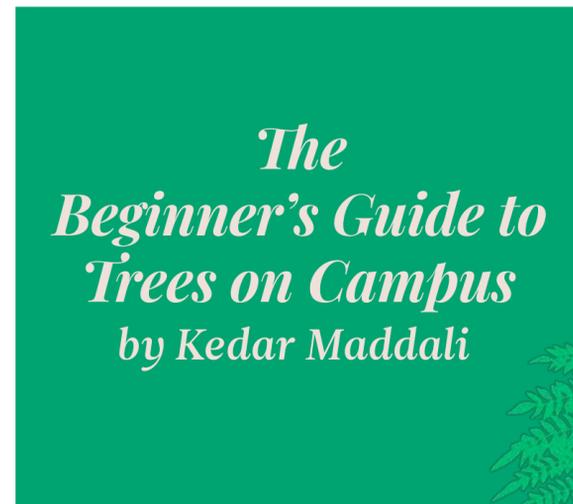
journal of secret spots. I can't help but feel like this climb has been a kind of test, and that maybe I've passed it.

Where L's Marauder's Map is a quick guide to a few of the rarer spots, this is a compendium of secret locations. Lovingly rendered in pencil, there are architectural maps, multi-level dissections of buildings and step-by-step instructions. Here his attention to detail is put to its best use, a record for him to save, or pass down. He doesn't let me look at it for long, just enough to catch a glimpse of a mention of tunnels; an adventure for another day.

I ask how X feels about me writing this article, publishing the details of these secret places.

He seems to share L's feeling that too much exposure is bad: the more people visit these places the more likely they are to get shut down. Since my article was published, he's noticed changes in the rooftop of the Woolley Building.

I haven't visited since writing the article, and I definitely don't make ten minute detours on my journeys across campus, but maybe from here on out I'll be more willing to open the doors I stumble across. If you're a fellow adventurer, try to leave them unlocked.



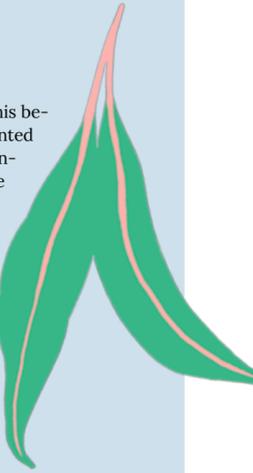
## The Sydney Blue Gum

**Scientific Name: Eucalyptus saligna**

**Location: ABS building**

Found in front of the Abercrombie Business School, this behemoth of a tree, as tall as the building itself, was planted during the 1890s—making it over 100 years old. When construction of ABS began, the builders ensured the Blue Gum remained intact, as it was considered an important part of Darlington's history and environment. The architects even incorporated the tree into their design, allowing it to dominate ABS's entrance court, whose two wings wrap around the tree, almost embracing it.

The Sydney blue gum is one of the most common hardwood trees on NSW's Eastern coast, generally reaching heights of up to 30-55 metres. To see the tree in full blossom, walk by around late January through to early April and experience its white wispy flowers and their distinct aroma.



## Jacaranda & Flame Tree

**Scientific Name of the Jacaranda: Jacaranda Mimosifolia**

**Scientific Name of the Illawarra Flame Tree: Brachychiton Acerifolius**

**Location: Quadrangle**

Once a king among plants, the Jacaranda tree that used to reign over the Quadrangle lawns reached the end of its 88 year-long life in 2016. First planted by Professor E.G Waterhouse in 1928 (after undergrad pranksters sabotaged a series of attempts to grow a tree in the Quad), the tree grew to be a local icon and the background of many a graduation photo. A university myth held that if the tree had bloomed before you started studying, you would fail your exams. Now, after the 2016 collapse, an identical clone of the original tree—so far a mere sapling—has taken root in the Quad. The clone, along with an illawarra flame tree were planted in the same ceremony in 2016. Flame trees, whose seeds some groups of Indigenous Australians traditionally toast and eat, is often paired with the jacaranda as both are deciduous plants. On top of that, both the plants bloom in mid-October, putting forth their respective purplish-blue and flame-red flowers just in time for exams.



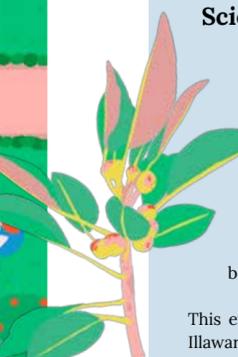
## Moreton Bay Fig Tree

**Scientific Name: Ficus macrophylla**

**Location: In front of Fisher Library**

If you thought the Sydney Blue Gum was old, then the Moreton Bay Fig will give you a run for your money. It was planted sometime during 1850s, which makes it about as old as the University itself: in fact, you can spot the fig in photos of USyd dating back to the mid-19th century. USyd's Fig is actually a fairly large specimen, even for its age. With a canopy spreading about 25 meters in diameter, the Fig provides generous shade to everyone sitting on the benches below, as it has for countless years past.

This evergreen giant is commonly found scattered on the coast in NSW's Illawarra region and even some parts of southern Queensland. Its blooms all year round providing fruits for the many fruit bats that visit USyd.



# State of the Arts

## What's wrong with the Sydney music scene?

Nicholas Horgan investigates the slow death of live music venues.

Since 2012 the Record Crate has been a popular Sydney venue for live music. But on the evening of Sunday, the 16th of September, the Record Crate opened its doors for the final time. A few days prior, the owners of the venue had announced on Facebook: "Sydney culture has changed so dramatically over the past two or three years and we simply could not keep up".

The sudden closure left bands who had booked gigs scrambling to find another venue in which to perform.

Since 2014, there has been net 176 venue closures in Sydney. Melbourne, on the other hand, currently boasts more live music venues per capita than any city in the world, with around one venue per 9,503 residents, according to a survey undertaken by Melbourne Live Music. Brisbane is also faring much better than Sydney—The Guardian's Nathan Jolly reported in September this year that Brisbane is a prospering musical hub, with no evidence of such widespread venue closure.

So, what is it about Sydney that is causing so many music venues to close?

At the Parliamentary Inquiry into the Music and Arts Economy in New South Wales stakeholders gave evidence that the package of legislation known colloquially as the 'lockout laws' were the predominant cause of venue closures in Sydney. Isabella Manfredi (lead singer and songwriter of Sydney band The Pretures) gave testimony to the Committee that lockout laws were

really just the 'nail in the coffin' of the Sydney music scene. Manfredi outlined that the lack of music venues in Sydney has made it difficult for up and coming Sydney musicians to hone their stage presence, musicality and performance skills. Many young people pursuing a music career are (seemingly justifiably) leaving Sydney for Melbourne or cities even further afield.

### Focused criticism on the lockout laws has obscured deeper cultural issues that are more to blame for venue closure

Sixo Cooper, a booking agent and founder of online zines Culture Eater and Cool Try, agrees that the lockout laws are a major reason for the decline in the Sydney Music scene. It is not only the direct impact of the laws themselves, Cooper told Honi, but the corresponding shift in nightlife culture, as people allegedly go out less at night because they feel unwelcome.

However, many active in the Sydney music scene believe focused criticism on the lockout laws has obscured deeper cultural issues that are more to blame for venue closure. Robbie Macpherson, bassist and manager of Sydney funk-rock band Just Breathe, and founder of the music collective Vandida, told Honi that venues are closing because not enough people attend live music shows.

The non-attendance, Macpherson reasons, is attributable to live music being relegated in

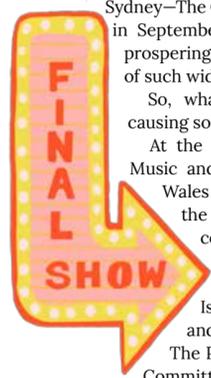


contemporary Australian culture. Indeed, it seems almost intuitive that in the age of YouTube and Spotify it is difficult to convince people to actually leave their house to watch live music.

Cooper and Macpherson agree that there are key practical ways in which venues and artists can work to improve the Sydney live music scene, away from petitioning for the abolishment of lockout laws. Macpherson states venues must make an effort into creating a welcoming, inviting environment—not just opening the doors, installing a PA system and hoping for the best.

Artists shouldn't just play shows for the sake of it, and should make sure to put time and effort into their releases, marketing, and music, said Macpherson. But fundamentally, people must realise that live music shows can be as fun as clubbing—perhaps even more.

It is clear multiple factors have contributed to the dire situation of Sydney's music scene. Repealing the lockout laws will clearly not automatically alter the underlying cultural apathy towards live music in Sydney, even if it is a good place to start.



## Old dogs should learn new tricks

Marcus Lee thinks competitive dancing could do with a return to form.

As someone who is unfortunately inept in all things physical, I vicariously live out my athletic dreams through watching dance competitions.

Dance to me is an art form that transforms boundary-pushing acts of the human body into a beautiful, effortless performance. I remember being in awe of the physical extremes in flexibility stunts—leaps beyond 180 degrees, leg extensions past the ears, and back-breaking contortion poses.

At the risk of sounding masochistic, all the moves looked painful but strangely so satisfying. They embodied my idealised vision of peak physical performance.

As I have come to learn, these stunts are known as 'tricks', which were once well-received by viewers of YouTube, back when I was watching competition numbers in 2014.

Being an amateur spectator however, I was unaware that dance was undergoing a revolution; one that would render it no longer recognisable to me.

Many dance teachers want dance to return to its artistic roots. In a 2016 article in Dance Australia, Paul Malek, a Melbourne-based artistic director at Transit Dance & Origins Dance Company, said that dancers are neglecting proper technique in favour of extravagant kicks, leaps, and jumps. Shelly Power, previous director of the international dance competition, Prix de Lausanne, echoed the same sentiment in a 2016 article in Dance Magazine: "too often we see technique compromised for the sake of the trick".

Tricks, especially those that are gymnastic and acrobatic in nature, are essentially perceived as tainting the purity of dance. People distinguish tricks from dance; 'dance is an art, acro is a sport'.

As U.S.-based choreographers Travis Wall and Alexa Moffett devised technique-heavy movement-based choreographies that dominated competition dance, tricks slowly became maligned in the YouTube dance community. Spectators began to criticise dance numbers for including lots of leaps and turns, calling in their comments for better 'technique', whatever that means. Consequently, my naivety led me to adopt an overcorrecting approach where I shunned all tricks even though they were my first introduction into the world of dance competitions. I would immediately close the tab if I saw a single pirouette or a dancer's feet launched into the air.

Over the years, I have seen 'technique' become a central component in competition dance. For example, contemporary dance has become about the execution of shapes, technique and clear positions, balanced with musical and story-driven movements according to Freya List, choreographer and freelance teacher from Victoria, in an interview with Dance Magazine.

While I love the musical and story aspects of contemporary dance, movement-based choreography that is solely fixated on showcasing technique has become bland to me.

I am neither advocating for dance to completely abandon technique, nor for dance numbers to be a

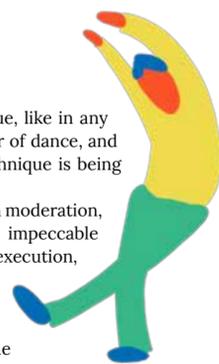
montage of tricks. Technique, like in any art form, is the central pillar of dance, and I, for one, am glad that technique is being foregrounded.

But I believe that tricks, in moderation, when accompanied by impeccable technical and emotional execution, can and should have a place in competition dance. If dance is an art of performance and making the audience feel something, tricks, able to inspire awe and incredulity, are surely deserving of validity.

As I was procrastinating and watching YouTube clips of competition dance, I noticed that tricks may be making a comeback.

For one, Expressenz Dance Center from Indiana in the U.S., who are famous for their synchronised turns, has been increasingly popular amongst dance spectators despite being a studio that is trick-heavy in their teaching methods.

While their technique, musicality and emotions are on point in every performance, it is their deft use of tricks make them a force to be reckoned with.



## MCA's latest exhibit: Sun Xun, the 'apolitical' activist?

Vivienne Davies thinks the West has misconstrued one of China's most famous artists.

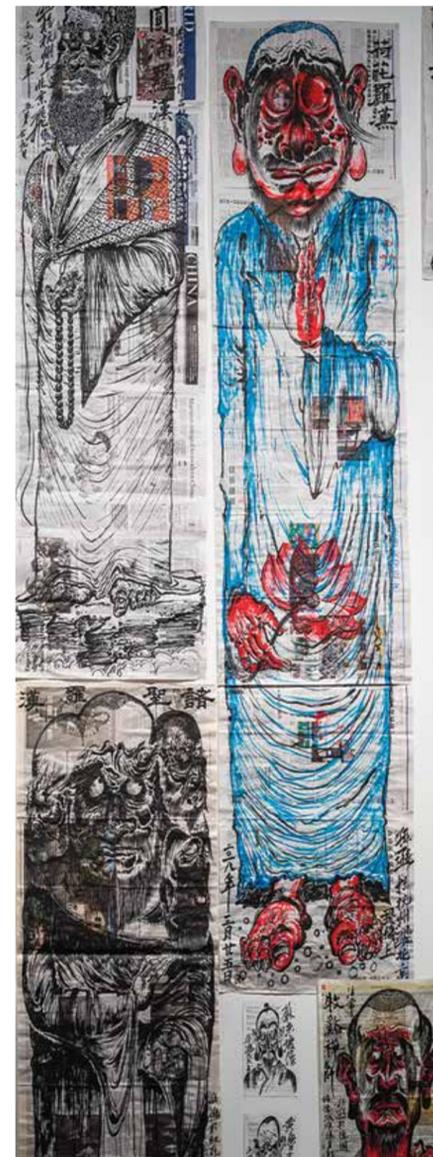
Entering Sun Xun's exhibition is akin to entering a foreign world. Much like Alice entering the mania of Wonderland, Sun's dystopia of underworld creatures and masked Chinese figures seizes the audience with an apprehensive mix of wonder and uneasiness. But Sun's work has been reduced by a Western lens, its message twisted into a conclusion that does a disservice to the artist and his audience. Australian media has largely described Xun's work as anti-China—anti-censorship, anti-propaganda and anti-authoritarianism. A recent Sydney Morning Herald article characterised Sun's work as a manifestation of political repression in China, stating, "let the Chinese have the more interesting art and more interesting times...political freedom is non-negotiable". 21 Grams may be influenced by China's censorship but it is an interrogation into China's politics from his personally lived experience, rather than a politically charged message itself.

### Sun Xun does not believe that an artist has a duty to change the present

Born four years after the end of the Chinese Cultural Revolution, Sun Xun's upbringing informs much of his art today. He grew up in the coal-mining town of Fuxin, in northwest China and moved to Hangzhou, a coastal metropolis, as a teenager. It was like relocating from 'North Korea to New York City', he has said in interviews. A stout Chinese man with square glasses and a penchant for Asics runners, Sun seems unfazed by little things like current affairs. Rather, he chooses to occupy himself with meditations upon investigating the slippery truth between the authorised accounts and the lived experiences of ordinary people. In the art world he is known for his versatility—he's said to be a 'shapeshifter extraordinaire'.

His first solo exhibition in Australia is an eclectic collection of artworks that showcases his fluid style. 21 Grams, a monochrome animation about the decay of an industrialised European city, is probably his most notable piece. The piece refers to the notion that the human body weighs 21 grams lighter after death, once the soul has abandoned the earthly body. The video features a magician, the only 'legal liar' in the city, alluding to the notion that that the populace permits and even encourages the magician to propagate illusions and orchestrate propaganda.

Sun Xun has often been quoted saying that his work



is apolitical. He maintains he does not have an activist agenda, and he does not believe that an artist has a duty to change the present. Rather, he holds that an artist should reflect on current systems and, in doing so, provide future audiences with enduring insights into our present existence. Hardly a chanting activist, he is more interested in gaining perdurable insights into our existence than making a statement on the limitations of present-day government.

The exhibition gives you the sense that Sun has made up his mind about the fate of humanity. In a curated documentary, he meditates on the helplessness of humans, unable to 'avoid seeing today with eyes of yesterday'. This is also a theme in 21 Grams. The piece is shaped by Sun's experiences in Fuxin, where the official account of history clashes with his grandmother's recollection of the horrors of the Cultural Revolution. The magician releases mosquitoes from his hand, representing 'turning forces' that transmit lies and disease to unsuspecting populations.

Sun was profoundly influenced by the intergenerational trauma of Mao's Zedong's mass ideological purge. His contextual influences, however, are not new. Chinese artists like Sun frequently draw understanding about human behaviour from the political and

### The politically tumultuous backgrounds of artists can be over-emphasised

social upheaval of the Cultural Revolution. This is not to say Sun's influences are clichéd; but often times the politically tumultuous backgrounds of artists can be over-emphasised.

It is important for art scholarship that the media does not impose exaggerated or erroneous intentions onto an artist's work, no matter how straightforward the link may seem. To me, it seems Western critics are tempted to jump on a self-righteous bandwagon of painting China as oppressive and corrupt, a narrative that must be properly scrutinised. This is especially the case, given the US' attempts to censor war crimes in the Iraq War, a topic that artworks such as these condemn.

As ethnic art is often relegated to niche art galleries such as White Rabbit Gallery, the MCA's decision to display Sun's work is a progressive leap. However, I, amongst many others, eagerly await the day they can be represented faithfully.

Image Credit: MCA



# A Chat with Chapo Trap House

Andrew Rickert sits down with podcast hosts turned bestselling authors.

John Podhoretz, Meghan McArdle, Bari Weiss: three names which mean nothing to the average Australian, but instantly remind fans of the hilarious socialist podcast Chapo Trap House.

“We joke with ourselves about our international fans,” says Will Menaker, a host of the show, “who are laughing about John Podhoretz, even though they may not have any fucking clue what him or Commentary magazine is, they just like him as a funny character, like all the people that we make fun of.”

“I’m a little amazed at the reception we get in places like Ireland or Australia.”

Menaker, alongside fellow hosts Matt Christman and Virgil Texas, spoke to Honi about the success of their podcast and the release of their first book, *The Chapo Guide to Revolution: A Manifesto Against Logic, Facts, and Reason*.

The vein of Chapo’s political takes are familiar. The commentary on US politics and pop culture is reminiscent of something Australians were exposed

**Capitalism, and the politics it spawns, is not working for anyone under thirty who is not a sociopath. It’s not supposed to.**

to through late night shows *The Daily Show* with Jon Stewart or *The Colbert Report*. Their educational tone is like other introductions to left-wing politics, such as Helen Razer’s *Total Propaganda: Basic Marxist Brainwashing for the Angry and the Young*. But the satire of Chapo is much heavier and ironic, with Christman describing *The Daily Show* as “smug above-it-all snark” in a 2016 interview in *Paste Magazine*. It’s true—their “dirtbag” humour is more akin to that of *The Chaser’s War on Everything*, and they mockingly describe their book as “a manifesto that renders all previous attempts at political satire obsolete”.

Original hosts Menaker and Christman, as well as Felix Biederman, are now joined by Texas and Amber A’Lee Frost. Each episode is hosted by three or four of these regular hosts, with frequent special guests.

The show has been an outstanding success. Born from a guest episode of fellow podcast *Street Fight Radio*, Chapo has been accumulating a cult following since March 2016. The show releases a free, hour-long episode each week, as well as a premium weekly episode. The premium episodes, hosted on Patreon, currently have 23,700 patrons

and earn Chapo US\$105,792 or almost AUD\$150,000 per month. They are the most popular podcast on the site, and this is beside tours of the US and the newly released book, which debuted at #6 on *The New York Times* hardcover nonfiction best sellers list.

“I don’t think we’ve ever asked people to subscribe to the show, or we’ve never done advertising for the program,” Texas says. “Frankly, I don’t know why people do it, I think there’s something wrong with them, but I congratulate them on what I consider a correct decision.”

Menaker puts the show’s success down to chemistry and chance. “I just

spawns, is not working for anyone under thirty who is not a sociopath. It’s not supposed to.”

“For how long is this situation tenable? You don’t have to be the main character in the first third of a YA novel to realize we’re going to end up in a very bad place.”

“What we’re seeing is an increasing rejection of capitalist norms,” Texas elaborates. “In the past you would just get fucked everyday by various things: from your utility company, to the government, to your boss, and you wouldn’t really have a schema that fit all these data points in, but I think now,

understanding a history..without understanding the basic framework of why the events and people that have... led us to our current situation.”

Despite the title, the group are uncertain on the actual feasibility of revolution.

“[The title] was sort of a joke on our part because, we’re well aware of the idea that a podcast, or a podcast that can barely get it’s shit together to sell merchandise when we go on tour, is going to start a revolution,” Menaker admits. “But it’s hard to imagine any change to our economic or political order absent a revolution.” Texas suggests that the sequel could be “a guide to counter-revolution”.

Like a lot of podcasts, Chapo use pop culture to connect with their audience, which gives the show a personal feel. “People are always asking us, ‘How do we create socialism in America?’ or ‘How do we start a revolution?’ And I’m just like, I don’t know—we talk about what’s on TV,

**I still just fuck with the former PM who bit into a raw onion. I love his skeletal face.**

what shows you’re into, what stuff you’re watching these days.”

Turning to Australian politics, the group has diverse views. “If people want to know what party we support, it’s the Bob Katter Father’s Rights Party or whatever it’s called,” says Texas, while Christman pledges his support to the Motor Enthusiast Party.

“I still just fuck with the former PM who bit into a raw onion...Love that guy, I love his skeletal face, I like that he wore those Oakleys and had that rictus smile, and the onion biting—yeah, I like that guy,” says Menaker.

They recently devoted an episode to reviewing new a *Sons of Anarchy* spin-off TV show, *Mayans M.C.*, and Menaker jokes, “I’m going to try to smuggle *Mayans M.C.* into Australia and then get sent to that island that’s all refugees and detainees”.

Christman is more ambitious. “I’m going to go to Australia and found the *Bring Mayans M.C. to Australia Party*”.

*The Chapo Guide to Revolution: A Manifesto Against Logic, Facts, and Reason is available now.*

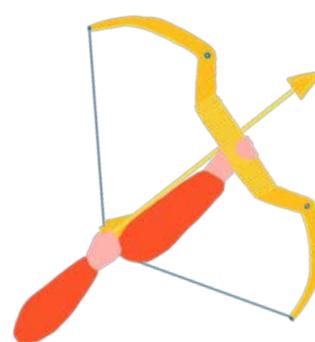


# JK Rowling: The Author who Lived

You can’t con the context out of the text, writes Jocelin Chan.

It’s become a pattern: J.K. Rowling, author of the *Harry Potter* series, just can’t stop wading back into her fictional universe. She takes to Twitter, or gives an interview to the press. Too often, the results aren’t pretty: Rowling’s interventions can prove unpopular, and alienate fans. Take her recent defence of casting decisions made by the producers of *Fantastic Beasts*, a *Harry Potter* spin-off movie: South Korean actress Claudia Kim is slated to play Nagini, Lord Voldemort’s pet snake.

Some fans have criticised this decision as racist: casting an East Asian woman in a submissive, literally dehumanised role reinforces the worst



orientalising stereotypes. Many assert that they still love *Harry Potter*, but can’t endure Rowling. They justify their stance by citing Roland Barthes’ ‘Death of the Author’, a poststructural theory which holds that authors are entirely separable from their texts. Readers are free, Barthes says, to interpret a book however they like, and disregard the intentions of the creator.

Certainly, it is useful for *Harry Potter* fans to critique characters glorified in the narrative, and try to diversify the largely-homogeneous characters. But the fans are wrong to rely on Barthes.

Understanding *Harry Potter* requires an understanding of Rowling’s original context—which means the author, and her world can’t be stripped away. It is the 1990s to early 2000s context of the original books which gives their message of acceptance and justice for othered groups lasting impact for fans who read them at the time. Indeed, Sofia Stathi’s research reveals that children who engaged with the books became more sympathetic to leftist politics. If fans stripped the implication of Hitler from Voldemort, the text would hold less meaning for our times.

When you consider that Rowling’s imaginary worlds stem from the real world, the link between text and reality—

fiction and author—becomes stronger. Her often-bigoted interpretations of our reality underpin the backstory and plots of her novels. For instance, her American history of magic appropriates Native American mythologies in a way which many Native Americans consider a misunderstanding of their cultures. Declaring Rowling’s death cannot avoid this criticism, because the textworld is so contingent on her life and her worldview.

**Her often-bigoted interpretations of our reality underpin the backstory and plots of her novels**

Barthes argues that his approach to literature is superior because we cannot know an author’s true intentions. But with Rowling’s irrepressible Tweeting, we are increasingly aware of her intentions—whether they be defending Snape or outing Dumbledore. No other author has enjoyed Rowling’s position as one of the most broadcasted voices in the world, and her constant online presence has contributed to her mythos. Twitter has granted her more power

to reinterpret and control the response to her own works. For every fan who resists her new additions to canon, there are others who latch onto her every word as gospel.

The #MeToo phenomenon has generated fresh debate about whether fans can separate problematic creators from their creations, and whether we should consume those creations regardless. Increasingly, the discussion is pragmatic rather than philosophical: even if the author is “dead” as a matter of literary theory, it’s incontestable that, in the real world, they receive attention, cultural cache and money every time you buy their work. If readers truly want Rowling to “die”, they cannot abdicate responsibility with Barthes; they should stop giving her attention—not to mention royalties.

In fact, there are many diverse fantasy authors today who receive little attention because of the hyperfixation on Rowling’s franchise, whether it be in praise or criticism. Perhaps fans who desire better representation should turn their attentions to these authors instead of clinging to a woman whom they despise.



# Tracking TV: a hobby spinoff

Alison Xiao has too many shows to watch and too little time.

I have 177 TV shows on my spreadsheet. These consist of shows I’m currently watching, have given up on, have finished, or will one day make a sad attempt to catch up on.

I also have a ‘to watch’ list, which began in 2010. It is dispersed between my laptop sticky notes and the Notes app on my phone (which has miraculously survived since Year 10). I can’t tell you how many shows are on this list. If you try to make me count it, I will cry.

I get stressed and overwhelmed by many things, but mostly by how much TV there is that I want to watch. This is only compounded by the realisation that I will probably never be able to watch all these shows before I die.

To cope with this, I track my watching. This is not a novel phenomenon—plenty of bookworms compulsively update Goodreads, while some avid music listeners are keeping last.fm barely alive. It’s the psychology of progress bars; the habit is controlling and neurotic but the visual markers of accomplishment keep you going. Progress bars are traditionally associated with unpleasant things like software updates and ticking

off textbook chapters while you’re studying. On the contrary, watching TV is supposed to be something people do to relax. But how can you possibly relax when you have a huge backlog of content waiting to be consumed.

Watching TV is a hobby, but tracking my watching is a separate sillier hobby entirely. A friend of mine compared it unfavorably to stamp collecting.

**I get stressed and overwhelmed by many things, but mostly by how much TV there is to watch**

Before my spreadsheet, which is a comprehensive list of everything I’ve watched since Year 9, I was working with Tumblr pages. They were extremely temperamental, but much prettier to look at. For the uninitiated, customising themes beyond the default ‘theme garden’ was essential for the fandom community. Many of these coders created custom ‘tracking’ pages

which could be applied to anything—movies, books, TV. They were created in a way where flicking between ‘to watch’, ‘currently watching’ and ‘finished’ was aesthetically pleasing and a good way to impress your technologically illiterate friends. The catch was that you had to add individual images manually, a process which involved googling images, cropping, uploading and copying into the code. It was time consuming as fuck.

The two tracking methods I use serve highly important purposes. The first, which I’ve described at length, is



crucial to ensuring I don’t forget what I’ve watched. Were that list to disappear, there will be no trace of my having existed on this earth.

The second list is a bit trickier: its purpose is to keep track of what is currently on air or on hiatus, what episodes are out, and what episode I’m up to. This is difficult, because you have to rely on apps and websites. I used to swear by *EpisodeCalendar*, until they introduced Premium and you couldn’t add more than 20 shows on the free version. This is not a hobby I’m willing to spend money on. Then I tried other TV trackers, but I gave up. I barely have time to watch TV let alone log on to a site everyday to tick off my episodes. I’m a failure of a neurotic. These days, I get by with a combination of *EpisodeCalendar*, and a manual sticky note of all the shows not on *EpisodeCalendar* that are still in production.

Take it from me, TV is not as easy as opening Netflix and rewatching *Gossip Girl*. It’s hard work. These are the extremes you have to go to, if you’re dedicated to watching everything, and even then, you still won’t make it.

## Stupol is a hotbed of sexism

Jessica Syed and Lara Sonnenschein examine the culture of toxic masculinity in student politics.

Both Syed and Sonnenschein are in Grassroots. Syed ran with SPICE for Honi and Sonnenschein contested the SRC presidency. They are the 2018 co-Wom\*n's and co-Education officers respectively.

Student politics has a reputation for toxic personal gripes and general acrimony. For women, this toxicity is deeply gendered.

Political contests can be heated, of course—and sometimes, in a healthy democracy, this can be positive. But instances of sexism appear to be on the rise.

Take some examples. At a party, a senior male stupol figure characterises you as a psychopath, just because you're running for the SRC presidency.

Another guy theorises that you were elected to a position because you were sleeping with your co-office bearer.

You're explaining the facts around sexual assault on campus to a student, when a male campaigner interrupts you to the point of physical intimidation, all for a vote.

You're labelled a male candidate's 'bitch' in a WeChat group conversation with over 500 students.

Another senior man in student politics hisses at you as you leave the women's toilets late at night in the Quad. You notice a man breaching electoral

regulations. You watch him quietly. He shoves you.

But, more often than not, the sexism we experience is indirect. It's being the only woman candidate sitting on stage at Hermann's for the Honi debate, sandwiched between two white men. Their banter-bro mates heckle you and dismiss your answers. It's being told that your Honi ticket is “not diverse enough”, despite the majority of it being comprised of women, and indeed, women of colour.

It's the praise heaped on your male negotiating partner, while your contributions are ignored: he is headstrong, they say, he tells it like it is—as if you don't have a similarly forthright style.

It's the gendered division of labour obvious in every campaign we've been involved in. Women do the Officeworks print runs, the trips to Bunnings, the a-frame painting. Women, for the most part, set up the stall and stay back late to make sure that campaigners are available for the next day's effort.

And it's women who usually do damage control for men's macho behaviour on the campaign trail. Their actions are viewed as funny, or heroic, but often have consequences for the campaign itself and the candidate's mental health. That candidate is usually

a woman.

Even when women hold power in stupol's institutions, the sexism continues. This year, a diverse and skilled group of women, with robust political beliefs, filled the majority of positions in the SRC. Over this period, the student union sustained unprecedented attacks from right wing populists and so-called progressives alike.

### You're labelled a male candidate's 'bitch' in a WeChat group

No administration should be exempt from criticism, of course. But it's telling that many criticisms single out women's achievements, often understating their work or holding them to unfair moral standards. Take the attacks on the Wom\*n's Officers' campaign against sexist culture at USyd's residential colleges. During this year's SRC elections, Reboot, a Labor grouping, launched criticisms against that campaign, accusing the Wom\*n's Officers of alienating college residents..

It's no coincidence that the colleges population would make an attractive voter base. So, you wonder whether these critiques are genuine, or just a

sexist ploy to delegitimise the campaign against sexual assault on campus, while grabbing some cheap votes along the way.

The sexism doesn't stop there. It's the constant internal deliberation about whether you're good enough for the job. And it's men's self-assurance, despite their lack of experience. In this year's election, Jacky He and Alex Yang postured as qualified SRC presidential candidates; yet both of them had far less involvement in the organisation than either of the two women running.

It's the artificial creation of competition between women: Honi Soit, for instance, published rumours that Lara Sonnenschein and Nina Dillon Britton were in a power struggle leading up to Grassroots' pre-selection of its presidential nominee. This power struggle was a total fiction.

We are indignant about this pool of incidents, but we are also concerned our grievances will not be taken seriously. We don't feel comfortable confronting the men who've contributed to this sexist atmosphere. Indeed, we've played out scenarios in our heads where we do, but never act on them, afraid that we'll be typecast as 'angry feminists'.

And so this article. It's an indictment on our campus culture that we have to write it at all.

## Right wing attack: When bigots silence young activists

Nina Dillon Britton exposes the strategies used by right-wing media to muffle the campus left.

Takedowns of young activists have been something of a cottage industry in the Australian right-wing press of late. Some might say that simply reposting activists' private Facebook posts isn't “newsworthy” and instead a “gross invasion of privacy.” Others might think that calling on young protestors to be subject to University investigations while supporting racist cartoonists under the guise of “free speech” is grossly hypocritical. The editors of the *Daily Telegraph*, *Australian* and *Daily Mail* would likely disagree.

### Connor Parissis received violent threats from the Australia First Party

But what is it like to be on the other end of that attack? What impact does that have on the work of activists?

One reason the press seems obsessed with bringing attention to activists is to try to reduce their emotions and work to a trope. This can function as convenient excuse for overlooking the substance of activists' arguments, depicting them instead as irrational or too extreme for mainstream discourse.

Connor Parissis, who received violent threats from the Australia First Party after being targeted by Miranda Devine, recognises he was an “easy target.” “I'm the Blonde-haired, very queer looking activist” who had been “angered by comments surrounding bestiality and paedophilia made to the queer students I was elected to represent.” Parissis says they weaponised his anger, which was “perfect for their narrative” that “marriage equality, and the queer movement are larger projects to suppress freedom of speech.” Anna Hush, of End Rape on Campus (and avowed “gender warrior” according to Andrew Bolt) has also been the victim of a similar process. She says that most right-wing media portray the organisation as “hysterical feminists making a big deal out of nothing.”

“Obviously this is not a new stereotype, and is used by members of the political elite to silence dissent and feminist activists,” Hush says. This experience has been shared by SRC Wom\*n's Officer Jessica Syed, who found herself targeted after leading recent campaigns against Bettina Arndt's “Fake Rape on Campus” tour. “Rather than engaging with the fact that Arndt's tour quite awfully purports to deny the existence of sexual assault on university campuses, right-wing media

finds it easier to invoke misogynistic and false notions of ugly feminists who have never had sex in their life who involve themselves in protest movements because their lives are unsatisfying.” So eager are they in their efforts that sometimes they lose track of their targets: in a recent video Arndt identified an unknown south Asian woman as Syed.

The angry activist isn't the only trope that conservative media rely on though. When Pranay Jha dared write about a culture of sexual assault at Sydney's private boys schools, Miranda Devine attacked him as a spiteful “bespectacled GPS debater.” “Her characterisation of my time at King's seemed to be picked out of a shitty American high-school film,” Jha says. “I think a lot of it constructed the standard stereotypical image of this quiet brown kid who was good at academics and nothing else.” Clearly, whether the stereotypes invoked are true is of little concern to conservative writers like Devine. “I was in good sport teams, in leadership positions and doing all the other bullshit you get celebrated for in private schools. The image of me as someone who was successful at King's

for novelty value for their right wing audience, who loved to hate a young socialist woman.” But for her, that was an opportunity: “They weren't expecting that I'd be able to answer their questions and confidently refute their redbaiting. It was worth doing the interviews I did, to try boost the profile of an anti-racist, anti-sexist and socialist perspective, something often silenced in the mainstream.”

But even when one is careful with what they say it can be difficult to guess how conservative media will run the story. I provided comment on the USU's Debating Society's affirmative action policies to the Australian assuming it would be appearing deep in the paper's Education section. Instead, it was a cover story for which I received a number of rape threats and talk-back radio requests for comment.

Often it's not the attacks from the media that impact activists, but the reactionary vigilantes they inspire afterwards. Hush reports that “there have been some pretty horrific comments on videos of me, and I've received lots of abusive messages in the past”. She knows many other

Parissis says his personal details were posted on the far-right Australia First Party's website. Parissis reports that that the attacks in conservative media incited death threats, threats of bashing and sexual assault and “homophobic abuse unlike what I'd heard before”. This experience was “genuinely traumatising”, and the fact that Parissis has taken a year off from other official activist roles since is ironic given his attackers claimed to be defending free speech against intolerance.

### The threat of that backlash impacts activists

Attacks based on reductive images of activists reveal the right-wing media's reluctance to genuinely engage with their arguments. Such attacks come with long-running threats to their safety and wellbeing, but it's not enough to stop their work. “I was able to overcome much of the events that

## Foul play: #MeToo hits football's biggest star

Romaan Dulloo investigates the sexual assault allegations against Cristiano Ronaldo.

On September 28, German newspaper *Der Spiegel* published explosive allegations of sexual assault against Cristiano Ronaldo.

In 2009, Ronaldo—perhaps soccer's biggest superstar—was caught up in an incident at a Las Vegas nightclub. *Spiegel* spent a year investigating, and finally made contact with teacher Kathryn Mayorga. In 2009, Mayorga was an emerging model, 25 years old, who worked for Las Vegas nightclubs. She claims Ronaldo raped her.

Many Ronaldo fans have questioned why Mayorga is only coming forward now. The answer is clear: in 2010, Mayorga signed a non-disclosure agreement, part of a \$375,000 out-of-court settlement she reached with Ronaldo. But it is important to note that she went to the police immediately after the alleged assault.

Out of these official proceedings, documents have turned up which seem to damn Ronaldo. In a questionnaire prepared by his legal team at the time, Ronaldo states that, during their sexual encounter, Mayorga “said no

and stop several times”. This statement disappeared from later versions of the questionnaire and Ronaldo now claims the sex was consensual. But at face value it reads as a clear admission of guilt.

And now, Mayorga is ready to seek justice. Her lawyers are questioning the validity of the agreement and Las Vegas Police have re-opened the investigation.

\*\*\*  
In the #MeToo world, rape allegations spread like wildfire. But when it came to Ronaldo the reaction was muted.

It took two days after the initial article for outlets like the BBC to report on the case, and even then, only to platform Ronaldo's denials.

It took days more for soccer sponsors to comment on the allegations. Juventus, Ronaldo's club, defended him on twitter last Friday, a week after the first article.

Part of it might come down to Ronaldo's sheer popularity: recently, ESPN named him the most famous athlete in the world, with over 120 million followers on social media and \$40 million in endorsements. It's impossible

to escape him if you're a football fan. He's on the cover of FIFA 19 and every time he scores a goal it's plastered all over the papers. He's popular—and he's valuable. Soccer, FIFA and clubs all have financial interest in preserving his reputation.

\*\*\*  
Mayorga says the #MeToo movement gave her the courage to come forward. But this is #MeToo's first big test in the sporting world, and so far the results are disheartening. On social media, droves of fans have come out in Ronaldo's support.

#MeToo, after all, was born in Hollywood and the corridors of US politics. These are areas where patriarchal power structures abound—but still less so than in sports. Female athletes have tiny public profiles and most sports' biggest stars are men. Masculinity here is at its most toxic: certain stars, like Ronaldo, become heroes and sex icons. It's easy to see how stars could develop a sense of entitlement and impunity, and how fans could excuse it.

With the Ronaldo case, #MeToo has also been taken outside its original cultural context: soccer is a global game, and audiences across the world, who may not have encountered #MeToo before, will now have to grapple with the allegations against Ronaldo. Many, particularly from societies where patriarchal oppression remains strong, may struggle to condemn a godlike figure.

\*\*\*  
“What they say today... fake, fake news!”

Ronaldo's response to the allegations against him echoes the words of US President Donald Trump, striking an uneasy link between the two. Trump, famously, has never been held accountable for his sexual misconduct and gross objectification of women. #MeToo clearly does not always work. With Mayorga's allegations against Ronaldo, it's clear the sporting world has a choice: whether it will apply #MeToo's standards to the world's most famous athlete, or allow him to escape with impunity.

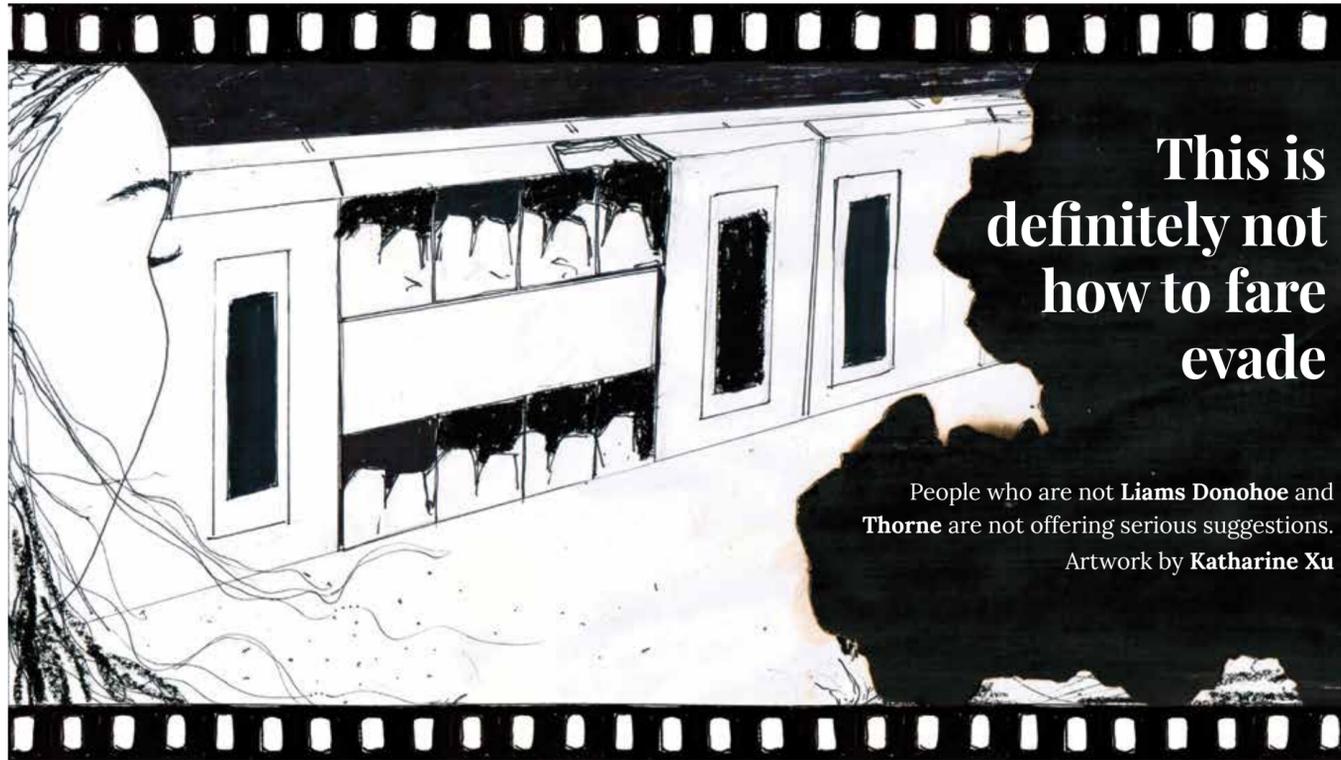


wouldn't have fit in with the traditional conception of what brown kids are like in high school or with her explanation for why I wrote the article.”

Other activists willingly choose to engage with right-wing media. Lily Campbell, the SRC's Education Officer, appeared on Sky News's “The Outsiders” to speak about socialism. “I think SkyNews was mostly using me

feminist activists who have “received far worse”. The ongoing threat of that backlash continues to impact activists. “I don't think I will disengage with social movements involving protests as a result of the coverage,” Syed says, “but it's scary knowing you've become a target. You never know what kind of reactionary neo-con will show up to a rally to punch on. I do feel more unsafe.”

# State of Non-Compliance



This is definitely not how to fare evade

People who are not Liams Donohoe and Thorne are not offering serious suggestions.  
Artwork by Katharine Xu

Public transport should be free. The NSW government could get rid of fares with a mere 20 per cent increase to its current transport outlay. Even then they would still have had a \$3 billion budget surplus on 2018's figures.

But until fares are abolished, we have to take things into our own hands. That's right, public transport can be free—if you want it. Enter fare evasion. You're not going to harm the state's bottom line if you don't buy a ticket: the government estimates it loses \$80 million each year to fare evasion, which is a fraction of the \$1.2 billion it made from passenger services this year. That \$80 million loss in revenue isn't going to reduce the quality of transport either: the government already funds public transport to the tune of about \$5 billion per year.

So how's the game played?

## 1. Gates & mates

Let's begin with trains, arguably the easiest mode to subvert. Some train stations in the suburbs have pissweak ticket verification systems, and if there aren't gates, you can just walk out.

But sadly most train trips involve gates at some point. Sometimes you can jump over the weird, red triangled thing, but with NSW rolling out body sized gates this classic method is becoming obsolete.

Failing this, those among you with friends might find it exhilarating to rush in through behind them before the fly trap ensnares you. But it's its positively exhilarating to do so behind a total stranger.

But, if none of these options will do, most stations have some way around the gates. At Wynyard, for instance, there's a sneaky glass pane next to the gate near the big fuckoff York St escalators. Being less than a metre off the ground, people might be able to jump over it. Failing that, with enough force one can bust through the gap between the plastic pads, or, for those with a more deft touch, scale the gate.

## 2. Transport officers and coppers

The natural enemy in all of this are public transit staff. Most don't give a fuck—it's the Transport Officers (TOs) you have to watch out for.

Transport Officers are authorised under the Passenger Transport (General) Regulation to determine if riders have valid tickets, and may issue fines to punish offenders. They can approach commuters if they're in the vehicle, a station's restricted area, or if they've recently left either. They can also compel you to provide your name and identification. Importantly, though, Transport Officers only have the same powers of arrest as any other citizen—that is, they have to be certain you are

committing a crime or have just committed a crime before they can detain you. They're also not explicitly allowed to use force, so even if you are caught, if you run away it's possible they won't give chase.

Best make sure they actually are TOs though. In the past few years the police have begun to assume more responsibility for enforcing fares. That means they can arrest you if they have reasonable suspicion you've committed a crime and can compel you to give identification and your name. Most importantly, you can't run from these guys without committing a serious offense, so be careful!

To avoid TOs and transport police, join one of the many private Facebook groups that provide regular updates on their whereabouts. Sdfoidsindsf is a good one. Also if you're on a train, you can normally see TOs as you draw up to the platform, and unless they walk onto your carriage it's normally possible to avoid them before the next stop by moving through carriages. Finally, if they're loitering outside the gate at your destination, wait it out in the toilets until they've moved on.

## 3. Bus fuss

Evading fares on buses can be a tall order, since drivers often deny access to free riders. The best approach is to ask the driver for the relevant fare, before presenting a note they're unlikely to have change for (a \$20 may do, but a \$50 should guarantee it). They may well let you on for free.

Another strategy is to get a friend to ask the driver where the bus stops and then slip in unnoticed during the ensuing exchange.

Or you could just walk on. You could even mime tapping your Opal, letting out a falsetto bing as you do so. But for those out there who fancy themselves wordsmiths there is another way: attempting to persuade the driver to just let you on because a) you really need to get there (the empathy approach), b) you didn't mean for this to happen and you normally pay (the law-abiding citizen defence), or c) that they don't get paid more for giving a shit and in fact increase their rate of exploitation by devoting their labour energy towards increasing their employer's revenue without proportional compensation (the Marxian attack).

I have nothing useful to say to those who catch the ferry: you you could always jump off the ferry and swim ashore. But, given you live by the harbour, I suspect you can just cop the fare.

No one should feel guilty about evading fares, especially those among us who have no other option. In fact, as you use the methods disclosed herein hopefully a different feeling takes hold: the feeling of defiant stingery.

# Somewhere only we know: The Treehouse, LA

Life moves like a film reel in tinsel town, writes **Lena Wang**.

The Sheats apartments in Westwood, Los Angeles, known as the Treehouse to UCLA students, is not a romantic place. It might have been back in 1949, when it was first built and before it was transformed into student housing. As the name suggests, the apartments are surrounded by trees. Its eight units are bright yellow, with futuristic curved windows, like a fallen SS Enterprise peeking through the foliage. Jim Morrison, lead singer of the Doors, is rumoured to have lived here.

Like many students, though, my introduction to the Treehouse was at a raging frat party. It has hosted so many, its hardwood floors lacquered with layers of booze, tears and other miscellaneous fluids. The plaster is cracked from dancing, the tiles bordered in grout. And this has sapped all romance from the Treehouse.

## Treehouse has the utopian domesticity of an Ikea catalogue

When I was on exchange, a few friends and I sublet one of these units for a month. Its usual tenants had gone home for the summer, and we inherited scorched earth. On move in day, there were wood chips in the corner—the remains of a broken piano. A bottle of ketchup, one year past its expiration date, lurked menacingly in the corner of the fridge. And there was a bong the size of a small child on the balcony. We spent hours vacuuming all surfaces, disinfecting and scrubbing, before collapsing in a cloud of isopropyl alcohol on the couch (we learnt not to look under the cushions). We ate dinner and watched the sunset spill through the LA smog.

Treehouse became our bohemian refuge, packed with cameras, Gibsons and empty cheetos packets (flamin' hot flavour)—a haven after our lazy, pretentious exploits in Venice Beach or Melrose. We spent days lounging around playing music and card games, reading and watching movies, talking and falling asleep on the couch, before abruptly waking up to the strains of a Rick and Morty theme remixed by the DJ upstairs.

Like Treehouse, LA has a boozy, tumultuous history, and it's hard to describe a summer there without waxing clichéd about the lights through the haze and the celebrity worship. After all, movies, its main export, invented clichés. I listened to the La La Land soundtrack in Griffith observatory, waiting for a meet-cute. My housemate took us on a walking tour of the Sunset Strip, passing the Viper Room and Tower Records, the Roxy and the Rainbow and the Whiskey A Go-Go. LA attracts a weird assortment of characters, some of whom found their way back to Treehouse. We hosted Sparky, who grew his own organic pot (peach flavour) and advised us, in conspiratorial whispers, to grow our hair out so that it could turn into antennae that would shield us from government interference.

I had to leave after a month; my visa was expiring and exchange was over. As befits Hollywood, I sobbed dramatically on my way to the airport—roll credits.

But after, as my friends later told me, Treehouse slipped from paradise to perdition. One housemate had started dating a girl he now describes as having "dark energy", and the apartment was overrun by a slew of people less benign than Sparky. My other housemates escaped the situation by heading back home, but forgot they had left food out on the kitchen counter; this eventually developed into a sizeable maggot colony. The apartment fell into disrepair far worse than it had endured through all of its previous frat keggers; when the original tenants returned, my scattered housemates had to pay a significant sum in damages. We did not get our deposit back.

The apartment has now recovered—the original tenants have moved back in, the bong restored to its rightful position on the balcony. Treehouse is once again a venue for underage drunken revelry. My housemates have been blacklisted from further leasing its units. But I'd doubt they'd want to stay there again.

The peak-end rule describes a psychological bias in which people recollect an experience based largely on how they felt at its peak and at its end. For my housemates, these both occurred during the "dark energy" phase of Treehouse. When I ask them about their summer, they explain how terrible and bewildering that time was, and how glad they are it's over. But, to me, Treehouse will always be a really fucking happy memory—it has the utopian domesticity of an Ikea catalogue. This version of the Treehouse remains untainted, romanticised and rose-tinted—a happy ending, if only in my mind.



## Deep Tea Diving



### WoCo Autonomy

Panda and the Libs are woke, haven't you heard? Clearly they want to prove their woke credentials, and they'll take all the activist SRC office bearer roles to do it. Even if that means seizing the Wom\*n's Officer role in violation of Wom\*n's Collective autonomy. 'Cos that is woke.

That's right: this is the latest out of Lib/Panda land. As we've reported, the Libs, who contested this year's SRC elections as Shake Up, are set to form a coalition with Panda ahead of Repselect. Together, Panda and the Libs

will control a majority of councillors, meaning they may be able to elect candidates of their choice to important (often paid) positions.

Some of these positions are considered 'autonomous'; these tend to be office bearers associated with a particular collective, like Queer Collective or the Autonomous Collective Against Racism. By tradition, the collectives preselect a nominee for the office bearer role they are associated with, and then propose that nominee to the full council at Repselect; Repselect historically has respected the collective's autonomy and chosen the

pre-selected candidate. There have, however, been notable exceptions: in 2015, SLS's Michelle Picone was elected environmental officer, breaching the autonomy of the Enviro Collective.

This year, word is Libs/Panda will be nominating candidates of their own choice for Wom\*n's Officer—candidates who haven't been preselected by WoCo. The names on everyone's lips are Gabi Stricker-Phelps (an independent who ran with Shake Up) and Crystal (Zhifan) Xu (who ran with Panda). Neither of the pair is part of WoCo, and the collective is said to be mightily enraged with the attempts to violate its autonomy (see page 2).

### Winner Winner Chicken Dinner

The USU held its annual Glitter Gala last Friday, giving hacks, student journalists and USU staff an opportunity to glam up and rub shoulders, all while celebrating the queer community on campus. But it seems Board directors Jacob Masina and Lachlan Finch were left out in the cold by whoever

organised the seating arrangements. While all the other Board directors were seated on the same table, the two Mod Libs were allocated spots at the other end of the hall. Clearly, this was meant to be noticed: whoever did the allocation opted to seat Masina and Finch together with the Honi editors in attendance. One such editor, Liam Donohoe, a member of Grassroots, upped sticks without touching his starter, spending the night at another table.

But Lachlan Finch's dinner plans don't always go this poorly. A few days after the SRC election, he and Unity's Connor Wherrett were invited to a Panda dinner celebrating the group's election victory. So where do you go if you're planning a dinner excursion for you and 37 of your friends? It seems like Panda had a craving for Korean BBQ, opting for Seoul Ria restaurant near World Square. At the last council meeting, we invited president-elect and Panda member Jacky He to turn this section into a restaurant review for Seoul Ria. To no avail. Maybe SPICE will have more luck getting He to write a weekly food column.



# President

Imogen Grant

At the 2 October meeting of Academic Board the Provost Stephen Garton presented the memorandum of understanding the University will be presenting to the Ramsay Centre. They are still in negotiations with a view to form a partnership and establish a Bachelor of Western Civilisation at the University of Sydney.

The Ramsay proposal has been met with intense opposition from both students and academics within the Faculty of Arts. The debate from students was particularly critical. Students made the case that we are introducing stratification in public education and within FASS. Handpicked students interested in studying the 'West' would be granted generous scholarships and offered educational opportunities - personalised tutorial-format instruction in small classes - entirely out of reach of those interested in indigenous Australia and Arab studies for example.

It is a kick in the face to those students and staff in faculties where units are being shut down for having small cohorts due to not enough student demand - but Ramsay can buy its way into being the exception. At a collective level it gives the false impression that studies of Western Civilisation are disadvantaged and those students should

be afforded exceptional learning conditions out of reach to the rest of the students in the faculty.

And while academics are trying to make great strides in emphasising diversity, appreciating different knowledge systems, the introduction of this Centre would be a retrograde step. Moreover, treating the West as an unproblematised category and introducing the Centre will also inevitably create the most drawn out academic dispute of recent decades - in size with the splits in the Philosophy and Economics departments. Collaborating with the chauvinistic Western essentialism that the Ramsay Centre programme embodies would be a violation of our crucial role in promoting a society of diversity, inclusiveness, and mutual respect.

Academics came out in full throttle as well. The final questioner posited that the University's processes are being "corrupted by finance". She asked whether there was a clear rationale for a specific emphasis on Western Civilisation outside of the already existing courses in the classics, history, philosophy and so on. Anti-Ramsay FASS academics have made clear a positive vision for education in the 21st Century and why the Centre's proposal creates a risk to this intellectual progress. Vice-Chancellor Michael Spence was unable to answer this

question and make a case for whether there was demand for a Bachelor of Western Civilisation before the Ramsay Centre came along with millions of dollars to purchase the course.

Finally, over the weekend over 50 USYD fundraising staff were fired with one days notice. A statement from the former call centre workers states that "the call centre was closed suddenly on Saturday 6 October and our employment terminated. We were notified of this decision at 3:40 pm on Friday 5 October, less than 24 hours before our final shift. To add insult to injury, the decision was conveyed to us not face-to-face or over the phone but via email".

The closure comes after a series of disputes over pay and work conditions between the centre and the employees. Fundraising staff are paid 25 percent less than other University employees as the staff are contracted out to a third party, Ruffalo Noel Levitz, rather than the University. On top of that, advertisements list the pay \$30.58 and \$36.70, however, employers were only paid between \$26.14 and \$31.37. When the pay discrepancy was raised, the managers assured workers that they would receive back-pay. Later the Director of Operations recanted management's assurances and informed workers they would not be back-

paid. Honi Soit also reported of another worker who claimed that they had been promised a \$100 gift card, for receiving the most donations in one night, however the card was only loaded with \$40.

"Many of us have been put into extremely difficult financial situations, as we have been given no time at all to find alternate sources of income. This is particularly the case for international students who worked in the centre, students who already pay so much money to the University of Sydney and have greatly restricted work rights because of their visa requirements" says the statement from the former fundraising workers. These workers have been severely exploited by Ruffalo Noel Levitz and the University of Sydney and deserve answers about the closure of the centre and to be reinstated as in-house call centre employees.

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.

## Verge ARTS FESTIVAL

Andrew Rickert directed Verge in 2014 and needs to get over it

Verge Arts Festival is the University of Sydney Union's (USU) biggest standalone event of the year, outside of OWeek. It's a festival designed to show off the best of USyd but also transform the campus for a week, showing off what the USU can do and livening up a quiet time of the year.

We've reviewed the Verge program and found the events we think you should check out this week. See the full program at [usu.edu.au/vergefestival](http://usu.edu.au/vergefestival)

### COMEDY NIGHT WEDS 5-10 PM

"Okay, a comedy night" you think. Wrong. This is two comedy nights rolled into one. It starts off with the Verge Comedy showcase, with the best student comedians at USyd, before moving into Small Trumpet's "Biggest Comedy Night Ever", headlined by none other than Rove McManus.



### CARNIVAL DAY THURS 11-3PM

Everyone loves a carnival - and this year's Verge Arts Festival is really leaning into the idea. An Ikea installation will be in front of the Quad each day, but on Thursday it will be joined by a carousel, as well as dunk tank and gladiator battle. You'll be sure to see your humble eds there determining who gets to keep our projector at the end of the year.



### BREAKFAST BAR FRI 8-10.30 AM

End the week with the free breakfast with a view! What's better than free food?

(Not much)








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Available to USyd undergraduate students through the Students' Representative Council (SRC)

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

**法律諮詢**  
法律アドバイス

We have a solicitor who speaks Cantonese, Mandarin & Japanese




## Are you struggling to pay your bills?



If you've missed credit card or other loan repayments, or have unpaid bills that you think another loan might help with, there may be another solution. Consider what you need the loan for and if there are better alternatives.

**TALK TO THE PEOPLE YOU OWE MONEY TO**  
 If you have a debt with your electricity company, phone provider, or bank, contact them and tell them that you're currently experiencing financial hardship. They should put you through to a hardship team to renegotiate your repayments. This may include giving you more time to pay, reducing the repayments for a period of time or other options.

**INTEREST FREE LOAN**  
 You might qualify for an interest free loan from the University. Contact Financial Assistance Office to ask for details. Similarly, some community organisations offer interest free loans for essentials, such as replacing white goods like your fridge or washing machine, if you meet certain criteria. You will still have to repay this money, but no interest is charged, meaning you only pay back the amount you were loaned. The University's Financial Assistance Office also offers bursaries (money you don't have to repay) to current students. Ask them for details.

**CENTRELINK PAYMENT ADVANCE**  
 If you're on a Centrelink payment you may also be able to apply for an 'advance payment'. You could also consider setting up Centrepay, which is a free voluntary bill paying service available to Centrelink customers. With Centrepay you can nominate an amount to be deducted automatically from your fortnightly payment, which is automatically sent to your biller. This means you're paying your bills in advance as you go so you don't have to pay a lump sum when the bill comes through at the end of the billing period. This could spare you any 'bill shock' and give you more control of your spending.

**PREPAY BILLS**  
 Have a look at your bills (electricity, water, gas, phone) and work out the average cost per fortnight. If you're not receiving a Centrelink payment, check out whether you can make periodic payments in advance, or consider putting money aside (either into another account or put some cash aside) to reduce the impact of your bill at the end of the billing period. Even \$10 a fortnight can take the sting out of your bill when it arrives.

Check out [www.moneysmart.gov.au/managing-your-money](http://www.moneysmart.gov.au/managing-your-money). This website has some really practical budgeting advice and tools.

## Ask Abe



SRC caseworker HELP Q&A

### TENANCY: Being on the Lease

Dear Abe,  
 I am moving into a share house next week, and they have asked if I want to be put on the lease. What's the difference?

If you do not go on the lease or have a written contract, you are not protected by any laws. Your housemates can kick you out whenever they want.

Moving  
 Dear Moving,  
 Being on the lease means that you have the rights and responsibilities given through the Residential Tenancy Act. If you have a written contract from the head tenant (someone on the lease already), you do not have to go on the original lease, but you will be considered the sub-tenant. The head tenant in this circumstance then becomes your landlord. The Residential Tenancy Act will still apply to you.

Remember that being on the lease means that you are financially liable (as an individual and as part of a group) for any expenses or damage to the home. If you are a sub-tenant you are only liable for your own expenses or damage.

Also, if as a sub-tenant you agree to pay a bond, the head-tenant must give you a receipt, and deposit the money with Fair Trading within 10 working days. The maximum bond that a sub-tenant can be asked to pay is an amount equal to 4 weeks rent.

Abe

# HONI Kids

## FINISH THE SENTENCE

These sentences have been split in half and jumbled up. Try and re-connect them all so they make sense!

- |   |                                     |
|---|-------------------------------------|
| Before I go to bed I have to            | curl up in a ball until it is safe. |
| I'm sad because I don't want to         | grow hair in weird places.          |
| My dad said when I hit "puberty" I will | go to Grandma's funeral.            |
| The best way to deal with bullies is    | brush my teeth and wash my face.    |

## SPOT THE DIFFERENCE

Mary, Mazie and Miffy are having a tea party in the garden. There are FOUR differences between the two photos below. Can you spot them all?



**A**



**B**

Answers: 1. The flowers on top of the cake are gone, 2. The bottom of the cake has changed colour, 3. Mary's hat is blue not pink, 4. The bowl now has two spoons in it

# "U Fix USyd" DRAWING COMPETITION

Last week, we asked you to send in drawings of the ways you think the University of Sydney could be improved. Here are four of our favourites!



**Jess, 6**

"I wish there was a robot class so that Tony Stark could teach me how to make my own Iron man suit"



**Sam, 4**

"They should give everyone a friend for every lecture so you never have to go to a lecture without a friend"



**Tamara, 7**

"We need to burn down the colleges. The culture of bullying, misogyny and sexual assault will never be dismantled from within, and we can no longer wait for the University to take action. Take up arms, this is something we must do ourselves."



**Jack, 3**

"My dad's car."



## **'No More Harm': National Day of Action to End Offshore Detention, Wednesday 17 October 2018**

Join staff and students at 1pm outside Fisher Library on Wednesday 17 October to call on the Morrison government to end offshore detention. Similar events will be taking place on campuses across the country.

Vivian Honan, a staff member and post-graduate student organising the event at Sydney University, stated, "The refugees on Manus and Nauru should be in our communities, in our schools and universities.

Instead they are being left to languish offshore with no future. This cruelty must end.

We will continue to campaign for the refugees on Manus and Nauru to be brought here to safety."

For more information about the Sydney University action or the Campus Refugee Action Collective, contact Vivian Honan: 0403850794 or [vhon6830@gmail.com](mailto:vhon6830@gmail.com)

