

# Honi Soit

Week 5, Semester 2, 2020 / First printed 1929



SRC and Honi elections  
coverage / p. 6

Resisting the activist-  
industrial complex / p. 12

Where did LGs and LBs  
come from? / p. 16

Adam G.



# Acknowledgement of Country



*Honi Soit* is published on the stolen land of the Gadigal People of the Eora Nation. For over 230 years, First Nations people in this country have suffered from the destructive effects of invasion. The editors of this paper recognise that, as a team of settlers occupying the lands of the Bidjigal, Darug, Gadigal, Wangal and Wallumedegal people, we are beneficiaries of these reverberations that followed European settlement. As we strive throughout the year to offer a platform to the voices mainstream media ignores, we cannot meet this goal without providing a space for First Nations people to share their experiences and perspectives. A student paper which does not acknowledge historical and ongoing colonisation and the white supremacy embedded within Australian society can never adequately represent the students of the institution in which it operates. We seek to resist colonial violence and the racist power structures that serve to oppress those who are Indigenous to this land. Sovereignty was never ceded. Always was and always will be Aboriginal land.

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## Editorial

Many readers will hate this week's edition. It takes aim at Labor-favourite Daniel Andrews (p.9-10), the "activist-industrial" complex (p.12), kinks (p.2) and one particularly-out-of-touch Oxbridge student (p.19). Readers may not share the sociological interest we have in some of our readers' increasingly unhinged letters (p.3), or appreciate our endorsement of several SRC tickets (p.23).

Some may disagree with our criticisms of this year's crop of election candidates (p.6-8). Others will not enjoy our tasteful tribute to the late-Ruth Bader Ginsburg (posted to our Facebook page on 21 September). Readers might realise that none of the news is even real, we made it all up. We just photoshopped police repression under Pinochet's Chile onto campus situations, which at the time felt poignant but now we acknowledge is just plain silly (p. 5). The news piece about continuing voluntary redundancies as the University sees an increase in student fee revenue is obviously satirical (p.4) — but at a level of absurdity that completely undermines its effect. We know that SAIt will disapprove of developments in our Harry Styles fanfic saga (p. 3). There is also, we now realise, no solution to the Word Path puzzle (p.22).

This was leading up to a big "but" to justify this, but now having written this I'm not quite sure what we were

thinking. We were pretty tired last night, and to be honest, we forgot we had an edition this week and wrote everything at 2am under different pseudonyms (I mean what sort of name is "Georgia Mantle"). Now, in the cold light of day we're confused, bewildered and a little afraid.

I had planned to offer my thanks to my fellow editors, and begin to reminisce about our slowly ending term. Maybe I would have mentioned that I'm already beginning to miss Chuyi's obscure music references, Lara saying "spiralling" so frequently it's nonsensical, Maddy's fake references to Townsville (she's never lived there and we know she knows we know that), Ranuka's alcoholism, Angad's insistence we refer to him as "gumnah", Robbie's pet abuse, Matt's far-right turn, Iris' disappearance in late-March and Murphy's increasingly violent threats to the SRC President when he submits his reports late. But now I realise those are all very negative characteristics, and I am deeply concerned to share an office with these freaks.

So I can only offer our humble apologies, dear reader. Perhaps it's best if you quickly recycle and / or compost this edition. I'm really not quite sure what happened, but I'm very very sorry for it.

Yours, in deepest regret,  
**Nina Dillon Britton.**

## Letters

### An email complaining about the RO

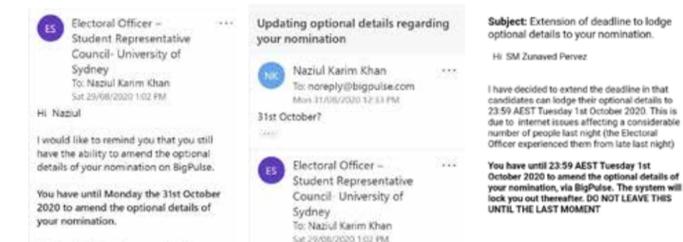
Dear Editors,

Attached are some of the misleading and incorrect official emails sent by the Electoral Officer of SRC election 2020 without any apology or 'follow up correction email' whatsoever later. But, instead of taking responsibility for his own actions, he didn't accept the optional details and policy statement of our ticket candidate who was misled by his official emails that mentioned of deadlines like '31st October, 1st October'

Can you please clarify why Equality - End Bias ticket's Zunayed Pervez's optional details and policy statement were not published on current *Honi Soit* print edition? If it was because of the mistakes or inaction of the Electoral Officer, should *Honi Soit* as students' newspaper not hold the Electoral Officer accountable?

I am looking forward to hearing from you.

Regards,  
Naziul Khan



### We, the current editors of *Honi Soit*, are now 9/11 truthers

**Nudes, declarations of affection and hate mail may be sent to: editors@honisoit.com**



### Another email complaining about the RO

Dear Madeline,

As you can see in the attached, I have emailed him all the details by 2.08 am, 3/9/2020 following my email on the 2nd. There was a 12days gap between him getting the details and publishing on *Honi Soit*.

Also, I have a reasonable doubt that he's put our candidates through unnecessary harassment over the last week for their proof of student validity. I seriously question his impartiality, and as clear in the attachments of the previous email, needless to comment on his competence as an EO.

Regards,  
Naziul Khan

### This dude is really unpopular

Dear Madeline,

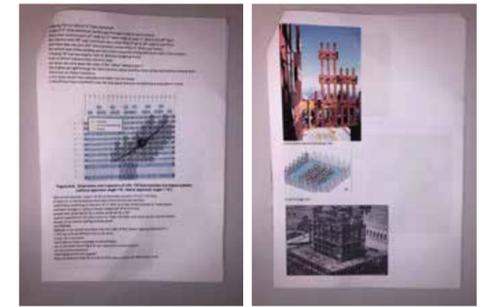
Continuing from last email.

As you can see from the screenshot he hasn't sent an apology or 'follow up correction email' that he meant it to be '1st September' instead of '1st October'. He even sent an email stating '31st October' instead of '31st August' - that too without any follow up to this date. I don't think anyone would disagree that this sort of unprofessionalism is unacceptable by any standard.

I am looking forward to hearing from you and seeking support from the student newspaper through reporting or may be, intervention for fairness to prevail in this regard.

Kind Regards,  
Naziul Khan

The information we were posted this week **changed our lives**. If anyone else would like to see this important information, please come to our office **immediately** and we'll make you a copy.



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## CANCELLED CORNER

*Georgia Mantle goes straight to goal, does not pass go, does not collect \$200.*



As I laid tied up on my bed with cum in my eyes and my underwear stuffed in my mouth I couldn't help but wonder, was this really what I wanted or had I completely internalised the desires of men to such an extent that I began to think of them as my own?

For a generation of young, horny feminists coming of age, the idea that consensual sex could be oppressive would seem a contradiction in terms. The sexy, sex positive feminism of Sex and the City (have I said sex enough yet?) told us that actually sex was not oppressive, but healthy, pleasurable and an essential part of women's lib. Elevating notions of consent, kinksters would have you believe that women can freely consent to our own degradation. No doubt we have "consented" to some pretty wacky things in the bedroom, but the idea that this was given freely and not informed by patriarchal values and the porn industry is ridiculous.

"Choice" feminism poses the radical argument that anything can become feminist by a woman choosing to do it, including being spat on, gagged, bruised, tied up and — sorry I'll stop, lest I turn the men reading this on. The idea that a woman has freedom to choose how she engages in sex with men overlooks the crucial feminist insight that women are subjugated in all facets of their lives. Sorry pervs: a woman's choice to be beaten up for the sake of sexual pleasure isn't liberating, but a dangerous internalisation of male fantasy and female subordination. Women have come to willingly participate in our own objectification falsely believing that it is a form of empowerment.

Criticisms of kink and sex positivity are often met with "Don't kink shame", "It's my choice", "Stop peeping Georgia", arguing that what other people do in their bedroom is

none of your business. Of course I am not going to come into your bedroom and stop your ass from being slapped by your boyfriend. Rather, I am going to passively-aggressively write an article in *Honi* where I suggest that you reflect on your own agency and reject the infiltration of these ideas in your sexual identity, you #girlboss. This is not about denying women pleasure or moralistically criticising sex, it's about being understanding how pleasure to be formed and influenced by the world we live in.

At the end of the day I'm not telling you what to do, no doubt the next time I fuck a man I will happily accept a little bit of choking and slapping (all in good fun!), but I'm not going to pretend it isn't completely contradictory to my feminist politics or defend it as anything more than complete and utter depravity. And neither, frankly babe, should you.

## FANFIC: Harry Styles defects to Solidarity

I'm in the SRC Bathrooms, curling my long, brown hair into perfect ringlets. As I brush out my curls into loose waves, I stare into the mirror and think of the last few months.

After Harry's devastating loss to Melinda in the USU elections, I left my friends in SASS behind and joined the Women's Collective. Harry and I have been seeing each other in secret, because he doesn't want to be seen fraternizing with petit bourgeois grassroots scum. At first I was hurt by this, but I've slowly begun to see Harry's point of view.

As I leave the SRC through the back entrance, I run into my friend Patience Walden-White. Patience is on the USU board with my ex-bff Melinda.

"Hey [y/n]! What are you up to?" I pause, trying to think of an excuse. "Hey Patience! I'm just going to study at the Library."

"Cool! I'll come with you. You can help me fill out these nomination forms!"

We walk to Fisher Library, and I'm panicking. What do I tell Harry? I send

him a quick text as Patience explains why all our friends in Grassroots are joining SASS.

Hey Harry. Stuck with Patience at Fisher. Sry!

I tune back into Patience's chatter as we enter Fisher.

".....anyway so if you could come to the next SASS party and then the AGM you'll be eligible to vote for Allie Spencerton for president."

I smile and nod as we make our way to a table on Level 7. It's getting late, so no-one else is around. Patience starts filling out her forms, and I check my phone, nervous for Harry's reply.

Hey [y/n]. I'm at a meeting for Keep Left. Meet me after?

I leave the library at 10pm and walk to Camperdown park, where Harry is waiting. I run into his broad arms, longing to feel them wrapped around me. We briefly embrace, and he steps back.

"[y/n], I have to tell you something" "What is it Harry?"

"I've left the Socialist Alternative." "...What?" "I'm joining Solidarity...."

"Who?" "...and I'm running for SRC President."

I step back in shock. Leaving the Socialist Alternative? Joining Solidarity? Running for SRC President? It's all too much for me, and I turn away from Harry and run from the park.

The next day, I wake up to a barrage of texts from Harry.

I'm sorry [y/n]. I had 2 do it. In hr of Trotsky. Solidarity r the vanguard. Pls call me when u get this. Need 2 talk 2 u.

This is the way we can b 2gether. The last text cracks my icy facade, and I call Harry with shaking hands.

He immediately answers. "I'm so glad you called [y/n]. I really wanted to hear your voice."

"Me too Harry. I am so happy we can finally be together."

"Yes [y/n] ... I just need one thing before that can happen. I need Grassroots to support me for President."

I hang up the phone.



# NTEU votes against voluntary redundancies

Nina Dillon Britton reports.

In a NTEU branch meeting of more than 340 Sydney University members last Thursday, staff voted unanimously in favour of a motion to oppose voluntary redundancies, and abandon all plans to cut jobs.

The motion also included commitments to build a university-wide meeting to discuss alternatives to cuts in addressing revenue shortfalls; establish a solidarity fund to assist members who have already lost income due to management cuts; and support the national NTEU campaign for Fair Funding to Universities.

“Really what we’re seeing here is a deepening in what has been happening to our sector for years, in terms of both the government and management’s response,” branch president Kurt Iveson told the meeting.

“We’re effectively saying in this motion that we won’t let more redundancies, insecure work and

increased workloads be deepened in response to this crisis.”

The motion notes that modelling made available by management shows that the University’s revenues have fared much better during the pandemic than initially projected.

Updated financial modelling, released prior to the meeting by the University, indicates that student fee revenue for this year is projected to be \$1.735 billion, substantially higher than that for 2019 (\$1.688 billion), and only 6.3% short of the University’s pre-COVID budget (\$1.863 billion).

In an email to staff this morning, Vice Chancellor Michael Spence stated that revenue losses had not been as large as initially projected. The University is \$117 million short of its pre-coronavirus budget, rather than the \$470 million projected in Semester 1 this year. This means that the University’s revised pandemic budget is in surplus.

The University remains committed to its voluntary redundancies program. In the same email, Spence stated that the University could not sustain saving measures enacted this year, such as the freeze on travel, new buildings and new hires.

“Any salary savings generated through a voluntary [redundancy] process — which we hope will be the only staff measure required — will go towards easing the pressure on other areas of our expenditure, many of which have a direct impact on staff and their capacity to undertake research and teaching,” the email states.

The email also states that the University projects international student revenue to recover in part from next year, increasing from 65% of the initially projected revenue intake in Semester 1 2021 to 80% of the projected intake in Semester 2 2021.

The NTEU meeting also voted in favour of a motion to condemn the actions of NSW Police in breaking up student protests against cuts yesterday.

Next year’s provisionally-elected SRC President, Swapnik Sanagavarapu, addressed the meeting to describe his role as a legal observer at yesterday’s protest.

“The big boss inspector officer I spoke to had a pretty questionable interpretation of the Public Health Orders. He told me that gatherings this size were fine inside, but as soon as they were outside they breached the order,” Sanagavarapu told the meeting.

“The most disturbing instance from yesterday I observed was when an officer announced to students sitting on the lawns that they were fine if they were there to socialise, but if they were part of the protest they were breaching the Public Health Order,” Iveson said.

The NTEU is expected to continue to build opposition to the cuts and redundancies scheme.

2019 Student Fee Revenue:	\$1,688m
2020 Budget Student Fee Revenue:	\$1,852.7m
2020 Current Forecast Student Fee Revenue:	\$1,735.4m
2020 Revenue Student Fee Downturn:	-\$117.3m
2021 5-year plan Student Fee Revenue:	\$2,015.1m
2021 Current Forecast Student Fee Revenue:	\$1,798.4m
<b>FFTSI Gap between the 5-year Long-term Model and the Current Forecast</b>	
2021 Overall Student downturn:	-4,940
2022 Overall Student downturn:	-4,190
2023 Overall Student downturn:	-1,876
2024 Overall Student downturn:	-827
2025 Overall Student downturn:	Positive 46
<b>Total Student Fee Revenue Gap between 5-Year Long-term Model and the Current Forecast</b>	
2021 Overall Student Revenue downturn:	-\$217m
2022 Overall Student Revenue downturn:	-\$183m
2023 Overall Student Revenue downturn:	-\$100m
2024 Overall Student Revenue downturn:	-\$58m
2025 Overall Student Revenue downturn:	Positive \$14m

The University’s current financial revenue projections. Source: University of Sydney Draft Change Proposal Proposed Voluntary Redundancy Program, 17 September 2020.

# Proposal to shorten Semester 1 to twelve weeks defeated

Chuyi Wang reports.

In a meeting of the USyd Academic Board held last Tuesday, a proposal to shorten Semester 1 next year to 12 weeks has been defeated.

The proposal, spearheaded by Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education) Pip Pattison, cited the potential for an academic and administrative bottleneck due to the reduced period of holiday time between Semester 2, 2020 and Semester 1, 2021

as the primary reason for the change.

Student Representatives present at the meeting told Honi that three options were being considered.

The first, which was to reduce Semester 1, 2021 to 12 weeks in addition to delaying the start of semester by one week, was defeated narrowly by 51% of attendees. Student Representatives voted unanimously against this option.

The second, which was supported by 60% of attendees, was to delay the start of Semester 1, 2021 by one week but maintain thirteen contact weeks. This may mean that Winter School offerings will be slightly reduced or be closer in proximity to Semesters 1 and 2 next year.

The third, which was to not change semester dates at all and maintain 13 contact weeks, was also supported

by 60% of attendees.

However, the conclusion reached at the meeting will only apply as a temporary measure for Semester 1, 2021.

As reported by Honi, earlier in September, the University is intending to return to the question of a permanent shift to 13 week semesters early next year.

# Car convoy demands justice for deaths in custody

Ranuka Tandan reports.

A car convoy of over 100 people and 40 cars circled Long Bay Prison on Saturday to demand justice for Indigenous deaths in custody and to support the prisoners living inside.

Honking resonated throughout the area, and residents came out of their houses to watch the convoy and in many cases, show their support to the movement.

The contingent met first at Heffron Park in Maroubra, where speeches were made.

The demands included immediately reinstating COVID-19 safe visits to imprisoned people, defunding the police and prison systems in place of funding towards community approaches to transformative justice, and finding immediate justice for all deaths in custody.

Lizzie Jarrett, cousin to David Dungay Jnr, who lost his life in Long Bay Prison in December of 2015, spoke to the importance of the action.

“I’m not just standing here as a Dungay family member right now. I’m standing here on behalf of every single black, beautiful person who has lost their life to this system.”

“I’m making sure we understand what today really means. There are still men working in this place that taunt our other black brothers that are behind bars, letting them think they’ll be the next David Dungay.”

“There is no ‘get over it’, there is no ‘it happened so long ago’. It is happening now, it is happening last week, it is happening yesterday, and I can guarantee by the time I speak to you all again, it will have happened again.”

“We’re going to keep going, we’re going to keep bringing this awareness, we’re going to keep being strong,” Lizzie said.

Prison abolition activist Georgia Mantle shared the perspective of prisoners in Long Bay Prison, who had written a statement to be read following the tear gassing that occurred in June of this year.

“We prisoners passionately embrace the commitment of Black Lives Matter, other organisations and people to force change on the way authorities degrade, attack and kill us.”

“There was no permission for our representative Inmate Development Committee to speak to the media about our views on the George Floyd killing, the David Dungay killing and the changes recommended by the Coroner. Please help us to have our voices heard in all these forums, rather than be dehumanised as though we are of no value and have no rights.”

Two police cars were present throughout the event, and guarded the entries to the Long Bay Prison car park, but police did not stop the convoy from going ahead and issued no fines.

# Police disperse rallies, several fines issued

Chuyi Wang reports.

Over 100 police, including several horses and riot vehicles, dispersed various decentralised actions called to fight back against University staff and course cuts last Wednesday.

Spearheaded by Students and Staff Say No Cuts, contingents congregated in groups less than 19 at disparate locations across campus, such as at the Cellar Theatre, Carlaw Building, Fisher Library and the Quadrangle.

However, prior to the kickoff of the rally, police had already established themselves on Eastern Avenue, behind the F23 Administration Building and at various places along Physics Rd.

At 1pm, speakouts began at the different locations. Outside Fisher Library, SRC President Liam Donohoe and SALT member Deaglan Godwin condemned the police shutdown of the National Day of Action protest late last month. At the Carlaw Building, SRC Environment Officer Lily Campbell and Art History honours student Aiden Magro called attention to the targeting and excessive cuts of arts and humanities degrees by the University and Morrison government.

However, despite groups remaining under 19 in total attendees, police began clearing the various actions within 10 minutes of speeches beginning. At Fisher Library, police issued a formal move-on order, claiming that there was a gathering larger than 20 “for a common purpose” – a justification that has been already used at two previous USyd education rallies. The other decentralised actions were shut down in a similar manner.

Around 10 activists were issued \$1000 fines, similar to last month’s National Day of Action. Aiden Magro, who was seized while attempting to disperse into Victoria Park, was issued with an unprecedented \$2000 fine.

“I was simply trying to leave, and I was chanting while doing so,” Magro told Honi. “But I’m here still to say that the University is treating staff like crap and it needs to stop.”

Solidarity member Adam Adelpour was arrested and charged with refusing to comply with police move-on orders, and was held at Newtown Station.

A large number of remaining protesters found their way to Cadigal Lawns, however, where there was little to no police presence. After a speakout, featuring activists Kelton Muir and Lauren Lancaster, the rally wrapped up around 2pm.

Clockwise from top left: Police on Eastern Avenue, a Science student contingent protesting cuts, police on Eastern Avenue, SRC President Liam Donohoe being placed under arrest, an NTEU contingent including USyd Branch president Kurt Iveson (left), protestors face off with police on the City Rd bridge. Photos: Aman Kapoor.

# Activist facing possible jail time following shutdown of USyd protest

Ranuka Tandan and Matthew Forbes report.

Activist Adam Adelpour is facing up to six months in jail or an \$11,000 fine after his arrest at a University of Sydney based protest against the Morrison Government’s attacks on higher education.

Police alleged that Adelpour was arrested for refusing to comply with police move-on orders.

However, Adelpour claims he was making sure that Anna Wensley, another protester who was being surrounded and grabbed by police, would be ok, before being confronted by police himself.

Adelpour believes that he was targeted specifically by police, having heard an officer specifically point him out as someone who should be charged.

Incoming SRC President Swapnik Sanagavarapu, who acted as a legal observer for the rally, witnessed Adelpour being led down Eastern Avenue, before being taken behind the Administration Building (F23) to be processed.

Sanagavarapu states he was “explicitly prevented” from going with Adelpour, and was eventually issued with multiple move-on orders and “prevented from observing other fines”.

Footage obtained by Honi shows Adelpour and the other student being confronted by police, while Sanagavarapu and a student filming are told to clear out.

Adelpour was released from Newtown police station this morning after refusing to sign bail conditions



Adelpour being placed under arrest. Photo: Aman Kapoor.

which included a personal curfew and a ban from University of Sydney campuses.

Police have stated that they “will allege in court that a 34-year-old man was given several warnings and directions to leave the area; however, he repeatedly refused to comply.”

Adelpour commented that, “The police’s decision to lay charges under COVID rules is a major escalation of the attack on the right to protest in NSW.”

“The protest actions at Sydney University yesterday did not even breach COVID restrictions on gatherings, as protesters gathered in groups of less

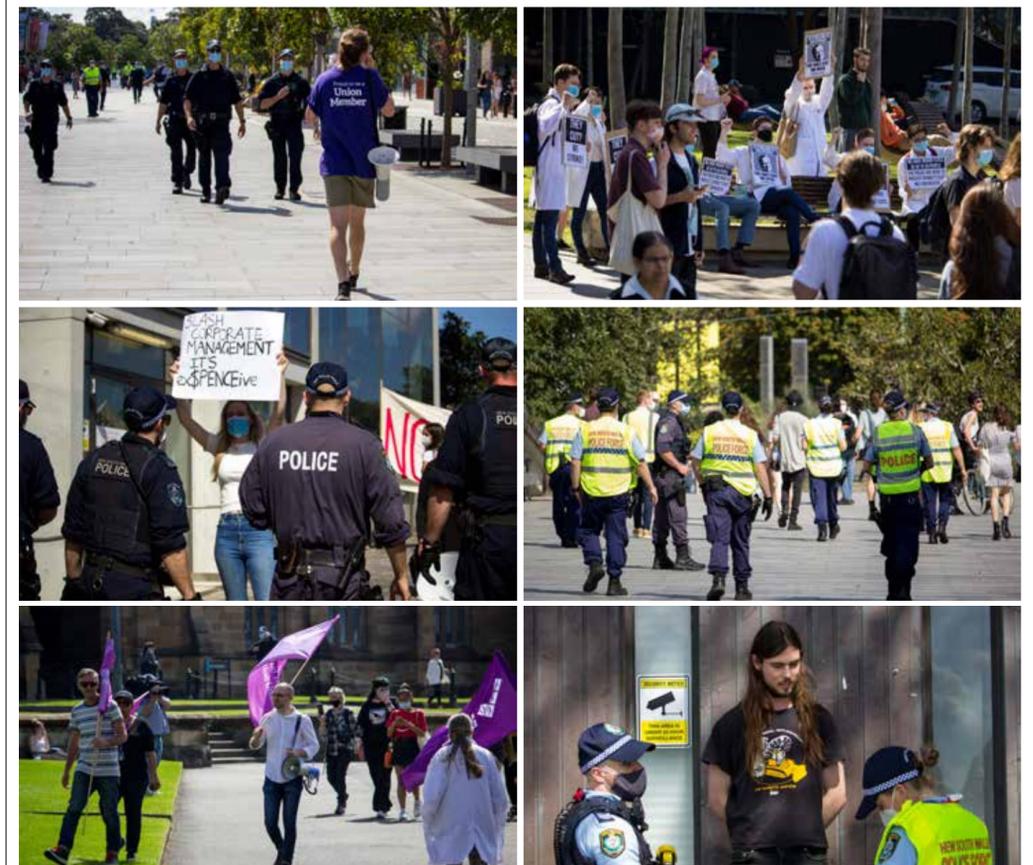
than 20 people, widely dispersed across campus.

“But police have made it clear they are determined to prevent demonstrations of any kind. This is an appalling attack on free speech and the right to demonstrate.”

Police refused to comment on why student activists were given move-on orders when other students in the same place were not.

Adelpour is receiving pro bono legal representation.

Nine other protesters were also issued \$1000 fines, bringing the number of student and staff activists fighting fines up to more than 25.





68 tickets are contesting for spots in the SRC this year. All of them had to submit CVs with their achievements and stupol history. Here are two analysis pieces about this year's SRC race, as well as the unprecedented uncontested elections:

The esteemed current editors of Honi Soit

Swapnik Sanagavarapu has been provisionally elected as the President of the SRC for 2021, as the sole candidate in an uncontested election. He scored 64% in our quiz. Here's our profile of him, below:



Swapnik Sanagavarapu (2021 SRC President)



Swapnik Sanagavarapu's election to President of the SRC is historic in at least three respects: it is the first time a SRC President has been elected without competition in at least 50 years, it is the first time Grassroots will have held the SRC Presidency for two years in a row, and Sanagavarapu will be coming to the office in the midst of a global pandemic.

Our interview with Sanagavarapu, much like his rise to presidency, was uneventful. With the vanishing of any opposition, so too goes the need for Honi Soit editors to create contrived downsides to compare him to a much worse candidate. That means we can say this: Swapnik Sanagavarapu will probably be a good president.

Students content with Liam Donohoe's presidency will likely be pleased by Sanagavarapu's. Indeed, Sanagavarapu is something of Donohoe's political protege, and was initially recruited into Grassroots by Donohoe after meeting at a debating mixer. "It's no secret that I'm very much like Doon," he tells us in his interview. Both are charismatic former debaters, both have considerable experience in Grassroots election campaigns, both enjoy (perhaps too much) sparring with their political opponents, neither had a paid Office Bearer position within the SRC prior to election, and both (I guess we should mention) are dudes.

Sanagavarapu's view of Donohoe's

presidency is unsurprisingly favorable. Even what he deemed to be the current president's biggest weakness — "trying to do too much" — sounded like he was doing a job interview on behalf of Donohoe. When asked how he would differ from Donohoe, Sanagavarapu's answer was "not much". He plans to delegate more work to other Office Bearers — a task that may be difficult if the lack of work from this year's General Secretaries and Vice Presidents is anything to go by — and lobby for permanent funding for Donohoe's popular initiatives, such as the mutual aid network.

Sanagavarapu has already begun to work closely with Donohoe, sitting in on the Academic Board, acting as the President in July when Donohoe was on leave, and assisting with the SRC's submission to the Senate's inquiry into the Higher Education Bill. He has been a councillor for the last two years, a member of the General Executive this year and served as Global Solidarity Officer (after getting rolled from Ethnocultural Officer) and co-convenor of the Autonomous Collective Against Racism (ACAR) last year, effectively rehabilitating the group.

However at the time, a female co-convenor complained that Sanagavarapu and other co-office bearers had done less than their fair share in the role. Sanagavarapu said he regrets letting some of his tasks

fall onto others, and cited "institutional constraints" — working multiple jobs, full-time study and a 90 minute commute — that would not exist with the President's almost \$40,000 salary. Though less experienced than Grassroots candidates of recent years, all of whom have had paid OB roles prior to running, Sanagavarapu's experience in the organisation, and the institutional experience of Grassroots would well-equip him for the role. His quiz results in this area were largely correct, though he crucially missed that the SRC is an unincorporated entity which impacts his legal liabilities as president.

Swapnik was initially hesitant to put his hand up for the role while Grassroots was looking for a candidate earlier this year. He attributes that to the fact that his degree progression is "fucked". It is for the same reason that he says he might have to, for reasons he could not tell us, take one or two units next year. This would be a break from previous Grassroots presidents, this is a far cry from Jacky He's absentee presidency through which he studied full-time.

Previous NLS president Isabella Brook, took two units per semester and was regarded as generally capable in the role. When asked whether this conflicted with Grassroots' criticisms of Josie Jacovak last year, he said that his criticism was not that she had planned to do any units at all (which might have been manageable) but that she

planned to study full-time.

Most of Sanagavarapu's policies centre on campaigning against cuts and racism, and for environmental action and greater support for international students. Some of Sanagavarapu's presidential ambitions seem out of place in the context of the pandemic, though that may well be attributable to the fact that it remains uncertain exactly what effect this will have on the SRC and campus life next year. When asked whether his proposed SRC stall would be feasible if most students remain off campus, for example, Sangavarapu admitted that that may be true but detailed an online communications strategy. There are several omissions from his policy statement, notably there is no mention of anti-sexual assault campaigns. In his interview, Sanagavarapu said this was not because they were "not important" but because they had dropped off this year.

Swapnik's knowledge of the broader University sector context, and the University itself was left wanting. His quiz scores were low in these areas. Importantly Sanagavarapu will be coming to office in a context of massive university funding and staff cuts. That context will ask more of him than most of his predecessors. It remains to be seen whether he will be able to rise to the occasion.

The esteemed current editors of Honi Soit

Bloom for Honi have been provisionally elected as the editors for Honi Soit for 2021, as the sole ticket in an uncontested election. They scored 63% in our quiz. Here's our profile of them, below:



Bloom for Honi (2021 Honi Soit editors)



Birthing through a tumultuous merger of two tickets, Bloom was automatically elected. The ticket comprises Shania O'Brien, Vivienne Guo, Claire Olivain, Jeffrey Khoo, Deaunde Espejo, Marlow Hurst, Juliette Marchant, Max Shanahan, Alice Trenoweth-Cresswell and Will Solomon.

All ten incoming editors have reported regularly for Honi this year with Claire and Shania also contributing art to the paper. Bloom also has considerable experience editing autonomous editions of Honi, in addition to campus journals, including the Arts Society's 1978 and Law Society's Dissent. The team have somewhat less formal experience within the SRC than recent Honi editorial teams, with only Vivienne (current Councillor and co-Women's Officer) having held positions within the student union. This is something that Bloom framed to us as an asset, in being able to "approach things more objectively."

Yet, this inexperience to student representative bodies is certainly something that Bloom will need to get a grasp on fairly quickly, as one of the first things they'll be tasked with as editors is covering the National Union of Students' National Conference (NatCon). When pressed on whether they're sufficiently prepared for coverage they answered with an unsatisfactory: "We haven't really thought about it, to be honest (...) I think it'll be like any other event." Unfortunately, anyone who knows anything about NatCon knows that it's

not like any other event.

Bloom received a sound score of 63% (almost a credit :P) in their quiz, demonstrating proficiency with regards to basics, including recent Honi history and who's who on campus. Despite this, they struggled on questions which either didn't feature in previous presidential / Honi quizzes or required decent general knowledge. Of particular concern were their incorrect answers around higher education and staff unionism, especially given the spotlight on such issues at the moment. Bloom didn't know the National President of the NTEU, named Dan Tehan as the NSW State Education Minister and answered "2025" as the year in which the Sydney University enterprise agreement expires. Given enterprise agreements last no longer than four years, and USyd's expires next year with the potential for strike action, the ticket must plug the gaps before taking the reigns come December 1.

Bloom has framed their vision for next year's Honi in direct contrast to our 2020 output. Critiquing the current editorial approach as being "intensely news-centric", despite Honi being a student newspaper (after all), Bloom wants to place extra emphasis next year on cultural writing, visual art and polished print design. Indeed, when looking at the Honi articles published by the team over the past few years, culture or creative pieces seem to be a strong suit of the ticket, suggesting they certainly have some potential in

bringing their colourful vision to life.

When asked about their political stances and direction for the paper, however, Bloom was almost incoherent. Despite labelling themselves as a "progressive" ticket in their policy statement, Bloom were unwilling to specifically "define [their] political leanings because there's 10 of [them]", eventually settling on "progressiveness" as their "broad vibe". When asked specifically about which recent Honi year they felt most politically aligned with, Bloom responded equally vaguely: "I don't really know. I'd say that Honi is generally fairly left."

Another important part of Bloom's vision is the broadening of Honi's visibility and impact on campus, pitching increased engagement with USU Clubs & Societies, social events and lecture bashes as ways of expanding its demographic. However, such promises are perhaps too optimistic — the chances of the current pandemic restrictions being lifted by the start of next year are looking slim at best.

Bloom's policy statement largely reads as a recycled list of fan favourites including greater "digital-focused" content, more live reporting and holding management to account. Where Bloom's policies aren't lifted directly from previous tickets, they're unclear at best. Claiming to make the reporter-editor pitching process more "discursive", it was evident in our interview that Bloom had not yet formed any concrete strategies to do so. Other

policies, such as sports coverage and alumni content, were also muddled: Bloom didn't seem sure whether they wanted to cover sport generally, or provide sporting reports for on-campus rugby games.

Further, Bloom's promise to "conduct extensive investigations" can hardly be backed-up by their actual investigative track record. No member of Bloom has ever been responsible for an investigative article. Moreover, having jointly pitched an investigation, several Bloom editors were unable to complete the piece and retracted its writing after it had already been approved and paginated for an upcoming edition. This followed another mishap the previous week, in which an article was submitted two days late and deviated from the original pitch. With both incidents occurring after Bloom's automatic election, we're left wondering whether the uncontested election has gone to their heads.

More concerning, earlier this year Bloom member Vivienne Guo co-wrote an article for Women's Honi which contained significant textual similarities to an article published in Growing Strong, of which she was editor-in-chief. In response to an allegation of plagiarism, Guo told Honi that she had a conversation with the other author and the two had resolved things, chalking up the resemblance to "a rare but unfortunate situation of having a phrase/idea stuck in your head and not knowing where it came from. (...)"



USYD Rants 2.0 21 September

SRC tickets 2020: Lay of the land / Robbie Mason and Angad Roy

There are 68 tickets this year. Switchroots account for almost half with 29 tickets. Unity (Unite) and NLS (Pump) have put forward four tickets each, while campus Liberals have formed 10 different tickets (TIME), which appear to be mere re-namings from last year's BOOST campaign. International student representation remains strong with Penta (previously Panda) and Phoenix accounting for seven tickets. Who is Phoenix? We have no clue, except that it was founded by our esteemed colleague, Lei Yao. Last year's council saw the seats dominated by Switchroots, Boost and Panda. With a similar proportion of representation in this year's nominations, we expect little to change this year.

Though most tickets submitted policy statements, one seemingly serious ticket (Equality — End Bias) did not send a policy statement in time for publication, begging the question: why even try? There is a certain level of homogeneity in most policy statements, which are reflective of current issues facing students: staff cuts, the use of ProctorU for online exams and related concerns around student data privacy and fee hikes; racism on campus and BLM issues; making a more environmentally-friendly university; and elevating the interests of international students.

The usual few joke tickets haven't

gone anywhere, serving no other purpose except to give 2 to 3 seconds of fame to USyd's seemingly inexhaustible supply of genius comedians. Our favourites are Divorced Dads for SRC and Legalise It. Punters would be remiss to overlook these though: the Divorced Dads currently have more Facebook likes than Liberal outfit "Time for SRC."

The CV sections for ticket members are a chance for stu pol enthusiasts to humanise themselves and prove their credentials. Almost all fail miserably. Most read like Tinder bios for which we would certainly swipe left. We notice many people appreciate food, which is, well, a fundamental human trait we all share. There are also many avid dog lovers. Similarly, cherishing your pet is not a cute personality trait but parcel of being a normal, functioning human being.

Multiple ticket members mention either working at a fast food outlet, as if this presents any transferable skills for campus rabble rousing, or adoring fast food meals. Sorry to break it to you all: working at Maccas at 16 and occasionally devouring a Zinger Burger does not make you a member of the working class or give you any street rep. We'll also add that although some feel it necessary to still talk about their ATARs at university, albeit plummeting their social capital, the same goes for your high school achievements.

For those unfortunate enough (us) to read your CVs, please remember that being a Prefect, or even worse, a "Peer Mentor" at your high school doesn't make you a big shot — we all know it's just code for "I was a snitch in high school."

The Engineers tickets (3 in total) unfortunately don't do much to deform the stereotypes that marr them. In an era where engineers are condemned constantly on USyd rants for their morbid personalities, their CVs can't convince us otherwise. Isabella Anderssen (Engineers for Equity) advertises that they are "weirdly good at Sudoku" (cool, but like, this isn't an Australia's Got Talent audition); Riley Vaughan is proud to have been offered free shirts by Ribs and Burgers (haha nice bro do you eat bulk wings at Hooters as well?); Cole Scott-Curwood says "mastered weeks 4-7 #chan (what?). Other lowlights across the board include: Kedar Maddali (Grassroots Against Course Cuts) thinking their role as a Pokemon Society Executive has any relevant experience and Xinyi Huang (Phoenix for Well Being) writing that they are "allergic to ALCOHOL". Our deepest condolences. Try ket instead?

Unsurprisingly, the CVs that plague the Liberal tickets make us want to cave in the wall of a cop shop with a sledgehammer. James Ardouin (TIME for Student Services), seems to have a disturbingly

inflated sense of self, describing himself as a "thorn in Liam Donohoe's side 2019-present". Our response: who the fuck are you? Georgia Lowden (TIME for Women) is a "Big fan of SASS, Subski and my dog (Poppy <3)" — are there any three more obvious red flags for a liberal? Tully O'Regan (TIME for First Years) thinks he's pretty funny with some stale blokey humour. The end of his CV reads: "Losing it — Fisher (ashamed), King of a late night Yeeros run". This is the kind of man we imagine walks around campus with egg stains on his shirt and still thinks placing a whoopee cushion on the lecturer's chair is hilarious.

NUS remains relatively generic and uninteresting. It is dominated by tickets from various positions on the left-spectrum, with one Liberal ticket (TIME) and what appears to be a joke ticket, Aladeen (End White Supremacy), whose policy statement opens emphatically by suggesting "Democracy sucks!" Thanks, Naziul. We hope your politics are a little more original than those of your namesake.

All in all, this year's election promises to be just another election. With the majority of students off campus, expect more vapid and shameless self-plugging to dominate your social media feeds.

Voting opens 9:00am Tuesday 29th September and closes 6pm, Thursday 1st October.



USYD Rants 2.0 21 September

An election like none other / Nina Dillon Britton

With a historic year, comes a historic SRC election. This year's election is the first time that a presidential candidate and Honi Soit editorial team have been elected uncontested, and the first time either election has been held online. What does that mean for the state of stupol?

Online elections

It's difficult to assess how online elections will shape this year's outcome. In opposing them, Socialist Alternative pointed to strong returns for right-wing candidates in Wollongong elections they transitioned to online voting. That seems based on an understanding that progressive candidates fare better in in-person elections because they are more motivated for grueling days of walk-and-talks than CV-stacking independents or Liberals. Moreover, Honi previously reported campaigners using stand-over tactics in the online Senate elections, pressuring students to vote as they watched.

The SRC's election system might avoid stand-over scenarios: unlike in Senate elections, students must enrol prior to the open of voting. And though online elections would intuitively favour more popular candidates with large social media reach (as opposed to ones with small groups of dedicated campaigners), it's not clear that that would always disadvantage progressive campaigners. Drew Pavlou at the University Queensland won the online Senate elections in a landslide; Switchroots candidate Prudence Wilkins-Wheat topped the polls

in this year's online USU elections.

Uncontested elections

The fact that Honi elections are uncontested is no great break from previous years. The last genuinely competitive election for the editorship was a three-way battle in 2016. Previous years have either seen serious tickets face off against jokes (in 2018 Spice for Honi bested "Pictures of Spiderman" and "Honey Soy") or have seen tickets marketing themselves as representing a number of political persuasions fell apart after their Christian members were cancelled for saying horrible things (in 2017 Mint disbanded after a member endorsed a homophobic Facebook comment; last year's Cream did the same after JP Baladi expressed support for George Pell). That is in part due to the difficulties in putting together a group of 10 people that are (a) electorally viable, (b) sane, and (c) competent to edit the paper. As documented in this year's gossip columns, the 10-person ticket lends itself to a strategy of poaching people from other tickets, destroying the ticket's chances before they even form.

So it is far more surprising that at USyd, which frequently sees the most competitive student elections in Australia and has spawned more federal front-benches than we care to count, only one person cared to contest the presidential election. This is the first time it has occurred since at least 1970 (Honi edoes not consistently report on election outcomes prior to this).

In his interview, president-elect Swapnik Sanagavarapu attributed this to the general withdrawal of students from campus life during pandemic isolation. There are, for example, less tickets contesting this year's election than last year (68 compared to 93 last year), and many international students have not returned at all this year.

Another factor, though, is a shifting electoral strategy from progressive grouping Switchroots to form large factional coalitions who are promised paid positions in exchange for their support of their candidate. Though a number of candidates had been rumoured to be eyeing the presidency — General Secretary Abbey Shi from the now-defunct international grouping Advance, Vice President Felix Faber from NLS, and SRC Councillor James Ardouin from the Liberals — all evidently thought it unlikely they'd win, or their factions saw it less risky to back Grassroots. The creation of a stipend for Vice Presidents in 2019 now means there are six paid non-autonomous Office Bearer positions within the SRC to be dealt away to different factions. This makes large factional coalitions, like the five backing Sanagavarapu this year, viable. Last year, Switchroots Liam Donohoe was supported by five additional factions, four of which were delivered paid OB positions at RepsElect.

It is also possible the uncontested election is the outcome of a general decline in stupol involvement. "Where did all the BNOCs go?" Honi asked in 2018, arguing that the vibrant stupol culture

that had formed in opposition to Abbott's 2014 proposed deregulation of university fees had faded away over time. Elections themselves are competitive, but less involved than in the past. Reforms passed in 2017 limited the in-person campaigning period to one week prior to elections, making unlikely previous election stunts like bringing a double bed as a prop to Eastern Avenue, or caf-bashing every lunch for two weeks. Other factors, like the increase on penalties for late assignments in Arts passed in the same year, no doubt undermined a culture of fucking off classes to pester passers-by for a semester.

Taking a much longer view, USyd's obsession with elections has declined over time. Through the 90s, upwards of five candidates would regularly contest presidential elections. The 1997 documentary Uni, which captures that year's SRC elections cycle, shows campaigners using drag queens, cars with speakers attached and elaborate lecture bash skits in their campaigns.

Though many victims of a walk-and-talk might celebrate that change, more than coloured shirts on Eastern Avenue are lost as student politics shrink. Almost a thousand fewer students voted in SRC elections after the election period was shortened. This year, Bloom and Sanagavarapu will come to office with most students not knowing, and not having a real chance, to know they exist.

Nina Dillon Britton is a former member of Sydney Grassroots.

# Panda: A story of its fall and legacy

*Zhiquan Gan on the seminal influence of Panda, its offshoots and the future of international student factions.*

The SRC elections in recent years have seen significant change, particularly surrounding Chinese international students and their representation within USyd student bodies.

In 2018, Panda's Jacky (Yisheng) He was elected SRC President largely through Chinese international student support. Furthermore, voting for the SRC Presidential Elections increased from 3576 cast votes in 2017, to 4085 in 2018, and then to the high of 5362 in 2019. Finally, there has also been a change in the political balance of power; mere months after their inception, Panda gained 25% of all votes cast in the SRC elections of 2017 — a share of votes even greater than any single domestic faction at the time.

Coronavirus has significantly shaken up the campaigning process and the voting procedure for both domestic and international students in this year's election. However, the other, more dramatic change could arguably be the complete disintegration of Panda as a faction — just three years after their establishment, which follows the footsteps of Advance (a rival faction which had previously also vied for the representation of Chinese international students). Due to the fact that Panda obtained nine of 33 total seats in the 92nd Council of the SRC during last year's elections, and the status quo of Panda was the largest university faction for a time, this disintegration is

undoubtedly momentous for the student community as a whole.

With the benefit of hindsight, this sudden, abrupt demise of Panda could be attributed to a series of dramas and scandals plaguing the faction, which all occurred within the public view.

In March 2020, it was revealed that a USyd SRC Helper Account on Wechat — originally created and controlled by Panda's SRC councillors with the purposes of aiding students with the handling of sensitive issues such as academic dishonesty - had been privatised and taken over by a migration agency without approval from the SRC Council. This follows the prior refusal of these Panda councillors to requests demanding the SRC Helper Account be handed over to the 92nd SRC Council in the beginning of the year for their continuing operation in service of the student body.

In May 2020, during the USU elections, whilst the campaign for Panda's nominee, Jiale (Wayne) Wang, was off to a successful start, it was soon derailed by allegations of bribery just days following the campaign's launch. As reported by *Pulp* at the time, Wang professed his intention to forgo his salary in order to fund Panda's election campaigns. This contradicted the USU Electoral Regulations, which prohibited bribery, defining it as "... the giving, procuring, promising, offering ... [of] employment, position or material

resources in exchange for preferential treatment or to induce a voter to vote..."

In addition, Wang's promise that he would "attempt to increase the publicity of Panda" through the leveraging of USU resources and connections placed significant doubt on his ability to act in an independent manner for the management of USU responsibilities. Ultimately, it was Wang's request for all members of the private group who read the message to keep it secret, to "please not leak this outside as this does not comply with the regulations" that led to the suspension of his campaign, and his disqualification from the election altogether. This is because not only did the quote imply the nature of the actions being one of 'wilful misconduct', it also undermined his later claim that he had done "everything [to] obey the rule [sic]" in a statement to *Pulp* published on the 13th of May.

As a result of these controversies, and other sources of dissatisfaction, including the lack of adequate engagement between the elected representatives and the student body and the low attendance rates of Panda representatives for SRC meetings, the faction gradually lost the favour of its internal members, and also the wider student body.

With its reputation tarnished, the original faction has slowly ceased to function. Some members of Panda have exited the stupor scene altogether, whilst

other members have decided to rebrand into a new faction named "Penta".

Now, given the upcoming SRC elections for the 93rd Council, there are significant implications for both domestic and international students. For domestic student factions, this provides an opportunity for them to capitalise on the international student votes with their policies and ideas as there no longer exists a well established faction in representing Chinese international students. For international students, there also exists an ability for rising factions and groups to capitalise on these votes, which is what "Phoenix", a faction only established in the past month, has decided to do.

However, despite Panda no longer existing as a faction, its influence and legacy continues to be observed, through a need for Chinese international factions to distance themselves from Panda and their malpractices as well as through a desire for factions to prove that they are fundamentally capable of creating change as opposed to simply engaging in the tactics of identity politics. This can be seen in Phoenix's self-proclaimed values of "professionalism", "expertise", "objectivity", and "accountability" and their promotional material being centred on the past work experiences of their SRC nominees. However, the extent of success of this strategy remains to be observed.

# Daniel Andrews and the little virus that could

*Iggy Boyd on the rise and fall of faction man Dandrews.*

Daniel Andrews, as a constructed personality, is twofold. In one corner, managed by more liberal media such as the Herald, is Sad Andrews, a well meaning public servant who, despite his mistakes and misjudgements, bears the tribulations of Victoria's second wave of COVID-19 as Atlas does the sky. In the other corner, managed by more reactionary media such as Sky News, is Chairman Dan, the would-be architect of the eradication of all liberties, whether social or economic, and the death of small businesses everywhere. This fight is, of course sensationalised,

acts of bastardry." Earlier this year, he was forced to sack his self-described "good friend" Adem Somyurek after demeaning comments about Gabrielle Wilson and accusations of industrial-scale branch stacking in the Victorian ALP.

In 1999, he began working at the party's head office as a State Organiser, becoming Assistant State Secretary in 2000. From 2002 he grew like a pre-teen on HGH; elected the state member for Mulgrave, he was immediately made the Parliamentary Secretary for Health, became the Minister for Multicultural

**As the royal commission has shown, the second wave is far from his doing alone, rather the fault of many different departments, but his former strategy to be the calming presence in the storm is now untenable when so many are mad at him.**

but is not without a level of truth on either side. One side sees him forego ADF support in an attempt to create jobs, the other sees him send 500 cops to public housing towers with no evidence of the virus. But Andrews is, like all politicians, nothing if not his record; particularly his time under Alan Griffin of the "Griffin Left" of the Victorian ALP in the 90s, which reveals much about why he is the way that he is today.

Alan Griffin was elected to the house in 1996 as the member for Bruce after the abolition of his former electorate Corinella. This flipped the seat from the Liberals for the first time since 1955. It was aided by the influx of new Labor voters from former Corinella, and was a thin silver lining in what was a thorough rinsing of Paul Keating by John Howard, their two seat counts mirrored at 94 for the Coalition, 49 for Labor. Andrews entered the Victorian ALP in this tumultuous time. Freshly graduated from Mannix College (of Monash University) with a Bachelor of Arts majoring in politics and classics, he immediately became an electorate officer to Griffin, now Leader of the Opposition, serving as his Parliamentary Secretary. Much of his work here was engaging in factional disputes over ballots, preselections and power. His reputation quickly began to loom large; Good Weekend (of the Sydney Morning Herald), quotes a 'long-term Labor player' as saying, "Daniel was the first one to go to war in every internal battle. He was the first one [...] saying, 'Let's kill that person.'" Additionally, Geoff Lazarus, a Greens member, even goes as far as to say that Andrews had a reputation as a branch stacker for the left; Andrews denies this, but grants that "[f]rom time to time there will be

Affairs, Consumer Affairs and Gaming in 2006, Health Minister in 2007 then Leader of the Opposition in 2010. Interestingly, his first experience with a pandemic was handling swine flu as Health Minister in 2009. Whilst he only spent four years as Opposition Leader, he was not always Dan The Man; in 2012, focus groups described him as "the guy who looks like an accountant and hunches" and up to his fairly scraped-by victory in 2014 he consistently struggled with polls. Per Newspoll numbers, the day before the election he was working a 38% approval and 43% disapproval rating, very discordant with his pre/early-COVID numbers. To overcome his stagnating reputation, he revealed something which may shock and discredit you: he's not wearing a tie at all. That is to say, for the campaign makeover he cast Dorky Dan to the wind like rags and became Debonair Dan, who wears his top button undone and is actually totally different and way cooler I promise.

Of course, it's not uncommon nor is it scandalous for a politician to be focus group'd, but it does certainly conflict with his earnest, working class aesthetic. He's an oxymoron when understood with regards to his identity and politics, unless of course you understand that he adopts whichever politics, framing or image which he thinks will make him most powerful, within reason. Of course, he'd never go renegade and become a reactionary because he does have vaguely left-wing convictions but, to return to his Good Weekend profile, Paul Keating describes what Andrews sought from him in 2012: "About the getting of power and the use of it [...] He had a hunger for power... and the leadership gene." Asking Paul Keating

about using and keeping power is like asking Louis XVI how to keep having a head but the point stands that Andrews is, above all else, interested in power, and the means through which he seeks it reaches back to what he learned in his earliest days.

Essentially, Dandrews is a bully. In party factions, secrets are held close and thinly veiled insults are common. In parliament, Andrews is smug and guarded, with a penchant for personal attacks; this is one thing when dealing with the Victorian Liberals, a shady bunch — as evidenced by Michael Sukkar's recent branch stacking allegations — and particularly Michael O'Brien, but as a consequence of this he very rarely tells people what they want to hear. Successful freedom-of-information requests were at their lowest point in five years earlier this year, according to the Sydney Morning Herald, and Andrews has drawn the ire of the public recently due to his lack of transparency, and outright lies, regarding the failures of his hotel quarantine procedure and enforcement of subsequent lockdowns. He is still yet to provide a real justification for sending five hundred police officers, rather than health workers, to public housing towers with no evidence of an outbreak, whilst failing to even test their residents in a comprehensive way for weeks. Andrews desperately needs someone to blame for this crisis, but all that he grasps turns to dust. He tried to blame the security workers, with accusations that they socialised in an unsafe manner, but as it happens the first case in the Rydges Hotel, the patient zero of the outbreak, was a night manager and far more credible reports have surfaced that posit the security workers weren't properly trained, staffed or supplied with PPE for their work. He tried to blame the police, asserting that no support was offered or even available; official documents since released show this to be a lie. He even tried to blame the police, stating he introduced the curfew to help police prevent gatherings, but the commissioner was never briefed on it before it began. In factions, one can avoid accountability through being subsumed into a group

identity; as Premier, Andrews holds the same distaste for being held to his actions but has no such place to hide.

As the Victorian second wave comes under control, calls for a royal commission into Labor's handling of the outbreak continue. On 27 August, Andrews accepted major concessions to his attempt to extend his powers to call a state of emergency and per Essential Poll numbers on 8 September only 50% of Victorians consider the state's response to COVID-19 as 'good', down from 75% on June 15. Daniel Andrews' imperiousness is gone with the wind, replaced by a masked but unmistakable desperation as he scrambles to recover what he lost in this second wave. He has, at least for a time, stopped blaming the virus on individual workers and will appear in front of the Judicial Inquiry into the Hotel Quarantine program in Victoria. As that royal commission has shown, the second wave is far from his doing alone, rather the fault of many different departments, but his former strategy to be the calming presence in the storm is now untenable when so many are so mad at him. Andrews has never been one to obsess over his legacy, but his legacy has, in a matter of some few months, devolved from that of a socially progressive leader who brought an infrastructure boom and economic prosperity to the state to the man who brought the pandemic to Melbourne and blamed it on anyone and everyone but himself.

*Art by Shrawani Bhattarai.*



# Does your campaign colour help you win? (Not really)

*Marlow Hurst does the numbers.*

*Disclaimer: percentages were rounded down.*

Twice every year, Eastern Avenue becomes a sea of multi coloured, branded bliss. It's confronting and often sickening, but above all it is ripe for intense data analysis. In order to pry open the juicy secrets that lay behind our university's elections, my crack team and I have looked at the USU, Honi Soit, and SRC presidential elections from 2015 to 2020 and analysed the colour data in the process. Because as we all know, colour is crucial.

The first thing that arose from my investigations was that the colour blue was the most popular, comprising over 20% of campaigns. This could either indicate the soothing qualities of the colour blue, or the enthusiasm of on campus Liberals (though the credibility of this theory is tempered somewhat by the fact that only 29% of blue campaigns are Liberal affiliated).

The next most popular colour is of course pink. This is mostly due to the repeated and egregious selection of pink branding by Honi Soit tickets. Almost 50% of Honi Soit tickets used pink as their primary campaign colour during this period, which in this reporter's opinion is simply too much.

Green, yellow and red all come in at around 10% as they are the go to pigments for three of the most consistent factions on campus (Grassroots, Switch, and the Labor trio). Tragically, for the many fans of beige out there, it is the least chosen colour out of them all,

clocking in at a miserable 1%.

But that's just the frequency of each colour's use, ostensibly the least useful information one could glean from this data. For all you electioneers out there looking for a double, chocolate dip, waffle cone scoop, I've got something for you.

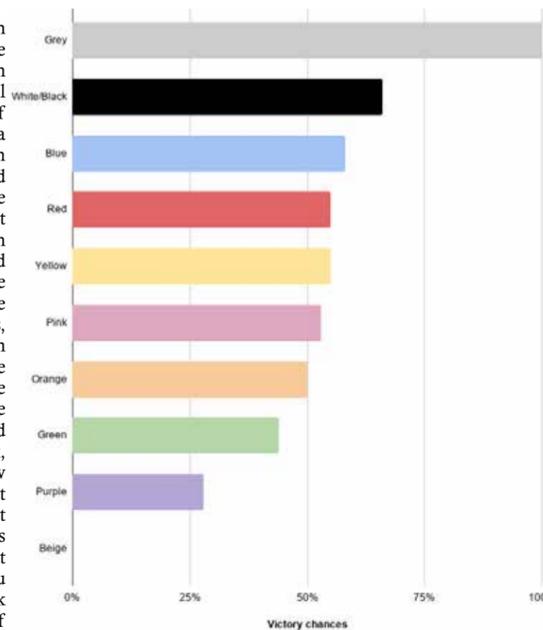
If you want to win an election: use grey. According to my research, if you campaign with grey, you have a 100% chance of winning. It's impossible not to: just ask the two people who ran with grey during this period. They probably won't have time to chat as they're most likely still riding the immense high of their electoral success, but it's worth a try.

On the other hand, if you want to really make sure your campaign is a failure: run with beige. You'll have a guaranteed 0% chance at success. Maybe your faction has pressured you into running, or you've found yourself on a Honi ticket stacked with the problematic and undesirable, or you just don't have the time to be a BNOC. Regardless, if you want an instantaneous escape from these responsibilities, just grab your campaign slogan, whack it onto a beige background, and BAM! You've got yourself a landslide defeat.

But these are hardly reliable data pools: Grey was used by two campaigns (Esther Shim in 2016 and Jacky He in 2018) and beige by one (Cameron Hawkins' 2016 bid for USU). Not exactly numbers to inspire confidence. If you look at the big hitters (any

colour with 10% or more representation in the total pool of campaigns), a combination of black and white or blue and white or blue are your best bets. With black and white you have a 66% chance of success, while with blue you have a respectable 58%. If they're not your speed though, pink, red, and yellow all hover at around about a 55% success rate. But whatever you do, don't pick purple! Of the legitimate campaign colours (sorry beige and grey), it has the most dismal chances, sitting at a miserable 28%.

What does all this tell us? Absolutely nothing. The most important thing I've learnt from this experience is that of all the traditional factions on campus, the Liberals have the lowest average quiz score, with a resounding 44%.



*Conflict of interest: the author of this piece likes pretty colours.*

# Progressive polie, pandemics and the police state

Daanyal Saeed on why the Victorian ALP has embraced a punitive pandemic response.

As COVID-19 case numbers continue to remain relatively low and controlled in New South Wales, we have begun to see a light at the end of the tunnel, and prepare ourselves for the way out from a generational health disaster. Throughout the pandemic, there has been a marked shift in our relationship to authority, and our relationship to police in a way that is distinct from any kind of response before, and which is deeply uncomfortable, particularly amongst the left. This is particularly disconcerting because the speed with which we have rushed to allow police to make and enforce public health matters is utterly incongruous with the reckoning with police that the rest of the Western world is currently undertaking. Osman Faruqi recently discussed our nation's historical relationship to policing, noting that the "law and order auctions" of the 1990s

Victoria where the stage four lockdown has shone a white-hot spotlight on our relationship to authority, turning traditional political understandings on their head.

The enforcement of the lockdown in Victoria has been justified by a line of attack from both the Government and its agencies that blamed particularly young people and ethnic minorities for "not following the rules", sowing the seeds of discontent and division in the community that preceded harsher crackdowns on protesters and individuals. The flashpoint for this in the wider community was the preemptive arrest of Ballarat anti-lockdown protestor Zoe-Lee Buhler, a video of which was viewed over 7.5 million times and drew immense sympathy not just to the broader anti-lockdown cause but to conspiracy theorists arguing that

**It is difficult to trace the basis of the law and order fixation in Victorian politics, but the modern state of place is rooted in then-Opposition Leader Ted Ballieu's declaration that "no civil society will tolerate being eaten from within by the cancer of sickening violence"**

in New South Wales took advantage of a concept called "penal populism": the basis of the political strategy of being tough on crime. In essence, we eat it up — it gives legitimacy and validation to the visceral feelings of anger we have, particularly when we see crimes of particular seriousness in the public eye, crimes committed by a minority we don't like, or otherwise significant unfairness.

No more transparently has this been seen than in Victoria, where a second wave took hold of the state's population, ravaging its aged care homes and its precarious workforces. The phenomenon of public health or COVID-compliance being categorised as a police matter is almost entirely unique to Australia, and Australian penalties for non-compliance are some of the harshest in the world. But it is in

this is simply one element of "Dictator Dan's" assault on civil liberties in order to execute his nefarious, corrupt plans for Victoria.

The myth that the Victorian second wave stemmed from disparate ethnic families across the south-east and west of Melbourne having super-spreader iftars has been completely debunked by the ongoing hotel quarantine inquiry, showing that the primary factor above all else has been precarious labour conditions. Despite this, the line taken by the Andrews administration until very recently has been the idea of the general public not "following the rules", providing space in the discourse for the otherwise generally impotent Victorian Opposition to stake claims that socially-distanced protests such as the Black Lives Matter rallies were the source of the second wave, and providing a veil

for the racism that their opposition is rooted in.

Perpetuating a discourse in which working people are blamed for the spread of a virus that can be ultimately controlled by management has wider ranging implications beyond the Victorian border. Whilst no government wants to deal with the crisis that played out in Melbourne, it has been used to justify increasingly harsh police responses in NSW. This has built to a point where decentralised groups of less than 19 socially-distanced, masked students have been unduly and inappropriately targeted on campus for protesting fee hikes and course cuts last week.

The 2018 Victorian state election was one in which the Victorian Liberals chose to run a negative law-and-order campaign centred around the two-headed attack dog idea of the "African gang"; the (myth) that gangs of African youth, predominantly with South Sudanese backgrounds, were running around suburbs like Broadmeadows and Pakenham terrorising local communities. Whilst this was entirely based in falsehoods, innuendo and misrepresentation, the Andrews administration chose to "address it". \$2 billion. 3000 more cops. Two new prisons, including one youth prison. Fast-forward to 2020, and the Andrews Government is looking to push through a new bill, providing police with the power to make preemptive COVID-based arrests, despite the Victorian 14-day case average dipping below 40 at the time of writing, the lowest point in the last three months. With such a consistent pro-cop disposition, the question of why the supposed most progressive state in Australia continues to vote for policy like that propagated by Andrews needs to be interrogated; the 2018 state election didn't occur in a vacuum, and it paved the way for what we see today.

It is difficult to trace the basis of the law-and-order fixation in Victorian politics, but the modern state of play is identified by Gay Alcorn as being rooted in then-Opposition Leader Ted Ballieu's declaration that "no civil society should tolerate being eaten from within by the cancer of sickening violence". He won the following election on a similarly reductive approach to crime and harm minimisation, putting thousands of armed guards at train stations. This has gone hand in hand with stricter bail laws and mandatory minimum sentences, taking Victoria from a relatively innovative state in the justice space to one of the harshest, most punitive jurisdictions in the country. Nonetheless, the idea that the ALP need to "get tough" and shake off a conception of being soft lefties is not one necessarily rooted in nuanced political strategy, nor in progressive principle. Before the pandemic even started, we saw moves from the Palaszczuk administration in Queensland to specifically target environmental and human rights activists, based on claims such as booby-trapping that weren't substantiated by

evidence, as well as more generalised crackdowns on bail laws in March, particularly targeting youth.

In a regular political environment, the penally populist approach is typically a winner in a nation of cops with a majority of white voters who simply are less affected by police violence. However, this is not a regular political environment; we have begun to see the breadth of police violence and scope of their creeping attacks on civil liberties begin to affect classes and demographics it hasn't before, or at least not to this extent, and there is a groundswell of public anger at white people being treated how the rest of us have been all along. Andrews' approval rating has plummeted from 75% back in June to 49% in August, despite ongoing strong support for many of the draconian measures imposed under stage four restrictions. This suggests a dichotomy between voters' understanding of the impacts of giving such powers to police and the figures who enact them. Politically, this is dangerous territory for the Andrews administration, and it along with other state governments, would do well to learn from the political impacts of aggressively pursuing increasingly punitive enforcement policy towards the back end of a pandemic. We know voters have short memories, but it would take a monumental effort from Andrews to drag himself into another term in 2022 given the extent to which the federal mismanagement of the pandemic has been conflated with his own leadership. Whilst he may be saved by the seemingly endless incompetence of the Victorian Opposition, who have called him a dictator from the rooftops as they simultaneously call for the army to take over, lost their own rigged Facebook polls, and called for the mass culling of Australian fruit bats to eradicate coronavirus, there still remain political consequences for the punitive, harsh and excessively draconian measures being pursued by the Andrews administration, many of which are at odds with his clean-shaven image as Australia's most progressive Premier.

If we want to walk out of the other side of this without anti-protest laws that permanently suffocate our nation's democracy, and police powers that torment and scar the bodies of minorities around the country, then we ought to interrogate our "progressive" politicians far more robustly and with far more nuance than we have. It's not about water drops in Twitter handles, or #StandingWithDan. It's about recognising that conservatives are hell-bent on using the pandemic to tear us apart; next week the Morrison Government will plunge 2.2 million people into poverty, and Gladys Berejiklian has backed in a police force that will shut down protests seemingly at will and with little regard for public health. In order to counter that, our "progressive" politicians need to do a lot better, and it doesn't come from #StandingWithThem, it comes from holding them to account.

# Does going bald mean you lose more than just hair?

Caitlin Clarke destigmatises men's balding.

2020 did not start well for David, a 21-year-old university student. Like many men, David's hair is an integral part of his identity; the cut, colour and style all lead people to make inferences based on someone's physical appearance. Which is why David freaked out after the new year when he noticed his hair was falling out. Thinning, receding and loss of a signature gloss to his curls suddenly felt like a threat to his identity.

Together with his education, place of birth and taste in art and pop culture, he considers his hair to be one of his defining features. One can understand, then, how distressing it must have been to suddenly feel it was being involuntarily taken away from him. "It was an existential fear. It was all encompassing and I felt it was having a direct effect on my ability to be successful in life." Although David laughed nervously when he said this, there is no denying that a lot of men believe hair loss is one of the worst things that can happen to them, especially when they are young. "It felt as though I hadn't even had the chance to enjoy my attractiveness."

But why does David place so much weight in his hair contributing to his level of attractiveness? David is a young, intelligent, charismatic young man, and you might think he would recognise these other qualities in himself and not feel he needs a full head of hair to be an attractive individual. But David doesn't see it that way.

"What girl is going to walk up to a guy in a bar who is balding at the age of 21...hair is a prerequisite for sexual attraction. Especially for younger men."

A 2013 study conducted by researcher Albert Mannes, found that women perceive bald men as less attractive than men with hair. Society has equated bald and shorn hair with "symbolic castration," and restrained sexuality. Participants also suggested

bald men were 5-10 years older than they actually were and were overall less attractive. However, this was the case only for men who did not choose to go bald, instead having the hairstyle forced upon them thanks to genetics.

Interestingly, the study found that men who opted to part ways with their locks were perceived as more masculine, taller and even physically stronger. While their overall level of attractiveness to women is lower compared to men with hair, this increased perceived dominance, yet decreased attractiveness is confusing. Mannes offered an answer, suggesting the distinction between masculinity and attractiveness could be explained by the hair styles donned in typically masculine professions - the military, policemen and, in some cases, professional athletes.

When David began noticing his hair was thinning, an internet research frenzy soon ensued, as though he was truly in a race against time to stop more hair falling out. David needed to find a plan of action to soothe his anxiety, to figure out if he really was



going to lose his hair forever.

Like many university students, David embarked on the quintessential backpacking trip throughout Europe during the summer of 2019. While enjoyable, the trip caused its share of major stress for David. A string of mishaps, sleepless nights, lack

of secure accommodation and experimentation with recreational drugs resulted in a very distressing environment.

"I was just really in a fucking bad space. I have never felt so stressed. Just like, pure stress and anxiety coursing through my body."

After extensive research and reflection on his own experiences, David came to the conclusion that he was experiencing telogen effluvium, a specific type of hair loss which can be triggered by major psychological distress, enhanced by recreational drugs. As David put it, he was "skat, out of my brain ... there was no serotonin left in my head." He was putting his body through too much stress, and the drugs he took caused dehydration, and thus his hair became brittle, dry and broke off easily.

David ceased his drug use to determine if it really was causing hair loss. The results were promising. Now that David was taking better care of himself and taking the prescribed tablets, he saw a major improvement to his hair. It began growing back and thickening. He is a firm believer in the saying, "If you look good, you feel good. If you feel good, you play good." David didn't notice the irony that the man who said it, American footballer Deion Sanders, is bald.

About 1 in 5 men will experience balding in their 20s and with half of men in their 40s experiencing receding hairlines and overall thinning. These statistics make clear that the fact that hair loss is a widely shared experience for men, making the often-silent struggle and chip-on-the-shoulder attitude surrounding it all the more perplexing.

So much of the messaging in society is that hair loss is a bad thing, and the men idealised in pop culture continue to reflect the primacy of men with luscious locks. Bald men are also often the butt of jokes. Jason Alexander's

character, George Costanza, from *Seinfeld* is a prime example of a target of "bald humour." George often said he was "handicapped" because of his baldness, and that it kept women from being interested in him. Yet including these jokes in the show must have been informed by the baldness of the show's co-creator, Larry David. Larry



has been quoted saying that "anyone can be confident with a full head of hair. But a confident bald man — there's your diamond in the rough." So perhaps the jokes about George are all made affectionately, playing into the trope of bald men being grumpy and unlucky in love?

All that being said, perhaps times are changing for bald men. While there will always be a high degree of subjectivity to what someone finds attractive, bald or not bald, there are more options for men like David being able to make a choice about their hair loss. Companies like Hims, while not suggesting they have the cure to permanently eradicate baldness, are certainly working towards lessening the stigmas surrounding hair loss. And at the end of the day, you have to work with what you have — or don't have. As confidence seems the denominating factor for attractiveness, if a man is confident enough in himself, even if he is losing his hair, he is still viewed as attractive. Sean Connery was once named the People's sexiest man alive, and the caption beneath his smouldering photo was "older, balder and better."

Art by Lilly Aggio.

## Review: In The Zone

Alice Stafford in conversation with *In The Zone's* Libby Montilla.

Shaun Parker & Company's *In The Zone* is a hypnotic piece of solo dance theatre that marks a triumphant return of live performance to the Seymour Centre. Sydney's first live major dance performance since pre-lockdown, *In The Zone* paves the way for the revival of the performing arts industry in New South Wales.

*In The Zone* merges hip hop with gaming technology, inviting the audience into a virtual world of electro soundscapes, popping and locking. The piece — designed specifically for young people — captures an all too relatable sense of escapism through technology.

With temperatures checked, masks adorned and a strict 1.5 metre social distancing in place, the lights went up on the York Theatre for the first time since March. Yet *In The Zone* had already had

its debut that morning — via live stream. This debut, attended by over 7000 people, speaks to the growing popularity of the digitisation of the performing arts. Although the essence of being an audience member is arguably lacking on a live stream, the format opens a door to increased accessibility and inclusivity within the arts industry.

*In The Zone* is constructed around the use of "Airsticks," innovative sound technology designed by Dr Alon Ilisar. The Airsticks are the centrepiece of *In The Zone*, immersing the audience in 'sound worlds' where every single movement is translated into a sound effect.

"There are over 20 scenes, and each scene could take up to a week to create — you're not just dancing, you're pressing buttons and making music

cues," says the show's sole performer, Libby Montilla. "During rehearsals there were times when I couldn't sleep — my brain was just going over sounds and buttons."

Montilla — who affectionately described the show as a "vibe" — brought a contagious energy to the stage, performing with a level of precision that was captivating to watch. Montilla's ability to effortlessly transition between moods was enhanced by Shaun Parkers' strong direction.

"I'm a self-taught hip hop dancer, my family couldn't afford dance classes when I was younger so I would wake up early to watch music videos, Usher and Backstreet Boys — once I got introduced to YouTube I realised how big the dance community actually was," Montilla tells *Honi*.

At points, the production did seem one-note. The heavy reliance on sound to drive the storyline brought with it a lack of visual variation on stage. The narrative was easily lost as a result of this repetition.

Regardless of the production's shortcomings, the broad intention of *In The Zone* is poignant. "We need more people to be aware of what is happening around the world. One small action can be enough to create a wave of great effect," says Montilla.

And that is exactly what *In The Zone* did. Interdisciplinary, experimental work is symbolic of the fact that the arts must collaborate to survive. Australian artists have spent six months in lockdown — and finally, the curtains have reopened.



Former Victorian Police Chief Commissioner Graham Ashton (left) and Dan Andrews (right). Photo: News Corp.

# Allyship, safety and the ACTIVIST-INDUSTRIAL COMPLEX

Himath Siriniwasa on activist bureaucracies in the United States and Australia.

Following the explosive resurgence of the #BlackLivesMatter movement in Minneapolis, “professional” radicals and clout-seekers alike took to the annals of Twitter and Instagram. These activists extended solidarity, symbolic protest and a discourse aimed at challenging anti-Blackness. One prominent anti-racist weapon in the arsenal of every experienced WokePoster™ is the notion of allyship. To be an ally, particularly a white ally, requires one to acknowledge their privilege in being recognised by major cultural and political institutions. It is argued that this privilege is one which Black people, Indigenous people, and people of colour (BIPOC) lack. Rather, BIPOC are subject to violence and control by a hostile state apparatus. Their voices of resistance are drowned out by underrepresentation in dominant institutions of bourgeois society — both repressive and ideological. To overcome this structural imbalance, the ally must follow BIPOC leadership within the culture industry, the corridors of government, and corporate boardrooms. The President of the Portland-branch of the NAACP, pastor E.D. Mondaine echoed such a sentiment, urging white people to “be with us in the classrooms and the boardrooms [and] in the halls of justice”.

Allyship can only challenge the status quo when deemed appropriate, with Modaine denouncing the supposed “white spectacle” of the anti-carceral insurgency in Portland. As such, the white ally must forgo their role as an independent political actor and elevate the voices of leaders of oppressed groups. Since white people have the privilege to engage in riskier political actions with less repercussions, they are expected to. By doing so, they safeguard “vulnerable” BIPOC from being targeted by police repression and entering the prison system. Resources detailing allyship politics are often shared with good intentions: white

supporters of anti-racist movements have, in my experience, acted with an arrogance and condescension not conducive to productive organisation. Nevertheless, this framework remains fundamentally flawed.

The notion that there is one Black or POC voice that allies can elevate is, to borrow a term from this discourse, problematic as it obfuscates power differentials within communities of colour. Black and brown communities are not a singular bloc with a unified political worldview. The seminal sociologist W. E. B. Du Bois, for example, forcefully argued that class divisions within the Black community were a crucial part of racialised capitalism. For the Black bourgeoisie to maintain a hold on their precarious class position, they were compelled to distance themselves from the rest of the Black community: those toiling in sharecropping, performing drudgery in industrial workites or being brutalised in urban ghettos. Rather, they had to communicate to their white class allies that they had had no sympathy for black criminality, emphasising their status above the Black working and middle classes in the socio-racial hierarchy.

Such power differentials are not remnants of the 20th century. Today, a new aristocracy of media personalities, politicians, and financiers claim to represent the interests of Black people as a whole, while functionally demobilising and depoliticising the poor and working-class. In effect, this political-economic elite maintains bureaucratic control over NGOs and activist groups through a network of financial flows, interpersonal relationships and political campaigns. In their analysis of the class composition of the early BLM movement, the radical journal Endnotes argues that the “Civil Rights legacies [of the 60s] perform important social and ideological functions” for this elite. Many civil rights veterans

like Al Sharpton, who played a prominent role in organising “civil resistance” following the murder of Trayvon Martin, occupy central positions in this political class, garbing themselves in the cloak of 60s radicalism while having the ear of media and political elites. Thus, Endnotes concludes that racial struggle in America is vertically mediated: these movements are hierarchically composed with actors in NGOs, municipal governments all the way through to upper state institutions

and political parties. While these “race leaders” can build momentum for campaigns, when crowds pose a sufficient threat to the state and private property they will often use their influence to control and discipline spontaneous action.

Following the murder of 16 year-old Kimani Gray by plainclothes police in 2013, a spontaneous wave of action spread throughout New York City under the Twitter hashtag #BrooklynRiot. Endnotes observes that this incident led to an early instance of Black leadership repressing struggle in the first waves of the BLM movement. Councilman Jumaane Williams brought in riot police on behalf of the “community”, claiming that outside agitators from Occupy had escalated peaceful struggle into unnecessary rioting. Given his precarious position in a hostile political environment, it is easy to see why Williams would opt for such a tactic as the legitimacy of his campaign rested on “[his] ability to rein in the violence.” The outsider agitator narrative was even more prevalent during the 2020 uprisings, where “white anarchists” were accused by bureaucrats at all levels of government of inflaming what to the white imaginary were respectful, non-violent civil protests. This discourse reached its crescendo when Twitter influencers called out the “Karen” who had allegedly been responsible for the burning of the Wendy’s following the murder of Rayshard Brooks in Atlanta.

Activists and influencers reduced the Atlanta revolt against police repression to the actions of a white outside agitator, leading civil protests astray by a single act of property destruction. Beyond its absurdity, these cases elucidate the crisis that Black leaders working within the state-NGO apparatus face. To retain their access to funding, prestige and a media spotlight, organisers must regiment the organic mobilisation of those affected the most by police brutality. The cruel irony here is that this “Karen” is in fact Brooks’ girlfriend, Natalie White, whom he mentions in the bodycam footage before his death: “You know, Natalie White, she’s my girlfriend. She left. I said, ‘Baby, I’ll get Wendy’s and then I’ll go back ...’” When white allies are told to promote Black leadership, they are drawn to the voices with the most power, prestige and name recognition. This in turn reinforces hierarchical relations within the Black community that are structurally opposed to interests of the urban poor and marginalised, whose voices, to paraphrase Martin Luther King Jr., are unsilenced through the language of riots.

White allies drift toward representatives and leaders whose politics are closest to their own. In Australia, the racial discrimination Adam Goodes faced within the AFL has become a symbol of liberal-progressive outrage at the backwardness of Australian race-relations. Yet, in the

well-intentioned elevation of Goodes as a symbol of Indigenous leadership, allies obfuscate that his class position (an estimated net worth of \$5 million AUD) is incongruent with the abject poverty many First Nations communities face. Further, Goodes is enmeshed with the very state apparatus that disproportionately carries out heinous police and military violence against Indigenous people. In 2017, Goodes became the CEO of the Indigenous Defense Consortium, a subsidiary of the UK weapons-manufacturing giant BAE systems. In 2020, BAE systems was revealed to have sold \$27 billion AUD worth of weapons to Saudi Arabia in their genocidal war against Yemen’s civilian population. One wonders how Goodes, entangled in the Australian military-industrial complex, could advocate for Indigenous campaigns such as Stop Deaths In Custody, Black Lives Matter, or a spokesperson for those who faced military repression during the Intervention.

Similarly, one wonders how white support for Black small businesses as espoused by POC influencers in the Twittersphere is conducive with solidarity towards the disenfranchised who face police violence, structural unemployment and general immiseration. The anarchist polemic emerging from the first wave of BLM, Ain’t No PC Gonna Fix It, Baby, put it poignantly when they noted that the white ally is repositioned to “to wield the power of determining who are the most representative and appropriate black and brown voices,” asking, “who white allies [are] to determine who is the most appropriate anything?”

In this understanding, allyship does little to offer genuine solidarity. Rather, it functions to reinforce the vertical mediations within the socio-racial hierarchy. This structure, I claim, is best understood as the activist-industrial complex (perhaps activist-NGO-municipal-state-industrial complex is more appropriate but for brevity I shall henceforth refer to it as the AIC). The AIC is comprised of a network of activist groups, NGOs and community organisations interlinked with the government at the municipal, federal and state levels. This network is “industrial” inasmuch as these political organs receive funding from an elite donor class and philanthropists looking to recycle their money in “woke” NGOs. In place of traditional support from large public-relations firms, the AIC operates more decentrally, receiving its prestige from influencers and WokePosters on Instagram and Twitter.

Due to this lack of centralised coordination, allies need not even look up to the powerful and prestigious names in POC leadership — just a brand name. During the post-Minneapolis uprising, many white anti-racist protestors were led by the officiated Black Lives Matter activists who called on white people to use their privilege to “fight the

status quo” while pacifying protests, negotiating with cops and disciplining protestors deemed unruly.

The political cache used to propagate this message is largely drawn from privilege theory. The viral Instagram post, “10 Steps to Non-Optical Allyship”, which made it onto the cover of Vogue magazine, is a case in point. Undoubtedly, many of its proposals are harmless (“Check in on your black friends”). Notably, however, the creator of the post is a public relations consultant and “sensitivity trainer”. This situates projects like these squarely in the AIC, where nonprofit organisations run diversity training courses to help white allies recognise and overcome their racial privilege. Such projects obfuscate the centrality of racist institutions like the judicial and prison system and centres anti-racist organising on white behaviours and privileges that can be “checked” given the right training. Race theorist Noel Ignatiev’s ironic comments on the diversity industry resonates here — “it is fortunate that in the nineteenth century they had abolitionists instead of diversity consultants; if not slavery would still exist, and representatives of slaves and slaveholders would be meeting together — to promote mutual understanding and good feeling”.

Underlying allyship is an infantilising logic that require BIPOC (a nebulous term in its own right) to have allies defending them from a perceived vulnerability to judicial and financial repression. As Jackie Wang argues in her groundbreaking essay “Against Innocence”, in placing emphasis on safety at all costs, this politics creates a false connection between militancy and whiteness. This further undermines and obfuscates the history of BIPOC militancy in the anti-capitalist, anti-colonial and anti-imperialist struggles of the 20th century. Moreover, it prevents us from imagining what other less alienated forms of relatedness and solidarity would look like, broken free from the shackles of allyship. This renewed understanding of solidarity is the fundamental problem radicals face: given that the subjugated classes are heterogeneous in nature, how can we unite in the face of catastrophe?

The politics espoused by privilege theory is one of passivity and weakness. When the vulnerable are asked not to take risks, Wang passionately argues that “the only politically correct politics becomes a politics of reformism and retreat, a politics that necessarily capitulates to the status quo while erasing the legacy of Black Power groups like the Black Panthers.” A praxis of non-violence, performative protests, Woke Tweeting and electoralism necessarily follows. Privilege theory is the ideological sheath by which the vertical mediations of the AIC exercises its influence. Community organisers and NGOs take the lead in organising these massive demonstrations. For their hard work, they are rewarded with media attention, online support and new recruits. This supporter base becomes the perfect funnel into electoral campaigns — with officiated sects of BLM having close ties to the Democratic Party at local and federal levels. In Sydney, we see nexus of state, NGO and activist organisations with

the NSW Greens and their support for popular social justice measures — #ChangeTheDate, an Australian Green New Deal etc.

The intermeshing of activism and bureaucracy can be seen at every level of political organisation, even on campus. It’s no secret that the progressive wing of student politics — Socialist Alternative, Labor Left (NLS), Solidarity and Switchroots — use activist campaigns as a massive recruiting pool, directing starry-eyed inductees to get involved with the latest SRC or USU campaign. This venture into electoralism is justified on the basis that it provides access to financial and organisational support for activist campaigns, facilitating a rapid expansion of consciousness and radical action. However, it seems that the opposite is true — certain avenues of praxis, particularly those popular with the university students — are chosen precisely because it leads to the reproduction and expansion of power blocs within these bureaucracies. The focus on formal political battlegrounds both diverts energy away from praxis while exerting a mediating, disciplinary effect on what forms of activity are viable. For example, if recruitment and media-friendly visibility are priorities for a particular faction, activism becomes a means to reach these goals. Organisers often tone down their content to have a wider appeal, materialised in the appeal to notions in the liberal-progressive imaginary such as human rights and state entitlements. Moreover, they will set a particular level of ‘intensity’ for the demonstration to attract particular types of participants; the goldilocks mean between overt passivity and combative struggle.

I acknowledge that it is unfair to compare the dynamics of university politicking with the repressive function of the AIC seen in the history of BLM. Having participated in a number of university campaigns, it’s clear that many student activists approach protesting with passion, just intentions and a genuine sense of solidarity. However, despite benevolent aspirations, activists often engage in a panoptic self-discipline. Their embeddedness in networks of advocacy organisations with ties to local and state government, unions and NGOs lead to an internalisation of modes of activity that don’t challenge the Australian state or capital. The social consciousness of this activist strata is largely reflective of these institutional arrangements — not vice versa. By virtue of these connections with the State, it is framed as an ally and defender of the oppressed for progressives to rally behind, despite how deeply contradictory this is with the objectives of anti-racist struggle. When activity diverges from the modes of organising allowed by the State, narratives like the outside agitator are brought up and activists will reign in struggle in accordance with a pre-determined itinerary.

Recently, the most disheartening examples of this are community organisers in the U.S. handing protestors to the police to maintain a level of respectability. However, this self-repression materialises in a multiplicity of forms. In the latest upswing of BLM struggles in Sydney, an activist

bureaucracy has been responsible for enforcing a rights-based, state-approved series of peaceful marches with police escorts. This further includes lobbying with, and seeking the validation of NGOs and politicians. Initially, BLM saw a return to spontaneous organising in Sydney, with #RIPGeorgeFloyd vigils and marches being held without the approval of professional anti-racist organisers. The largest protest was held on the 6th of June, when over 10 000 people marched from Town Hall to Belmore Park chanting “I can’t breathe”, remembering the death of both George Floyd and David Dungay. While the rally was led by a myriad of activist groups with a presence from the Greens, on the train there from the Western suburbs I noticed an extemporaneous energy emerging from groups of teenage protestors, self-organising with their circle of mates. During the rally,

walking around the Captain Cook statue in circles for less than an hour — quite a threat to the status quo. Thirdly, rally marshalls, negotiators between the police and protestors, immediately called off the protest at the police’s behest, more effectively and efficiently than the police would have (no doubt they would have faced some resistance). Despite being authentic supporters of BLM, marshalls inexplicably became better cops than the cops present in their ability to quickly break up the crowd. Additionally, marshalls and organisers spent the hours following the end of the rally breaking up independent actions by non-organisers on a purported basis of safety. Many veteran radicals were aghast at the extraordinary power the police had over the crowd when they mediated their demands through the bodies ‘representing’ the voices of the struggle. A key organiser of the Long

**In this understanding, allyship does little to offer genuine solidarity. Rather, it functions to reinforce the vertical mediations within the social-racial hierarchy.**

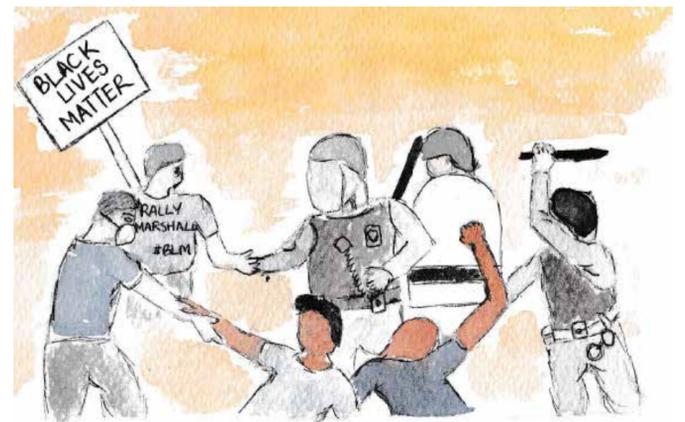
spontaneous actions by these teenagers were either restrained by rally marshalls or isolated and then repressed by the police. It seemed to me a fundamental violation of the principles of the post-Minneapolis Resurgence to co-operate with the police while organising the vigil. The event thus became an object to be governed, with mandatory social distancing and management by intermediaries between activists and the police. Moreover, it seemed unfair that activist groups, whose members were from diverse but often middle-class backgrounds, could choose whose voices were heard and whose were not. Given that they are part of communities most immediately terrorised by police brutality, why were the Western Sydney youth not given a chance to vent their frustration?

At a subsequent rally in solidarity with protesters at Sydney’s Long Bay Correctional Centre who faced tear gas attacks by prison guards, the regulatory behaviour of the activist class was farcically visible. Firstly, the rally was held at Town Hall, to attract larger crowds, despite the action being purportedly for Long Bay prisoners. Secondly, the action consisted of

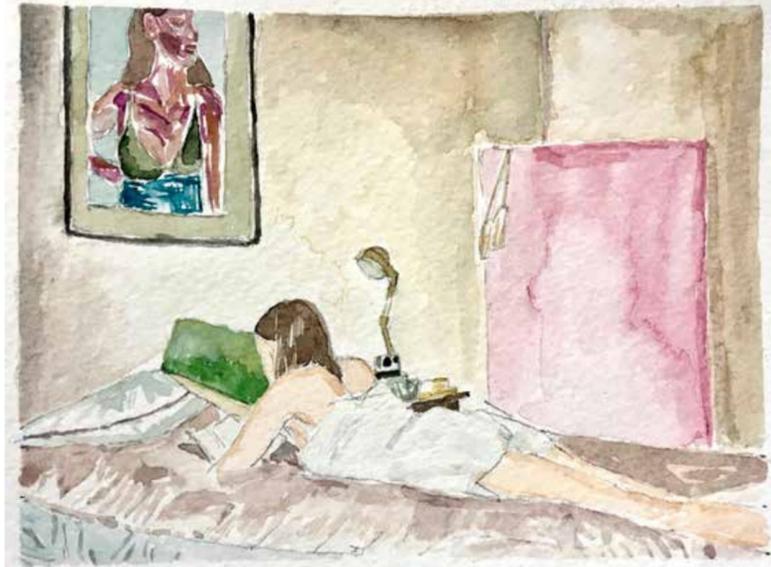
Bay rally I spoke with urged the Sydney left “to critically examine the ways in which activism can embody carceral logics like marshalling at protests, which functionally becomes a mechanism of policing”.

A spectre is haunting the world; the spectre of an abolitionist, anti-racist, feminist radicalism actively opposed to the decimation of the planet. For those that wish to see a world beyond capital’s destructive desire for profitability, a world that can facilitate the endless flourishing of human potential, we must exorcise the unholy alliance that activists have formed with the state and NGOs. To avoid becoming our own cops, we need to jettison the platitudes of allyship politics that ask us to look for leaders, abandon a politics of safety that pacifies and divide us, and break free from an AIC that makes our struggle impotent. Jackie Wang, citing Franz Fanon, reminds us that militancy is not just strategically beneficial. Struggle, real struggle, emboldens those involved, transforming their anger into strength, cleansing them of “the core of their despair”.

Art by Pratha Nagpal.



# Spaces in isolation



Whilst reflecting on lockdown I kept thinking about the absurdity of it all. The necessary separation from our friends and our external lives. The anxiety of leaving the house.

For many of us, we had probably never spent as much time inside as we did in the months from March to July.

I wanted to capture the unique spaces we were confined to, so I asked five women to send me photos of a part of their house which was significant to them during lockdown, and to share the story of that significance with me.

All five women reflected on their privilege and recognised that many people have, and will continue to face hardship as a result of COVID-19. Lockdown was a pluralistic experience and the perspectives that are shared here represent singular perspectives.

During quarantine Olivia Niethé returned to her family home, a small beach village six hours north of Sydney. The picture shows a beautiful collection of all the things which became important to her during this time. Propped up on the left is a surfboard which she hadn't touched for two years. She described the nostalgia that getting back into this hobby bought her and added that "the ocean, swimming and surfing became a huge part of getting through isolation". To the right of the board is a crocheted rug which her Mum has made for each child as they left home. On top of the rug is a stack of novels (one being *The Secret History* which she highly recommends) and some piano books. Olivia noted her initial frustration of not being able to play the piano as well as she used to. However, this feeling was overcome by the joy she found in playing when she removed expectation.

For Olivia the move home brought with it conflicting thoughts and feelings. It was a space so closely tied to her younger self and identity, so coming back felt like she was "going backwards", re-entering a time of her life that she'd moved so far from. But after reflecting, she realised that the space gave her the opportunity to be with her own thoughts, desires and emotions. She described how over the past two years she hadn't stopped, constantly keeping up with social expectations, university and work. Looking back on her time spent at home in lockdown Olivia said, "I feel so grateful for what that space allowed me to be, allowed me to think and foster and do. I didn't think I needed that space and I definitely came to appreciate it from a different perspective".

Phoebe Wolfe noted that 2020 was a start to the new decade, a time to turn a new leaf, but "the absolute irony is that we've all been forced to feel this stagnation". Change is often marked by events external to us, but Phoebe commented on how lockdown forced us to acknowledge the internal changes. She also explained how, for her, staying in the same space meant "staying in old habits and old identities". So, at the start of lockdown she decided to change her room around, painting her walls and rearranging the space. She said, "It felt like it was a different space even though it was the same room I've grown up in for 10 years."

I asked Phoebe how she feels about her room presently. She replied, "I've felt the urge to change it again. When I walk in it feels like I'm back in isolation". For Phoebe there seems to be a strong association between the layout of a space and its connection to a particular time. She described how "we're still in limbo, we could go back into isolation at any moment". This made me reflect on how the future feels suspended between two outcomes: the first being the gradual return to life outside of lockdown, and the second, the lingering thought that COVID-19 cases will rise and we'll have to return to isolation.

I noticed a pair of pointe shoes hanging on the pink room divider in her room. When I asked Phoebe about them she explained that she'd watched a YouTube video of Alexa Chung going to a ballet class in New York. Feeling inspired she looked up the ballet teacher from the video and found that she was running online classes. There was a discounted pandemic price, so she logged on and rekindled her old passion for ballet.

Anthia Balis also felt the need to change her space around during lockdown. She told me that she hadn't changed the layout of her room in years and said "the first time I changed it around I couldn't help but feel anxious. I think it's a thing about change. But then I eased into it. And now I'm just enjoying the space". We talked about the interplay between a person and their space. Even small things that seem trivial, like the position of the bed in the room, can affect the way we feel. Anthia said that her room was a "reflection of my mental and emotional state. If I'm feeling aligned my room will be neat".

In July, Anthia curated an exhibition for Verge Gallery called *pause.play*. As part of it she interviewed people on their experiences in lockdown. To me, she described how it made her realise that "life is weird because we don't get to ask everyone deep questions. But the beauty of the interviews were that they enabled me to get to the deep stage quite quickly". She goes on to describe how "it was so lovely to hear how other people were doing. It was such a comfort being able to relate to them".

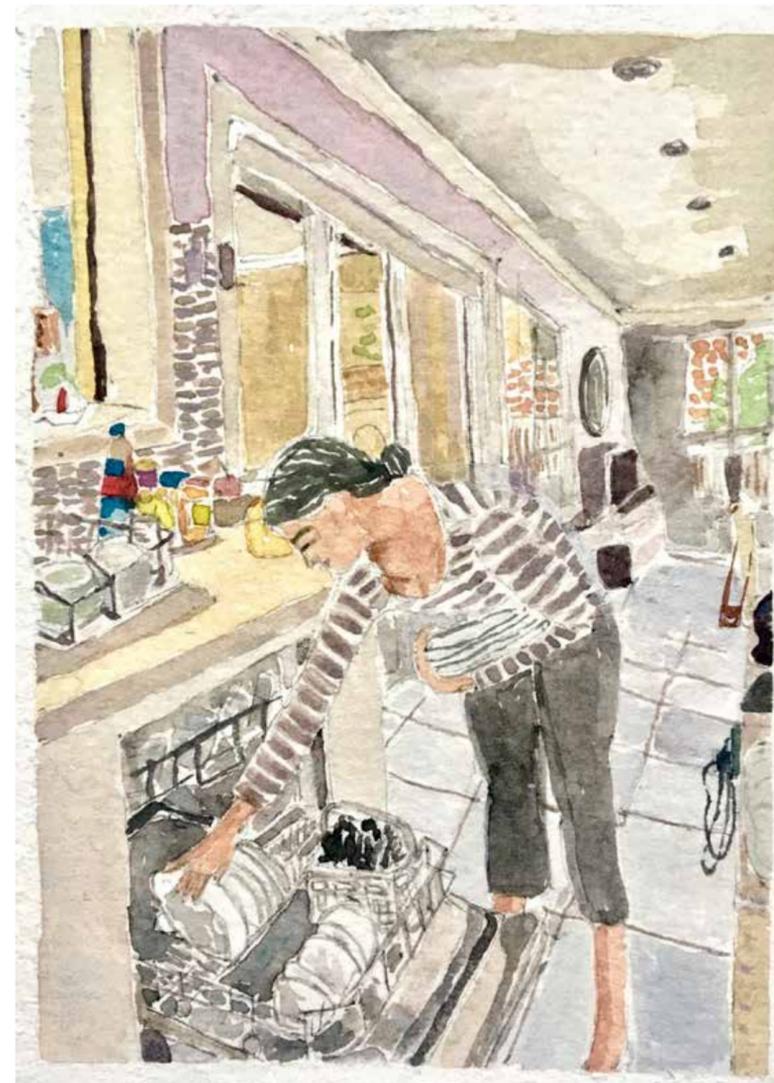
Kavya Nagpal said she became more conscious of the small moments in her day. Little sensory experiences started to mean so much. The feeling of morning grass on bare feet, the spotted shade underneath the washing line and the afternoon sun soaking her room in light. For Kavya, quarantine allowed her to take a break from the constant rush of life. The minutes and hours saved from what would've been time spent commuting allowed her to exist in her space in a way she hadn't before. She described how "the house became the literal perimeter of what I was allowed to occupy space in, so I started exploring it a bit more". She went on to describe how "slowing down reinstated a balance and allowed me to take account of things that matter". She said, "now I have time to enjoy a morning sipping chai in the sunshine or chatting to Nani" (her Grandmother).

We talked about how our world provides an overload of stimuli: chatter on the train, the frenetic feeling of a jostling city crowd, short and awkward hellos to acquaintances we bump into, the abruptness of advertisements on the street. But in isolation the chaos of life was simultaneously peeled back in our physical worlds, though perhaps increased in the invisible online one as we constantly read updates on the status of the global pandemic.

Kavya described how there are so many subliminal messages that we are affected by. She mentioned how "the world delivers you some existential angst... There's a lot of beautiful things but there are also a lot of experiences that I feel are very subliminal". Often, we don't have control over what tacit experiences we're exposed to. We may be left with an emotional response of which the cause seems unclear.

Violet Hull sent in a photo of her family's living space. At the time of taking this photo the afternoon sun was pouring in through the window, trickling through the plexiglass shelf and casting interesting shadows over the space. To the right of the shelf is a fresco that Violet's Mum created. The bottom of the piece is laced with smashed glass from a car that her Mum had collected on a street in New York. In the foreground of the picture are two silver metal café tables which operate as their dinner tables. The tables can also be moved into a big square, two separate squares, one long table or an L shape. Violet said "they are the most versatile tables ever".

During lockdown Violet decided to bring her mattress into the living room. She told me; "When you can't rebel out in the wide world I guess the only thing you can do is say fuck you to living expectations and put your mattress on the carpet in front of the TV". She also described how there was a different morning light in the room which was refreshing. "It took a long time for my parents to kick me out," she laughed.



Watercolours and words by Isla Mowbray

Violet commented on how her surroundings became a familiar blur. However, she mentioned that "there were still moments where I noticed things that I've never noticed before". She was referring to an artwork on her shelf, a word piece, which she'd only just come to read.

For the wonderful people I interviewed, it seemed lockdown was a time of uncovering things. It may have been an activity from their past, like ballet and surfing, or discovering something that was always in plain sight but perhaps they hadn't had the time to observe or experience before.

For me, the white square box of my bedroom allowed me to exist in an expansive aloneness. Contrary to feeling confined I felt a peculiar freedom in the way that my thoughts and feelings were able to unravel at their own pace. This time gave me a greater capacity to reflect, an act which had become increasingly rare in my life as I felt a persistent push driving me into the future while I unintentionally abandoned moments from my past.

For some of us, the enforced quietness that trickled into our minds and rooms sparked a desire to change and shift the spaces that we had control over. Maybe this rearranging was an attempt to mirror the perpetual chain of new experiences that we face in our lives outside of lockdown, trying to recreate a sense of change that we are so used to experiencing.

In lockdown we excavated memories and moments from our past. It may have been a forgotten pastime or perhaps it was an uncovering of something that was always in plain sight but there hadn't been the time to observe or experience it before.

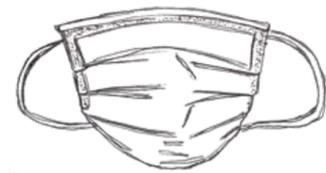
We all responded to this time spent in lockdown in unique ways, however these interviews revealed the many similarities of this isolated collective experience.



# Etymo-LG

*Baopu He traces the origins of LGs and LBs.*

Ahhh LGs and LBs. Little Girls and Little Boys. Every Asian in Sydney seems to know one, but no Asian in Sydney will admit to being one. When they're not muzzing at raves decked out in Nike, they're flexing their KPMG company badge at Sanctuary hotel while drinking more long islands than the zantac they took an hour before can handle. Either way, they're back home before midnight, because at the end of the day, they're still filial Asian children beholden to the whims of their overbearing immigrant parents. A lone Asian-Australian male with a fade cut who swears he's "retired" from raving is called an LB. A group of them is called a UNSW BSoc. A group of LGs, on the other hand, is called an I Heart Uni photoshoot. The mythology surrounding LGs and LBs is endless and their presence in the Sydney Asian social scene is now inescapable. But where exactly did they all come from?



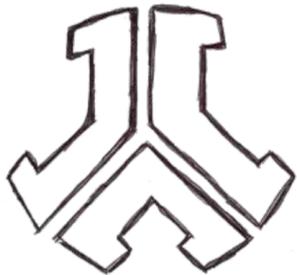
I start my search for the origins of the "LG" in the most obvious place I can think of - The Muzzing/Chopping Appreciation Society Facebook group. Founded in early 2015 and currently boasting over more than 75,000 members, this online community has been at the forefront of rave culture's surging popularity amongst Asian-Australians youths. Muzzing is a dance style commonly done at raves which, on first glance, looks like a horny person directing traffic. It's become associated with rave culture because its movements are well-suited to the beat heavy music of hardstyle, and MCAS is the place to be for aspiring muzz-kings and muzz-queens to show off their skills. So it makes sense that LGs and LBs originated there. Indeed, their explosion in popularity can be traced in the group to a video one of the moderators posted in early April 2016 of herself muzzing captioned "Calling out all LGs in the Southern Hemisphere #LGSTARTERPACK". That video quickly amassed thousands of likes and then triggered a flood of muzzing videos captioned with "LG" or "LB", each thumping beat matched with a confused commentator asking below "what the fuck is an LG?" The terms then spilled over from the group and, thanks to how interconnected the Sydney Asian community is, soon made its way to people like me who at the time at least had no interest in raving. In late April 2016, I used the word for the first time on Facebook messenger when I asked someone in a group chat "lol when did LG become a word?"

If something has ties with the Sydney Asian community, chances are it involves our other major cultural institution - the selective school. With this hypothesis in mind, and knowing that selective school students have a long tradition of making videos to promote school events, I start looking on YouTube. I soon come across what I'd been looking for and I feel ecstatic. Techstatic to be precise. The jackpot was a video from March 2013 made by the prefects of Sydney Tech and St George Girls, two selective schools in Sydney's south, promoting their school dance "Techstatic". In it, a teenage boy tells his Asian-squatting mates in a thick ethnic Sydney accent that "he saw an LG the other day," to which they respond by ritualistically chanting LG. The video gives no explanation as to what LG means, suggesting that the term had already become well-known in the vernacular of a small subsection of the Sydney Asian community by 2013.

Following this lead, I reached out to Shabab Jahan, a friend of mine who graduated from Sydney Tech in 2013. Shabab tells me that he first heard the term LG in 2012, and that it started circulating just as the Asian teeny-bopper scene was dying out (RIP

The rise of popular Asian-Australian facebook pages like "Sydney Asian Memeos for Selective School Teens" and "LGs of Sydney and Melbourne" gave LGs and LBs digital immortality by way of means, thus introducing them to thousands of unenlightened, unsuspecting individuals. Before long, even the New York Times (yes, the New York Times) ran a feature article about them, making LGs and LBs possibly one of Australia's most successful cultural exports in recent years. The rest is, of course, history.

However, slang words don't just pop up like this from thin air. A quick search in MCAS shows that low-scale usage of LG existed in 2015, suggesting that it had existed for much longer than the group itself. Intrigued, I look to Urban Dictionary for guidance, only to find that the top definitions for LG and LB are dated to November 2017 - long after the terms had become popular. But beneath the top definition of LG is a much older entry from 2009 which gives a very different meaning - a girl between the ages of 10-14 who adopts the mannerisms of someone much older. More interestingly, the definition notes that the term originated in the Canadian city of Vancouver. Much like Sydney, Vancouver has a huge Asian population. This couldn't be a coincidence, could it? Were the two definitions somehow connected then?



Gatsby, striped and LAN Gaming). He notes that the term initially had no connections with raving and was more derogatory than it is today. However, Shabab admits that he doesn't know where exactly the term came from, but only that he doesn't think it originated at Sydney Tech (or more accurately, sincerely hope it didn't). To find out more, he connects me with Johan Bui-Nguyen, a fellow graduate of Sydney Tech and the person who directed the "Techstatic" video. Johan tells me that he started using the word LG after hearing it used in videos made by a YouTuber called Chengman, whose skits often revolve around being an "Asian Gangsta" and picking up "LGs". Chengman, as it turns out, is a Chinese-Canadian from Vancouver. Eureka. I slowly begin to understand how all the pieces of this etymological puzzle fit together.

The term LG originated in Vancouver as a way to describe a girl who acts or looks much older than they are. Over time, probably due to the large Asian population in Vancouver, and the fact that Asians often look younger than they actually are, the meaning of "LG" reversed and narrowed to refer specifically to Asian girls. The term then travelled from Canada to Australia thanks to a Chinese-Canadian YouTuber and was quickly picked up by Asian-Australian youths. Johan notes that teenagers from other highschools in the Bankstown area were also using the word in 2012, suggesting that it was adopted independently by many different people all at the same time. This is confirmed by Twitter, which shows a huge uptick in Asian-Australians (mostly in Western Sydney) using both "LG" and "LB" from 2012 to 2013. Interestingly, some mentions from the early days explicitly tie the terms to rave culture - a particularly amusing tweet reads "if i see any lgs post status about going defqon with FAKE ID, im fucking reporting you." Strangely however, usage of "LG" and "LB" by Asian-Australians virtually disappears from Twitter after 2013, suggesting that the terms didn't gain widespread usage amongst Asian-Australians at the time and were, like most fad words, on the road to being forgotten forever.

But as we all know, LGs and LBs didn't disappear. Somehow, they survived wandering in linguistic limbo for two years before being revived by MCAS in 2016. The question is, how? We're now in the land of conjecture, and my guess is about as good as anybody's. But my hypothesis is that after the initial hype created by Chengman, the terms lay dormant. Due to a lack of a high-profile platform like MCAS, they did not spread into the wider Asian community in Sydney or Melbourne. However, the chain of existence was never completely broken, and the terms were probably continuously used by Asians in the rave scene even though their usage had little exposure. Concurrently, the terms possibly quietly survived in some selective school circles in Sydney. Shabab remembers "LG" spreading from Sydney Tech to students from other schools at tutoring, meaning that a sizable number of

Sydney Asians had at least heard of the term despite never using it. Like those microorganisms which go into stasis during droughts and only revert back to their original metabolism when it rains, the initial burst of popularity gave "LG" and "LB" enough momentum to wait out a period spent in highly reduced usage until something like MCAS came along. And when it did, a group of people who had never stopped using the words were able to connect with a group of people who were already somewhat familiar with what they meant.

Contrast this with what happened to LGs and LBs in their native Canada. While the term quietly lives on in its original meaning, the Asian dimension has been completely overtaken by ABGs and ABBs (Asian Baby Girls and Boys) - pieces of Asian-American slang from California. ABG and ABB have existed for quite some time as "street-slang," but their explosion in online prominence only came after a video by Vietnamese-Canadian youtuber LeendaDProductions called "How to tell if you're an ABG" went viral in early 2017. However, LGs and LBs had already become firmly ingrained in the Asian-Australian lexicon by that point thanks to MCAS and Facebook meme pages, who gave the terms a form of official online patronage which made them more resistant to external pressure. While it's commonly thought that LG and LB are simply an offshoots of ABG and ABB, it seems that their popular online usage actually predates their American counterparts. Not even the takeover of Subtle Asian Traits by boba-addicted Asian-Americans could dampen their usage in Australia. For better or for worse, it seems that LGs and LBs are here to stay.



While talking to Shabab and Johan, I floated the idea to them that Sydney Tech could have played a big role in popularising LGs and LBs. If that was the case, I asked them how they'd feel. Johan tells me he'd feel "half-embarrassed, half-proud" while Shabab bluntly answers with "denial". Even though the exact details of those early days will probably never be known, there is something that feels very fitting about this hypothesis. Remember the video they made to promote "Techstatic"? Turns out it was much less of a school dance and much more of a full-blown rave, complete with strobe lights, smoke machines and of course, gabbering. A school-sanctioned rave, at a selective school no less. When you think about it, the attendees there would have been the original LGs and LBs, in every sense of the word.

*Art by Ranuka Tandan.*

# Mulan bad—are we surprised?

*Jocelin Chan thinks she could make a decent movie out of you, Mulan.*

Disney's live action remake of *Mulan* is the most expensive film to be directed by a woman. \$200 million was lavished on it in hopes that the Chinese market would in turn flood Disney's coffers with yuan. But upon its release—among a spectrum of non-Asian, diaspora Asian, and the coveted Chinese critics—the reception has ranged from ambivalent about plot changes to downright hostile about its cultural missteps.

Let's not feign surprise at the reception. The project was doomed to failure from the start; it all comes down to how Disney addressed its two key directives.

The first directive was to satisfy the Chinese market with a more authentic story. This meant revamping the script to exclude elements that Chinese viewers

in the 90s had disliked and introducing a cast comprising only of Chinese faces, including Chinese action heavyweights Donnie Yen and Jet Li. The film also borrowed distinctive visuals, like wirework, that were pioneered in Hong Kong kung fu films.

The second directive was to still appeal to the expected modern Disney audiences. In the last few Disney princess live action remakes, this has meant dialling up the feminism—that is, as YouTube film critic Lindsay Ellis describes, a corporate-friendly "girlboss" version of feminism. It was in this spirit that Li Shang was cut from the script, because a relationship with a superior was deemed inappropriate after #MeToo; *Mulan's* superhuman



qi powers in the live action also stem from this agenda. Niki Caro was Disney's ultimate choice to head the representation of the "culture of Disney" in the new *Mulan*.

As a white female director, Caro was expected to bring the feminist chops to *Mulan's* updated and more authentically Chinese story. But in this choice, Disney revealed a fallacy in their thinking: that Chinese authenticity and feminism are mutually exclusive. See, the cast and the influences are Chinese—but Chinese directors are not similarly entrusted to make sure the story is feminist. Even though directors don't appear onscreen, they make every decision in the film. The Chinese aesthetics and actors masked a mechanism composed entirely of white people. This is where the film's dissonance emerges.

The problem from the start was that Disney could not conceive of the film in an intersectional way. Caro, as feminist and determined to respect Chinese culture as she may be, does not have an insider's perspective on what it means to be feminist as a Chinese woman. It's not enough to get the script, written by four white people, ticked off by the Chinese government—a body that we all know is the ultimate purveyor of culture and filmmaking, obviously.

In a time when Chinese feminists are becoming more outspoken about the constraints of traditional values like filial

piety, *Mulan's* story seems like fertile ground for a culturally appropriate feminist reevaluation. Instead of hamfisted references to "honour" and "family", the film could've sent *Mulan* to war at first motivated only by filial piety, before embracing her identity as a soldier and genuinely coming to embrace her otherwise-suppressed martial abilities as a female warrior. By handing the reins of the live action *Mulan* to Caro, Disney dismissed the fundamental differences between white womanhood and Chinese womanhood.

At the very least, Disney could have united these two elements by giving a Chinese woman the director's chair. That's not saying that this measure would make the film magically perfect but at the very least it wouldn't be plagued with that jarring inauthenticity, which even the least culturally literate filmgoers could detect.

Now, as it stands, Disney's failure to understand the importance of an intersectional feminist approach to the film has left it inevitably dissonant as it fails to tap into Chinese cultural realities and *Mulan's* humanity as a Chinese woman. In the end, this kind of portrayal isn't going to benefit anyone—except the two sets of boycotts railing against the film.

*Art by Nishita Gupta.*

# Phyllis Schlafly: Perpetrator and victim of misogyny?

*Eva Sikes-Gerogiannis on the complexity of Phyllis Schlafly.*

As we've all spent the year sitting in our living rooms mourning the loss of simpler times, TV has served dual purposes: either as escapism to show us that not everything is terrible; or as a lovely reminder that everything is, indeed, terrible, thank you very much. Somewhere at a strange intersection between these purposes is FX's historical drama *Mrs America*, which dramatises the political battle over the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) in the US during the 70s. The affirmative side of the debate is explored through the political activity of second-wave feminists, especially the impossibly cool Gloria Steinem (Rose Byrne). Meanwhile, the conservative opposition to the amendment is mainly expressed through the character of Phyllis Schlafly (Cate Blanchett), an especially active anti-ERA activist and founder of the conservative group Eagle Forum.

*Mrs America's* combination of stellar performances, uplifting feminist rhetoric and a gorgeous 70s aesthetic drew critical acclaim upon its release. But amidst this praise (and a claim of historical inaccuracy by Gloria Steinem herself), came social media backlash concerning the character of Phyllis Schlafly. Many viewers felt that the emphasis placed on Schlafly's storyline, in some cases over the feminist activists she opposed, humanised her so much that she was likely to be considered a sympathetic character or an antihero by

viewers. By extension of this, Schlafly's perspective was explored somewhat more thoroughly, giving her and her anti-feminist, conservative ideas an undue platform.

It is true that, amongst its criticisms of her ideology, *Mrs America* makes a point of humanising Phyllis Schlafly, who remained a prominent conservative political figure in America until her death in 2016 (before which she published a book called *The Conservative Case for Trump*). Cate Blanchett's performance is incredible, but her presence does lend Schlafly a certain campy, glamorous quality, so much so that her pastel suits and sculpted blonde hair seem almost fabulous instead of stuffy and uptight. Subtle shots of Schlafly's discomfort listening to male politicians sexualise their secretaries, or her simmering resentment of her husband's constant undermining of her ambition, also show her as being on an equal footing to her feminist counterparts. That is, as being a woman who is not so exceptional that she is immune to misogyny, no matter how much she tries to deny it. In many ways, it is valid to criticise this humanisation of a figure who opposed the very idea of women having equal rights to men, especially considering that the ERA was never ratified at least in part due to the vehement opposition of Schlafly and her associates.

But is the humanisation of Phyllis Schlafly ultimately a bad thing?

The main 'types' that represent conservatives are usually reduced to the gun-toting redneck, the timid housewife, the arrogant male politician, all of whom are considered by many to be some combination of ignorant, uneducated and stupid. As much as she is undoubtedly ignorant, Schlafly's almost inconspicuous persona as a college educated, intelligent housewife contrasts the representation of these archetypes throughout the show. It is

nice middle aged lady living down the street.

*Mrs America's* portrayal of Phyllis Schlafly's suffering under the patriarchy despite her best efforts to reinforce it also represents the universality of misogyny. The viewer's insights into Schlafly's personal life reveal her hunger for political power, using the anti-ERA campaign as her vehicle into Cold War politics. Throughout the show, the audience watches her smile through

**As much as she is undoubtedly ignorant, Schlafly's almost inconspicuous persona as a college educated, intelligent housewife contrasts the representation of these archetypes throughout the show.**

exactly this complexity in her character that made her such a formidable political figure, who could go from persuading housewives at the hair salon that the ERA would make their daughters eligible for the draft to a meeting room in the White House on the same day. The representation of such a unique conservative figure as being a human being instead of a soulless, ruthless monster should remind viewers that sometimes the most crazy, gun-loving, rights-denying conservatives are the

meetings with senators where she is mistaken for a secretary, walk in bikini pageants as "Mrs Fred Schlafly", and be continuously repressed by her husband. But at the end of the last episode, she's sitting alone in her kitchen, having lost her political dreams, peeling apples to make an apple pie. As Elizabeth Banks' character Jill Ruckelshaus said: "you wanna get ahead climbing on the shoulders of men? Fine. Just know they're looking up your skirt".

# The rise of the role-playing Facebook group

Angela Xu explains what "a group where we all pretend to be ants in a colony" tells us about loneliness in a socially-distanced world.

In a time of global pandemics and social distancing, true human connection is hard to come by. While we stay at home, avoiding bars and clubs, Facebook role-playing groups have become a keystone in social interaction, providing us with ample distraction from the troubling world around us. The groups begin with a simple concept, a premise which everyone must follow. It may be that it's the year 1453, that everyone is a middle-aged dad, or that everyone must speak gibberish and pretend to understand each other (that one is a personal favourite).

The most popular of these groups is undoubtedly "A group where we all pretend to be ants in an ant colony", which has now amassed almost 2 million members. Originating on Facebook in June 2019, the group gained significant momentum at the height of the COVID-19 pandemic in March and April, reaching 1.6 million members in May. It is now so popular that the group recently released its own ant-dedicated merch line, with profits

going to a conservation organisation. Ant-related content floods the page, attracting hundreds of thousands of comments and likes on a daily basis.

Following the success of this group, both old and new groups have been gaining members rapidly. While some groups seek to evoke a sense of nostalgia for childhood, encouraging members to pretend it's 2007 again, others seek to encourage a particular type of communication, such as "a group where you can only communicate in auto-complete" or "a group where we only talk like Raymond Holt". The majority, however, are built on pure stupidity, where people can only say "egg", everyone gives you terrible advice, or everyone pretends to be pieces of bread.

Upon entering the strange world of the role-playing Facebook group, one's first reaction is to ask "why?". While it may seem ludicrous that adults are spending their time pretending to be ants on the Internet, these groups provide an innovative and safe environment to interact with other members, make

connections with like-minded people, and have some good old-fashioned fun.

The development of these online communities reflects the greater shift towards online communication and interaction that we have become accustomed to in a time of COVID-19. In contrast to how we might usually interact on Facebook, with only those who we know personally appearing on our feed, these groups make your feed much more unpredictable. Content from strangers appears frequently, almost mirroring the everyday ambiguous and interesting interactions that you would receive in a pre-COVID era.

Built into these groups are a high level of moderation and extensive rules, reminding their members that even though they are hidden behind a screen, anything that wouldn't be acceptable in real-life interaction would not be acceptable in the groups either. Hate speech and highly politicised materials are removed as well. These rules provide a judgment-free zone to be silly and fantastical while being yourself, without

the need to hide behind an avatar or a persona, like in most role-playing games.

All in all, teamwork, a collective desire for escapism, and a sprinkle of childlike delight holds this little corner of the Internet together. Whether it's the wild fantasy of being an ant in an ant colony or the nostalgia for the 2000s, the rise of the role-playing Facebook group is sure to provide all with their fair share of satirical humour and reinstate a sense of unpredictability back into their lives.

As the world continues to ease back into face-to-face interactions and the seats at the bar slowly fill up, it is possible that these groups will begin to dissolve. In the future, perhaps they will be remembered as a part of the greater migration of interaction and community from the in-person to the virtual, alongside Zoom, Microsoft Teams, and Tiktok. But while they are still fulfilling and abundant communities, they are reminders that we are all going through a shared experience of hardship and isolation.

# The horny POV: Evolution of modern fanfiction

Shania O'Brien has read every single fan fiction on Wattpad.

I am no stranger to the realm of fanfiction. I have spent many late hours of the night curled up on my side on AO3 (archive of our own), stolen moments between tutorials reading about Harry Styles being Cheshire's Pablo Escobar, long minutes scrolling through books of BadBoy!AUs on Wattpad. I am no stranger to being Y/N. What I am, however, a stranger to is being POV-choked through my phone by someone cosplaying as Draco Malfoy.

There is little debate surrounding what qualifies as "fanfiction." It can be argued that Dante's *Inferno* and John Milton's *Paradise Lost* is Bible fanfiction, or that Virgil's *Aeneid* is Iliad fanfiction. The line between great works of literature and trashy NewStudent!AUs is not as clear as scholars might want to admit. But the subculture has evolved since then: from Star Wars and Star Trek fanzines to boyband members as mafia bosses to minute-long videos on TikTok.

In the late twentieth century, fanfiction -- primarily written by women who reimagined popular texts and situated their plots in feminist narratives -- was limited to the physical page. But as it evolved, fanfiction became less of a political statement and more for the purposes of entertainment. The first

half of the 2010s saw online platforms like Wattpad flooded with "books" about real people -- pages and pages on pop stars like Justin Bieber and One Direction placed in high schools and small towns and drug lord dens.

In theory, popular Harry Styles fanfic turned bestselling book and then major motion picture *After* is comparable to *The Three Musketeers* by Alexandre Dumas.

Preteens and teenagers are the driving force behind Wattpad's success, but Wattpad isn't the only app they have popularised for fanfiction. TikTok, a Vine-esque video-sharing app, is a new host for the genre. But TikTok's format means the content has a time cap of one minute -- which has excluded many genres of fanfiction. Slow burn fics, for instance, can go as far as having seventy thousand words before the character pairing even interacts. But TikTok fanfiction allows for an audio-visual experience that hasn't previously been tapped into. Watching people dress up in a green and silver scarf, or with piercing blue contact lenses and store-bought fangs, or open white shirts with butterflies on their chest is a new form of intimacy, to say the least. TikTok creates an inadvertent immersive experience of fanfiction. POV (point of view) videos

are structured to insert the viewer directly into the context of the scene -- they are there, with the character; they are being pushed up against a wall; they are being held hostage with a sword under their chin.

American scholar Henry Jenkins famously described stereotyped representations of fans in popular culture and academic criticism, likening them to shameless, undisciplined cultural scavengers. However, more recently, active and creative behaviour by audiences has been instrumental to the commercial successes of popular cultural artefacts (mainly film and novel franchises). There is a semiotic democracy in which active audiences reinterpret texts in creative and personal methods, effectively questioning established power hierarchies in the process. Writing and consuming fanfiction actively causes people to fragment and reassemble texts, joining broken shards together to fit the picture they have in their mind. By recreating the texts, they are able to form more inclusive material a larger audience can engage with. Fanfiction was -- and still is -- considered entertainment enjoyed by the 'lowest' members of society: teenage girls, women and queer people.

But despite popular derision,

fanfiction is slowly beginning to be understood as an important popular cultural artefact. Most fanfiction, especially those found on sites like AO3, can be better thought-out and more holistic than the source text. Is TikTok fanfiction worthy of the same degree of consideration and discourse we have placed on their written counterparts? Honestly, probably not. But does it have to be for us to enjoy it and admit that it is culturally significant?

TikTok POV videos are in their infancy. The people who produce them do not do so with the intent to make subculture history -- it started as a method to place beloved characters in different settings, pushing the limits of what is traditionally accepted in the genre. It is a means to share and explore experiences of sexuality, to form relationships with a like-minded community, to have an excuse to bleach your hair ash blond and carry around a stick from your backyard. The first time I saw someone cosplay as Draco, I absentmindedly scrolled past it, not realising that moment would later turn into a flashbulb memory. Henry Jenkins might not appreciate people in repurposed bathrobes with fake blood dripping down their chins, but what does that say about him?

## A long way home

Attending one of the world's best uni's living 10,000 miles away can be both a blessing and a curse

The start of term, for most Oxford students, means being dropped off by their parents at college. The termly ritual often involves a long car-trip, unpacking various boxes, books and cacti, and perhaps lunch out in town, before saying goodbye. But like many other international students, I will never be dropped off, nor picked up. For me, 0th week brings a pang of homesickness as families flood Oxford's streets.

I live over 10,000 miles away, in Sydney, Australia. The journey to and from Oxford takes me 30 hours door-to-door but the transition between these two places lasts much longer. It's a transition I find very difficult, although it's taken me a long time to speak openly about it. The journey is always coupled with a sense of overwhelming anxiety, one that starts a week before leaving and takes roughly two weeks, once arrived, to settle down. It's not the flying itself (although international storage, economy-class seats, and jet-lag definitely don't help). It's the feeling of constantly being yanked between two different worlds, and not really belonging in either. It's almost embarrassing to say that I find the vacations the hardest part of my Oxford degree. You're literally writing an article complaining about THE HOLIDAYS! I fully recognise that I am privileged to live in, and travel between, these two beautiful cities and that my feelings of dislocation are in no way limited to me as an individual or as an international student. For example, a close college friend of mine lives in Oxford, a ten-minute walk away. They must re-adjust from the independence of student life to the expectations of their conservative family every eight weeks, without the benefit of distance to buffer the transition. One year on, having learned about myself and my friends' experiences of first year, I now know that the issue is missing Oxford during term-time rather than resenting home in Sydney. Yet there is also a unique set of problems to living so far away.

These problems start before the vacation even begins, with the process of moving out of college. Packing up is intensely stressful because it's a responsibility that I have to face entirely on my own. I'm reminded that my college room is only a temporary home, particularly by the rather cold-hearted and dysfunctional international storage system. For the past two years, I've lived my life from one suitcase and a few boxes. As soon as I feel rooted, it's time to pack up again. Then, there's the issue of travelling solo. For 30 hours, I'm left alone with my thoughts and feelings, in the absence of a friendly face or even wifi. I'm also often mistaken for an unaccompanied minor, (being offered a children's plane toy was just insulting), and going from the intimate college environment to one in which I am an absolute nobody is especially disorienting.

Next comes the crippling jet lag. For those who haven't experienced it, jet lag is a bit like a week-long hangover. It simply makes everything worse. Not only am I exhausted when it's least convenient (i.e.: collections), I also feel moody, over-emotional, disoriented. This was how I felt at my lowest point, exactly one year ago, in 0th week of Hilary in my first year. Jet lag became an extra hurdle, on top of the cold dark winter, academic work and changing friendships, that I had to navigate as an international student.

Long-distance relationships are difficult too. It's impossible to physically meet up with my friends who live in the UK, and the time-difference hinders social media communication, even if today's transport and technology have made these possibilities easier than ever. It's even harder to keep up with my friends back home during term-time. This is partly because I struggle to explain what Oxford is like and why it's such a big part of life without coming off as distant or pretentious. Whilst I recognise that Oxbridge is unique to any other university experience, it's harder and harder to find common reference points with people my age in Sydney. The norm in Australia is to live at home, study a vocational degree and attend a local university, where the mantra is "PS get degrees" (where "P" stands for "Pass", the equivalent of a Third). Most people there don't quite understand why I'm travelling halfway around the world to study History and Politics at a lesser version of Hogwarts.

There's also a more existential issue that comes with living so far away, which is that straddling these two worlds challenges my sense of identity. Here, I'm not just talking about growing into my own person at university. The differences between home and college are salient to me as an international student in a way which they simply aren't for most domestic students. My identity is defined in contradiction to the place I'm in, but I don't really belong in either. I am Australian when in Oxford and an Oxford student when in Australia. Even my accent changes depending on where I am, making this disjunctive feel particularly real. I've been asked several times in shops and cafes around Bondi where in the UK I'm from and for how long I'm backpacking. I've then had to explain that I live five minutes away, and have done so for 14 years. I'm still not sure who's found these conversations more awkward. It's often easiest to laugh these encounters away or whip them out as funny anecdotes, to hide how difficult I find them.

I may post Instagram photos of sunny beaches, but I'm secretly wishing that I was in cold and rainy England at my friend's Christmas dinner party instead. I'm guilty of both idealising Sydney (the heat, the brunches, the relaxed lifestyle) and complaining about it (the heat, the time difference, the "Eastern Suburbs bubble") as proxies for the deeper experience of feeling torn between two places. Over time, it's gradually become easier to talk about why I'm struggling and how I'm coping directly. My experience is also relatively easy in comparison to other international students. As a British-Australian dual national with family in the UK (family friends in town and a dad who went to Oxford), I haven't had to deal with culture shock or language difference (even if "chirpsing" confused me for an entire term. The Australian slang is "tuning"). It's a testament to the drive and resilience of these students that they surmount these extra obstacles, which are invisible to most of us, on an everyday basis and with minimal support.

... Seeing friends or attending events such as Twickenham or the Boat Races is not an option for me. This is sometimes comforting, because there's really not much I can do about this 'fear of missing out'. It's perhaps worse for students who live outside the Home Counties, where such a trip is feasible, but costly and impractical. This distance also means that there's a network of Australian students in Oxford and Cambridge with which I can share common experiences, talk to when I'm homesick and, most importantly, celebrate Australia Day. I now know that I can rely on this network and other close friends in both Oxford and Sydney when I'm stressed out. To tell the truth, it's been a steep learning curve.

... it's often awkward and dislocating to reintegrate into past routines and relationships -- to return to "how things used to be" before flying the nest. This is also the case with friendships based at home. It's a sad truth that school-age social groups tend to narrow, as they change in importance over time, especially in comparison to the intensity of college relationships. It's also more difficult to make new friends during the short vacations, meaning that there are fewer and fewer people to come back for at the end of every term. The most challenging experience however is becoming that Oxford student -- to have my identity reduced to the institution I study at. I have been made fun of, dismissed as pretentious and considered intimidating in this way, both by friends and strangers. Obviously, life must go on. As I change as a person in my opinions and interests, I must accept that I'll diverge from my life before university. The truth is that I prefer living in Oxford, even if this truth is sometimes difficult for those at home to accept.

This summer was a turning point for me. My family attended the funeral of one of my dad's best friends from Oxford, and it made me realise just how precious our time here really is. Out of my dad's year group of 100 students, half a dozen have lost their lives to accident, mental illness or disease in only 30 years. This realisation filled me with a sense of impending doom, as if life is a constant race to stay ahead of mediocrity, anxiety or tragedy. With halfway hall approaching, I described this feeling to a friend as standing on top of a waterfall with my eyes closed (think "Titanic"). I can feel the water rushing around me and am desperately trying to catch hold of it as it slips through my fingers and pushes me closer and closer to the precipice. Ultimately, our time at Oxford will likely be the best three years of our lives. Life beyond Oxford is unknown and there's a limit to what we can do to change that. Truth be told, it was my dad's stories about college which made me want to study here at the age of ten. Yeats captured it well when he wrote, "I wonder anybody does anything at Oxford but dream and remember, the place is so beautiful".

Our time here is finite, it's imperative that we seize the opportunities these years provide us with. The terms are intense, the work is rigorous and the vacations are long. I cannot wait to get back to college, despite all the essay crises, emotional breakdowns, and chirpsing drama it entails. So as I'm sat writing this on the plane, I now know that "home" can be both Sydney and Oxford simultaneously. And I've only six hours and 45 minutes of this long journey home to go.

BREAKING: Oxford student realise time at Oxford, on Earth, is limited

Handwritten notes in various colors and styles are scattered throughout the page, providing commentary and corrections to the printed text. Notable notes include: "TL; DR: Nothing is harder than being an Oxbridge student returning to the colonies for summer.", "I went to Oxford I have no so friends in Oxford?", "You? Never!", "How you need telling them you want to Oxford?", "I do a vocational degree, what does that mean?", "DISCRIMINATION!", "Micro-aggression!", "Of course we think you're doing a pretty great job!", "Sorry that word's too long, I don't know how to write it!", "Aren't you the one queen boys on long-haul flights that you go to Oxford?", "There's no waterfall in that movie...", "You're definitely winning it!", "Sorry I do a vocational degree", "You've captured it well when he wrote, 'I wonder anybody does anything at Oxford but dream and remember, the place is so beautiful'." and "I've only six hours and 45 minutes of this long journey home to go."

From Oxford student paper, Cherwell.

## President

**Liam Donohoe**

The spectre of police repression continues to haunt the USyd campus. On Wednesday, as with a fortnight before, NSW Police descended on the Camperdown campus en masse to move on, fine, and even detain, despite the decentralised actions being COVID-safe and compliant with public health orders. But while the repression may have been cruel, it certainly wasn't successful—students are now angrier than ever, and plan to show up for an even bigger Day of Action this Wednesday, the 23rd. But while education activism continues to be my priority, I am still diligently contributing to internal University and SRC matters, and having success in the process, as I detail below.

Whatever the case, Wednesday's Day of Action was the most significant event of the week. The Day saw over a dozen simultaneous protests organised on campus for 1pm, with each focused on a different issue. Many 'contingents' were faculty-based, highlighting issues specific to their discipline, although a few Collectives organised protests as well. As positive media coverage later reported (particularly a great article by the SMH), it was hoped that these gatherings of less than 20, with distinct intents, would not run afoul of health orders. But despite initial optimism that the police would not feature and that the protest was legal, an enormous police operation greeted us.

Before the police could shut down the Education Action Group protest outside Fisher, a large crowd spontaneously gathered to listen to my speech, with many stopping on their way from the library. These students, and other protesters assembled around

Eastern Avenue, were eventually chased to the Law lawns with students in larger and denser gathering watching on aghast while small groups of socially distanced protestors were harassed. At the same time, down near F23, police were particularly repressive, issuing fines to 7 different students while detaining activist Adam Adelpour overnight. The SRC condemns Adam's arrest and intends to help any victims of repression however we can, particularly as the campaign escalates in the coming months.

In spite of the repression, though, a bunch of us managed to regroup later at a separate location to protest uninterrupted. Many of those same people then joined a post-meeting forum featuring legendary political economist Frank Stilwell and veteran activist Paddy Gibson, who both spoke inspiringly about past struggles and infected the audience with some much needed courage and hunger, before heading to the timely launch of the new "Democracy is Essential" campaign, which demands the restoration of the right to protest in NSW.

But any hopes that we could rest after Wednesday's actions were quickly dashed when news broke that Senators Lambie and Sharkey intend to betray students by supporting Morrison's fee hike legislation, and that, therefore, the legislation may pass within the week. Buoyed by positive coverage and increased attention on our cause, activists have called another Day of Decentralised Action for this Wednesday the 23rd of September in response. As one of the key people behind the push for this Day of Action,

## Vice Presidents

**Charlotte Bullock and Felix Faber** did not submit a report this week.

## General Secretaries

**Liam Thomas and Abbey Shi** did not submit a report this week.

## Ethnocultural Officers

**Altay Hagrebet, Kedar Maddali, Virginia Meng and Anie Kandya**

Since the beginning of semester, ACAR has been busy and in the process of putting together our annual autonomous edition of ACAR Honi which will be out in Week 6.

In the meantime, our members have been supporting the essential campaign against University staff and course cuts and fee hikes on campus.

## Global Solidarity Officers

**Kelly Chen, Holly Hayne, Enrong (Annie) Zhao and Shailene Wei**

Since the beginning of COVID-19, everyone's been having a hard time. The pandemic has made the collective's activism exceptionally difficult. This is especially shown in the fight against the radical changes in tuition fee and staff cuts. However, we are still fighting hard against those issues. We actively participate in strikes and publish related info through social media.

Moreover, since we also have international student as a part of Global Solidarity Office, we are also devoting effort to make international student life better under COVID-19. We got in contact with an NGO called '1 for the World' aiming to fight to eradicate extreme poverty through student leadership. We got many online meetings and still discussing the feasible way

## Sexual Harassment Officers

**Kimberly Dibben, Ruby Lotz, Courtney Daley and Kira Xu** did not submit a report this week.

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

I have made sure to apply myself to the task of building these actions—not only have I attended a number of meetings over the weekend, but I've also been furiously messaging staff, students, and celebrities to increase numbers. Beyond mobilising the same contingents and students as last time, we hope the breakthrough media coverage helps us attract previously uninvolved students and form entirely new contingents. This may be our last opportunity to protest before the sector is shamefully destroyed and students face disgraceful fee increases. As such, it is more important than ever that students stand up for themselves and their future—I implore you all to join what will be a landmark Day of Action.

But as important as the streets are, I have also been fighting for students in the meeting room too. On Tuesday I attended an Academic Board meeting, where we voted on the University's controversial proposal to (temporarily) reduce semester length to 12-weeks. I had previously spoken against the proposal in numerous public fora and University committees, and had been organising to defeat it with other student representatives and numerous staff members. I'm really pleased to announce that, thanks in part to our organisation and diligence, we defeated the proposal! As such, semester 1 2021 will be 13 weeks, though it will start a week later to reduce workload on staff.

Aside from activism and advocacy, there was plenty to do on the operations front as well. On Monday our interim Principal Solicitor, Nas Hanafi, informed me that he was unable to juggle supervision responsibilities



with his own practice, and so stepped down from the position. Faced with the stressful possibility that the practice might be wound down, and concerned by matters still before the courts, myself and Maggie Hayes, the SRC's original Solicitor and long-time volunteer, urgently hired Mr. Jahan Kalantar as Acting Principal Solicitor for the next 3 months. While Mr. Kalantar has incredible experience and skill, his familiarity with the SRC legal service and commitment to our mission made him an easy choice. I offer my sincere thanks to Mr. Hanafi and Mr. Kalantar for their help during this stressful time.

Other SRC service provision continues to go well. Our Casework and Policy Manager, James Campbell, presented on accessing Centrelink as part of the second SRC Informs session, with the video enjoying hundreds of views already. Students have also taken advantage of the Mutual Aid program's new pick up option, while a few delivery runs were initiated. Further meetings of the Mutual Aid program are likely during the next few weeks, where we will determine our long-term strategy. Similarly, another SRC Informs session will be announced in the coming week. We encourage all students to participate in both, and to request help from the Mutual Aid program if you need!

It was yet another busy and auspicious week, but also one which will likely blur in with the craziness of this unprecedented period. I look forward to the week ahead, and remind students to attend Wednesday's massive Day of Action for what may be our last opportunity to publicly dissent to the destruction of our livelihoods.

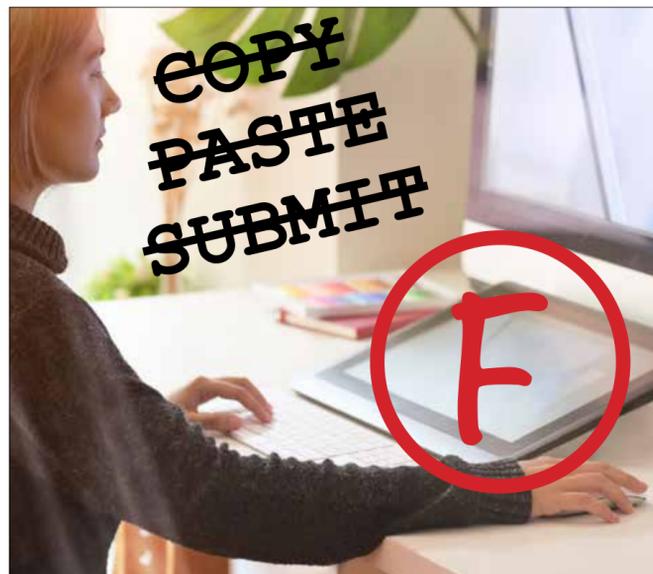
We will be holding regular meetings throughout the semester. If you would like to get involved or keep up to date with the collective, you can find us on Facebook,

Twitter, and Instagram.

to collaborate. Additionally, we individually looked after international students through online contact to make sure both their physical and mental health are well.

In short, we will continue work on issues that affect students and issues that students care about. We will continue to fight the recent staff cuts and tuition fee reform, and we will keep assisting international students

as they have been heavily and negatively impacted by the current global environment and yet not given enough care by the University and the government.



Do you need help appealing a **PLAGIARISM** or **ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT** allegation?

Ask the SRC!

SRC CASEWORKER APPOINTMENTS ARE NOW AVAILABLE ONLINE

Students' Representative Council, University of Sydney  
Level 1, Wentworth Building (G01), University of Sydney NSW 2006  
PO Box 794 Broadway NSW 2007

p: 02 9660 5222  
e: help@src.usyd.edu.au  
w: srcusyd.net.au

f /usydsrc  
m @src\_usyd



STUDENTS' REPRESENTATIVE COUNCIL UNIVERSITY OF SYDNEY

SRC CASEWORKER APPOINTMENTS ARE NOW AVAILABLE ONLINE

Do you need to **DISCONTINUE** or **WITHDRAW** a subject?

If you apply to discontinue a subject before the Friday of Week 8, you will get a Discontinue Not Fail (DNF). **The HECS Census Date is Monday 28th September.**

Additional information is available on the SRC website: srcusyd.net.au/src-help/academic-issues/withdrawing-discontinuing

If you need assistance or advice, or wish to apply for a fee refund:

Ask the SRC!

Students' Representative Council, University of Sydney  
Level 1, Wentworth Building (G01), University of Sydney NSW 2006  
PO Box 794 Broadway NSW 2007

p: 02 9660 5222  
e: help@src.usyd.edu.au  
w: srcusyd.net.au

f /usydsrc  
m @src\_usyd



# PLAGIARISM: Is it really a problem?

## WHAT IS PLAGIARISM?

Plagiarism is taking someone else's words and/or ideas and presenting them as your own. This might be done purposely or accidentally, but that doesn't much matter. Plagiarism really is a problem, and can get you a range of penalties including failing your assignment or subject.

## HOW DO I KNOW HOW TO REFERENCE?

There is an Academic Honesty Education Module available on Canvas. It should take about a half hour to complete, and is compulsory for most students. The library also has Peer Learning Advisors who can review this

with you, or answer any questions that you have. There are also lots of online resources, including websites that will create reference lists for you.

## BUT I WAS PRETTY BUSY / I FELT UNWELL / ENGLISH IS NOT MY FIRST LANGUAGE

There may be many reasons that you did not reference correctly, and while these provide an explanation or context, they do not excuse the plagiarism. If you are in a position where plagiarising seems like your best option, please talk to an SRC Caseworker or (if you feel able) your subject coordinator about what your options might be. It is much better to take a late penalty than to fail the assessment.

For more information read our online leaflet on **Academic Honesty & Integrity: bit.ly/33JT9Sm**

## Ask Abe

SRC caseworker help Q&A

Ask Abe about the **HECS Census Date**



Hi Abe,

At the beginning of the year I enrolled in 4 subjects but I've had some family stuff happen and now I don't think I can cope with that workload. What should I do?

Overwhelmed

Dear Overwhelmed,

**The HECS census date is Monday 28<sup>th</sup> September, 2020.** This means that you can drop any subject before then, without any academic or financial\* penalty. Before dropping any subject, make sure

that you understand the impact it will have on Centrelink payments, visas, and travel (Opal) concession cards. Dropping from 4 to 3 subjects will not affect your full-time enrolment status, but if you are an international student you may be in breach of your visa. International students require faculty approval to reduce their study load. Contact International Services by emailing international.support@sydney.edu.au.

Abe

\*International students may have an administration fee deducted from any refund.

For more information read our online leaflet on **Withdrawing & Discontinuing: bit.ly/3kyPKMP**

Contact an SRC Caseworker on 02 9660 5222 or email help@src.usyd.edu.au



# Students' Representative Council, University of Sydney Elections 2020



**REGISTRATION CLOSURES:** 6:00pm Monday 28th September 2020  
**POLLING:** Tuesday 29th September to Thursday 1st October 2020

**TO REGISTER TO VOTE go to:**  
[srcusyd.net.au/elections](http://srcusyd.net.au/elections)



#### Election Notice Elections for the positions of:

- Seven (7) Delegates to the National Union of Students
- Thirty-five (35) councillors for the 93rd Students Representative Council, University of Sydney.

#### Register to VOTE!

To vote you will need to register as a voter prior to 6:00 PM Monday 28th September 2020. To be eligible as a voter you need to be enrolled in an undergraduate course (degree or diploma). Students who have deferred their studies are also eligible to register as a voter. **Full details of how to register as a voter for these elections can be found at: [srcusyd.net.au/elections](http://srcusyd.net.au/elections).**

**Online Polling will be held between 9:00am AEST Tuesday 29th September 2020 and 6:00pm AEST Thursday 1st October 2020.**

Full Details of how to vote will be emailed to all registered voters.